To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Gwendolyn Lachelle Norris entitled: "Power and Protest in a West Tennessee Community: Constructing an Enhanced Social Movement Theory for the Analysis of Environmental Injustice." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Sociology.

Sherry Cable

Sherry Cable, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Asafa Jalata

Tom Lawton

Robert A. Hamilton

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn Minkel

Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

POWER AND PROTEST IN A WEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY: CONSTRUCTING AN ENHANCED SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY FOR THE ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
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Gwendolyn Lachelle Norris
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family . . .

my grandmother, Laura Bradley Kerley

my mother and father, Gwendolyn and Glen Norris

my sister and her husband, Laura and Lafayette Gwin

and my husband, Paul L. Jacobson

My family has loved
and supported me
throughout my graduate school career.
I owe my success to them.

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ABSTRACT

Current resource mobilization perspectives fail to include analysis of power in the study of social movements. An enhanced resource mobilization theoretical model can be developed by synthesizing the work of Steven Lukes (community power) and Mayer Zald (resource mobilization).

In 1994, Jackson/Madison County Commissioners in west Tennessee proposed to build a county jail in a predominantly African American residential community. The action was perceived to be a case of environmental injustice by residents. The neighborhood mobilized, formed a protest group, and defeated this action. This case of social movement activity tests the explanatory power of the enhanced resource mobilization theoretical model.

Data for this research project was gathered by conducting in-depth interviews with members and supporters of the protest group, leaders in the community, city and county officials, civil rights veterans, and local historians. Historical analysis incorporated scholarly works, city directories dating from 1872-1910, the original charter of the town of Jackson (1854), as well as 1909 amendments to the city charter, several historical monographs, census records, articles from the Tennessee Historical Quarterly, a 1920 Social Survey of the City of Jackson, and numerous back issues of local past and present newspapers. Long term residents and local

historians also provided historical information.

The data supports the assertion that this was a case of environmental injustice. Economic and political structures which developed through the years determined the form that race relations historically took. The unequal relationship among blacks and whites served to prevent African Americans from participating fully in an open decision-making arena until the late 1980s. At that time, the political structure changed to a more representative form of government, allowing true grassroots activity to take place during the jail siting protest.

The theoretical model enables a more thorough analysis of many aspects of this social movement activity. The model satisfactorily describes where power relationships are located in the social structure, as illustrated in this case study. The model also allows scrutiny of the role of power relationships in influencing and controlling the interests, welfare and freedom of the less powerful. Finally, the model aids in analyzing the ability of power relationships to enable or prevent the securement of resources or the defining of a collective good.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For the past twenty years, social movement research has been primarily guided by resource mobilization perspectives. This somewhat loose variety of theoretical assumptions has progressed from a strictly structural approach to a more social psychological analysis of social movement activity. One element, however, is still missing in social movement research: an open treatment of power relationships.

Appeals have been made for a more overt examination of power in social movement research and theory. Yet, power variables have been, and continue to be, treated as presuppositions, rather than independent variables capable of influencing the complex facets of social movements. The absence of a power element is a decided void in most resource mobilization theoretical models used today.

This theoretical inadequacy can be addressed by merging power variables with resource mobilization assumptions. The synthesis yields an **enhanced resource mobilization model** that can more fully explain and analyze social movement activity. To achieve this, the work of two primary theorists--Steven Lukes and Mayer Zald--will be blended. Lukes (1986) suggests that power relationships are located within the social structure, particularly in economic and political systems. From such locations, power relationships

influence and control individual and/or collective interests, welfare and freedom of action. These relationships also enable or prevent resource securement and can determine the defining of a collective good.

With power relationships treated as independent factors, their influence on Zald's (1992) resource mobilization assumptions can be examined. Taking Zald's core assumptions in social movement theory, I have distilled the following resource mobilization problematics: individual and collective rationality and decision-making; the internal operations of a social movement industry; construction of meaning and demands; individual and collective contributions to social movement activity; social movement organization action and the connections to the social structure; individual and collective use of resources and definitions of collective goods; individual and collective access to power; the power of the social movement within the system; and the rise and fall of professional or grassroots social movement epochs. Analysis of these difficult and complex aspects of social movement activity is made possible with inclusion of a power variable.

In 1995, an African American community in Jackson, Tennessee was targeted for a new county jail. The social movement activity that emerged provides a means to test the utility of this enhanced resource mobilization model.

The Case Study

Jackson (pop. 55,000) is located in western Tennessee, approximately seventy miles east of Memphis, and 120 miles west of Nashville. Jackson is the Madison County seat, and is the only urbanized area in the region, excepting Memphis.

Jackson's African American community lies to the east of the city center. This East Jackson neighborhood is bordered by an industrial park to the east, the downtown to the south and a historically white neighborhood to the west. The area has undergone considerable change through the years, having expanded from the original black community immediately around a traditionally African American institution, Lane College. Urban renewal activities in other parts of the city in the late 1970s had a "shot-gun" effect on the black community, scattering black residents and businesses throughout the city to available and affordable housing. However, this solidified East Jackson as the primary African American community, as many of these displaced residents relocated there. Today, the residential and college community encompasses a small black-owned business district before blending into downtown Jackson.

Grassroots protest in the community emerged when County Commissioners proposed a county jail in the heart of this African American, lower/working class, urban neighborhood. Residents defined the Commission's actions as socially unjust and they mobilized to form a community organization:

the East Jackson Concerned Citizens Coalition (EJCCC). Efforts by the group eventually forced the County Commission to relocate the proposed jail site.

This grassroots protest activity provides an excellent case study for evaluating the enhanced resource mobilization model. The protest revealed the internal workings of a local political power structure normally hidden from public view. This "eruption" of social movement activity, and the conflict that ensued, "lifted the veil" (Couto 1993) on political "business as usual" and permitted an in-depth examination of political players operating in the open and behind the scenes.

In analysis of any protest activity it is first necessary to understand the political economy from which the protest activity emerges. Therefore, research for this case study included an historical analysis of the area's political economy. The origins of a dominant white power structure can be traced to the settlement of the area in the early 1800s. White settlers depended heavily on cotton and corn cultivation. The strong agriculture-based economy that flourished determined who would weld power. The political structure secured the interests of landowners, planters and cotton buyers who most benefitted from this economy.

After the Civil War, the labor base on which this economy depended was reshaped--from slavery to a sharecropper system. Economic development in the city of

Jackson, however, began to focus on a retail and manufacturing economy, supported by the cotton and agricultural surplus. This strategy for development was made possible with the expansion of the railroad; once again, political positions were well represented by men who had railroad, business or retail interests.

After World War II, and with the decline of the railroad empire, Jackson moved into another era: the courtship and securement of large, multi-national manufacturing industry. This brought more change to the political economy. Today, Jackson is experiencing the legacy of this mode of economic development. The economy is booming and a shift in the location of power relationships is occurring as old wealth and established power meets outside corporate interests.

The findings of this research suggest that the recent shift in power relationships is one factor that enabled grassroots activity in the East Jackson community to take place. The enhanced resource mobilization model proves useful in drawing this conclusion. In addition, the model allows an historical examination of a traditionally dual political system: the dominant white power structure and the power system within the black community. It is possible to analyze how this dual system of power has facilitated or fettered political activity in the African American community since the late 1800s.

The theoretical model illuminates not only the continuous nature of black political activity through the years, but the form that activity took. Forced to work under the constraints of a dominant power structure, African American political action has adjusted and continued, covertly and overtly. The precipitating factors leading to today's grassroots social movement activity were due to change wrought by the Civil Rights Movement and a change in the form of government--a shift in power relationships.

Without the inclusion of a discussion of power relationships, these conclusion could not have been reached. The model affords a more comprehensive social movement analysis of this case study of environmental injustice.

The enhanced resource mobilization model used in this study is explained in more detail in the following chapter. The various research methods used are discussed in Chapter III. Chapter IV is as a selective historical analysis of the area. This important analytical piece places the Madison County jail protest in context. A chronology of events surrounding the proposed county jail is presented in Chapter V. This chapter also describes the emergence and activities of the East Jackson Concerned Citizens' Coalition. In the final chapter, I discuss the data in terms of the enhanced resource mobilization model, assessing the adequacy of the model in explaining this case of environmental injustice.

CHAPTER II

TOWARD AN ENHANCED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: A SYNTHESIS OF RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND COMMUNITY POWER

A new theoretical framework bringing a power element to resource mobilization theories is needed to advance the area of social movement analysis. This need is especially evident in examination of environmental and social injustice issues. A power element is inherent in any discussion of environmental injustice. However, many social movement theorists, in their efforts to more thoroughly understand environmental injustice, treat power relationships as abstract constants. The explanatory and analytical power of such a theoretical model can be strengthened by the incorporation of power relationships as an independent variables within a resource mobilization framework.

In this chapter, I discuss resource mobilization perspectives and community power theory to reveal why a resource mobilization framework requires a power variable to be effective. The works of Mayer Zald, a leading resource mobilization theorist, and Steven Lukes, a power theory scholar, are synthesized to produce the enhanced resource mobilization model. This model is presented below.

Resource Mobilization and Power Theories

The resource mobilization perspective and political process models appeared in the 1970s as a rather loose

collection of social movement theoretical tenets arising from the works of Olson (1968), Stinchcombe (1968), Coleman (1969), Gamson (1969, 1975), Tilly (1969, 1978), Oberschall (1973), Schwartz (1976), Jenkins & Perrow (1977), Aya (1979), and McCarthy and Zald (1973, 1977). These new orientations emphasize social support and constraint of social movement activity in a political and economic atmosphere. Earlier emphasis on social psychological variables of ideologies, values, attitudes and grievances were dismissed as constants in movement analysis. "Broader macroanalysis of the processes that make for stability and change in the evolution of social movement" (McAdam et al 1988, pg. 697) guided social movement research. Without the more subjective elements (e.g., grievances and ideology) social movement research adopted a more empirical approach.

From the late seventies to the early eighties, research using resource mobilization theories emerged in respectable numbers. Yet, in the mid 1980s, neglect of the social psychological elements resulted in pointed criticism. Social movement theorists argued that strict adherence to structural factors left a gap concerning the role of grievances, ideology, values, and collective identity. Some theorists stressed the need for equal treatment of micro-level factors. Resource mobilization, they maintained, should be revised to incorporate the subjective elements of research endeavors.

Today, resource mobilization has incorporated such social psychological elements, as evident in the works of Useem (1980), Walsh (1981), Zurcher & Snow (1981), Jenkins (1983), Klandermans (1984), Cohen (1985), Ferree and Miller (1985) and Cable & Degutis (1991). In 1992, an edited volume of "cutting edge" work in the social movement field drew closer attention to the importance of research topics such as rationality (Ferree 1992), the social construction of protest (Klandermans 1992), and identity (Taylor & Whittier 1992). These analysts project a more subjective element into a field dominated by a structural, empirical resource mobilization. Co-editor Mueller, in her introduction to the volume, suggests that the essays represent the future direction of social movement research within a more comprehensive resource mobilization paradigm, incorporating the social psychological elements, the actor's construction of grievances, ideologies, and meaning, all within a historical, political and structural medium.

The resulting blend of resource mobilization and social psychological variables has yielded a powerful theoretical framework emphasizing: structures, the capacity to mobilize resources, the use of resources, grievances and ideologies. Through diligent work, analysts have determined that grievances and ideology are not constant, but variable in their strength, depth, and influence on social movement activities.

Importantly, Zald (1992) identifies five core assumptions in the field of social movements:

> 1. "Behavior entails costs;"
>
> 2. "Mobilization of resources may occur from within the aggrieved group [and] from many other sources;"
>
> 3. "Resources are mobilized and organized;"
>
> 4. "Costs of participating may be raised or lowered by state and societal supports or repression;" and
>
> 5. "Mobilization and movement outcomes are large problematics"
>
> (pg. 332)

These assumptions are central to social movement theory and suggest the direction of future research and analysis. Yet, one important element is missing: power relationships.

The criticisms: missing power relationships

Resource mobilization has been criticized as inherently pluralistic: resources either are or are not available and mobilization either will or will not take place based on the acquisition of these resources. Therefore, resource mobilization suffers from many of the same shortcomings faced by pluralistic approaches to the study of power. The approach is heavily behavioralistic (see Dowding 1991), based on the observable actions and outcomes involved in mobilizing resources. Since there was no treatment of social psychological variables such as grievances and ideologies, the pure emphasis on the measurable and

observable acquisition of resources left little room for in-depth analysis of the dynamics behind who acquires resources, who does not and why or why not. It appears that in the attempt to be more empirical, resource mobilization analysts focused exclusively on the observable, tangible resources--time, funds, group size and structure, etc. They failed to address the situation where one party may prevent another from acquiring resources, from joining an organization, from recognizing inequality as a grievance in the first place.

This dimension of resource mobilization requires an analysis of power. It is not enough to only ask who has power or who does not have power, in defining this concept. Power cannot be analyzed just as another resource, as "[power] cannot be possessed" (Bachrach and Baratz 1970, pg. 19). Rather, power is relational (see Isaac 1987). Again, the pluralistic aspect of resource mobilization will miss this important point. Power is not "simple property" (pg. 19) to be gathered by one group for use at will. Power is present through relationships--and it is these power relationships that prevent, provoke, or permit resource mobilization. To treat the power relationship variable as a given falls woefully short in fully explaining social movements and their social movement organizations.

Social movement theorists have noted the need for a power element. Danns (1986), in his case study of a third

world labor movement, calls attention to the omission of an explicit treatment of power in resource mobilization theories. Analysis of social movements using a resource mobilization perspective is restricted by the "limited treatment of **power** as a movement attribute" (pg. 255, emphasis added), Danns stresses. His research in Guyana shows that the inclusion of a "power perspective" greatly adds to the analytical strength of resource mobilization theories.

McAdam (1982) believes that "all theories of social movements imply adherence to a more general model of institutionalized power" (pg. 231). However, he finds both the classical and resource mobilization models lacking in this regard, particularly in analyzing black insurgency.

In fact, all five of Zald's core elements reflect an implicit dealing with **power**. On the macro-level, the dynamics of the movement itself--the initiation, the internal/external workings, the outcomes and effects--all depend on **power relationships** determined at the structural level. The mobilization process--from **where** the resources are derived, **how** resources are organized, and **to what effect** these resources are put--also reflects an unspoken reliance on an analysis of power. Power in itself is a resource, but may also be analyzed as a tool in the acquisition of resources or in the denial and prevention of the mobilization of resources. Third, the activity and behavior

of movement participants, at a micro-level of analysis, also suffers from a lack of treatment of the power aspect. Costs and benefits are dependent on one's access, or lack of, to power. Real or perceived power, or powerlessness, is the key factor in any cost/benefit equation. Yet, this important piece--the power aspect to social movement activity--has not been dealt with explicitly.

Herein lies the future of social movement theory. The inclusion of a power perspective leads to a stronger and more complete resource mobilization theory. This new theoretical framework provides increased analytical potential for social movement research.

I propose that analysis of power is feasible at micro-, meso- and macro levels. But before inclusion of power relationships to the model, it is necessary to review power theory.

Community power contributions to the model

The history of power theory is long and varied, but in recent years, the notion of the three faces, or dimensions, of power has emerged in the forefront. In response to criticisms against pluralist and elitist traditions, typically referred to as the one-dimensional approach to power, community power theorists have sought to analyze the non-observable aspects of power. Non decision-making and non-action are evidence of a power relationship as much as

observable policy decisions or physical force.

Bachrach and Baratz (1970) began building on Schattschneider's (1960) idea of a party influencing participation by influencing the nature of the participation "game." The well-known "mobilization of bias" has come to be synonymous with the "second dimension" of power (pg. 8). Control of issues and grievances can be structured so as to control which issues reach the decision-making arena at all, thus effectively preventing action from occurring. The "rules of the game" involve: control of expertise and information; secrecy; institutional barriers erected to prevent inclusion in the arena; education; voting participation; laws, norms and other rules buttressed by ritual and symbolism; control of resources by those seeking to keep a position of power by perpetuating the established patterns of participation within and outside the decision-making arena (pg. 11).

Crenson's (1971) study of air pollution in Gary and East Chicago, Indiana, empirically tests this second dimension of power. He criticizes political scientists for avoiding research opportunities in which decisions to act should have been made but were not. He points out that

> . . . no attempt is made to account for seemingly important decisions that are never made, significant policies that are never formulated, and issues that never arise.
>
> (pg. 4)

Crenson's study addresses the gap in power studies,

observing two similar areas affected by air pollution. One town mobilized but the other did not. His inquiry focuses on the apparent lack of concern in the face of observable and hazardous problems with air quality. He concludes that "acceptable" issues and demands were indirectly influenced by an industrial presence. Open, overt strength did not prevent the raising of concern and action but, rather, **apprehension** about the company's reaction to stiffer penalties stifled political leaders' action. The company did not have to act in any overt way to protect its interests, but merely relied on its reputation of power, a reputation forged by years of economic domination (pg. 177). This domination "prevented" an issue contrary to its interest from reaching the decision-making arena. In short, Crenson finds that it was possible for a political system to appear to be pluralistic, yet operate in a very non-pluralistic way. Non decision-making, or "politically enforced neglect," is a second dimension of power (pp. 179-184).

Just as issues and therefore participation are blocked from the decision-making arena by the mobilization of bias, might residents' <u>perceptions</u> of grievances and issues also be manipulated? While the second face of power provides more explanatory power, it still falls short (Lukes 1974, pp. 21-25). Bachrach and Baratz (1970) asserted that while conflict might not be seen in decision-making arenas, it

would be visible outside the arena. If it was not, then conflict was not present. However, if the myths, rituals, language, and symbols of elites were internalized and accepted by the masses via socialization processes, the very perception of grievances could be blocked from ever surfacing in the first place. The situation would never be defined as problematic, nor would the powerless be fully aware of their dominated status. This quiescence would be an exercise of power, though covert and non-observable. The dimension of power would be hidden (Lukes 1974, pg. 52).

This third face of power is less behavior-oriented than previous theory, allowing for the inclusion and use of the role of hegemony in power relationships, based on the writings of Gramsci (1971). Gramsci, in his analysis of Italian history, notes that brute force did not always explain the establishment of political domination, that such domination could be achieved by use of "ideological blocs." Once hegemony is established as "normal," it becomes subsumed into the ideology of the masses and maintained by the "consent" of the majority (pp. 12-13, 55-61, 80).

Lukes (1974) addressed the shaping and influencing of "consent" as it pertained to the perception of grievances. Consciousness can be controlled and dominated, not necessarily by any one individual, but by collectivities and social forces. Power, therefore, can also involve the shaping of culture, values, beliefs, wants, and desires

through the psychological adoption of quiescence and inaction. Through the institutions of communications and media, religion, education (see Freire) and other agents of socialization the dominant relationship between the powerholders and the powerless is perpetuated by validating the relationship as typical and fair. Power relationships seemingly based on mutual consent are kept in place by preventing potential issues and the very notion of conflict from surfacing at all (Lukes 1974). Gaventa's (1980) study of quiescence in Appalachia provides an empirical case study of this third dimension of power. In his examination of coal mining communities, he identifies the historical processes of socialization that resulted in an acceptance of the activities of the elites as "normal" and subsequently irreproachable.

Debate continues regarding the definition of "power." Defining this central concept has been a sticking point for theorists since the earliest political philosophic exercises. Should power be considered a "property" to be held by individuals or groups or should it be seen more as a "relation" between entities (Dowding 1991)? This definition has repercussions for methodological procedures: should power be studied on a more micro-individualistic level, or as macro-level structural phenomenon? Critics of the two faces of power argue that even this definition of power does not escaped behavioralism. Lukes' three dimensions of power

is debated regarding "interests." Realists, taking a post-positivist stance, have criticized what they believe is still an adherence to empiricism in the study of power (Isaacs 1987). Do we have to develop a concept of power that is observable at all times? Is reasoned judgement, especially if grounded in historical analysis, enough to explain "lack of collective action" in the face of what we perceive should warrant action?

Lukes (1986), in his introduction to a set of collected essays regarding power, cuts to the point. He states that there have been so many attempts at defining "power" that to come up with a comprehensive, absolute definition may be counterproductive, if not impossible. Rather, we should think of power in two fashions: as the ability to make a difference in the world (locus of power) and what that difference actually is (outcome) (pg. 5). Answering his critics regarding the ambiguous nature of interest, Lukes states that **outcomes** have a particular relation "to the desires and beliefs of the powerful" and therefore must be intended. Who would act counter-intuitively to his/her desires if he/she holds the power to do as he/she wished? Important is the issue at hand. Lukes defines issues as being a "set of related outcomes" (pg. 8), both specified and non-specified. How are people affected by the outcomes of both forms of issues? Should the <u>importance</u> of the issue also be addressed? Lukes (1986, pp. 9-13) condenses the

debate to four questions in the analysis of power:

1. Who adversely affects the interests/welfare of whom?

2. Who can control whom and subsequently affect the limits of one's freedom?

3. Who can get what?

4. Who can secure the achievement of collective goods?

In addition, how do we go about **locating power**? Lukes (1986, pp. 13-17) contends that our interest in locating powerholders fuels our desire to understand exploitation. Locating power also helps us pinpoint and understand sources of social change, how change is brought about, and how change is resisted.

I contend that questions of outcomes and locations of power are crucial in integrating power and social movements theories. Lukes has not discarded his three dimensional approach to power but, rather, has sought to demonstrate the variety of interests and possibilities in the power field. Can the gaps in the resource mobilization paradigm be addressed via Lukes' questions?

We can acquire important keys to **locating power** in the recent work of Scott (1990) and his critique of the third face of power. He uncovers flaws in the logic supporting the existence of a "false consciousness" or dominant ideology. He sees no evidence that those with less power have been fully socialized to completely internalize elites' dominant images, legitimations, or beliefs. Scott suggests,

rather, that the less powerful are fully aware of their place in the hierarchy and would gladly make the relationship between haves and have nots more equitable if they could. However, their voices and complaints are rarely, if ever, heard. He proposes that the powerless keep their words purposefully hidden for their own best interests (pp. 14, 86). Silence has been mistaken for quiescence throughout much of history. Instead, the apparent calm acts as a false front, amounting to what Scott terms the "public transcript": the phrases and actions that are spoken and carried out when in discourse with those in power (pp. 13-14). The seemingly contented and dutiful proletariat belies its true feelings in this way. When alone with others of their same social stature, however, the powerless and powerful each follow their own private transcript. The transcript of the least powerful serves to tie them to each other, with a common ideology. This transcript is not made available to the more powerful.

Meanwhile, the powerful are assuring their hold on power by not showing weakness that could be misconstrued as a break in the social contract that the public transcript is based upon (pp. 50-52, 70). Scott finds evidence of the secret separate transcripts of the both powerful and powerless, though the official record will reflect the powerful, further supporting the misguided notion of the quiescent other in the clutches of an elite hegemony

(pp. 13-16).

Scott finds that under everyday circumstances, the transcripts of both powerful and powerless are hidden from each other. We are made aware of the power structure in place when eruptions occur and elements of the formerly hidden transcript of the powerless are made known to the powerful. "Revolt" or conflict may take the form of a revolution **or a social movement**. Social movements can be viewed as an alert, a key spot used to gain access to the world of a hidden transcript, and a place to begin analysis in the study of power relationships (pp. 70, 87).

The Model: Plan of Analysis

How do we go about constructing a social movement theoretical framework that adequately and successfully incorporates the power relationship variable? If we develop Lukes' three questions into the form of independent power relationship variables, varying in terms of who, what type or how, they become crucial in developing a thorough model for use in social movement analysis at both a micro-, meso-, or macro-level. The following model is useful for illustration:

Model of an enriched resource mobilization framework

Independent Factors	Dependent Factors
Power relationships...	
(I) influence/control interest, welfare, and freedom	* affect rationality and decision-making * affect the internal operations of the social movement industry * determine a social system that can "shape and channel" demands; construct meaning
(II) ability to enable or prevent securement of resources/ collective goods	* determine individual contributions to social movement organization activity * determine the social movement activity and links to the organization and structure * determine what resources are available, how resources are used; determines the nature of collective good
(III) location of power relationships	* determine individuals' access to power * determine the social movement's power within the system * influence the rise and fall of social movement epochs, either professional or grassroots

In this model, **social power** (1) influences and controls the interest and welfare of others, (2) affects the ability and success of securing resources and collective goods and (3) resides in a structural "location" of social interactions. Each of these three forms of social power can in turn influence/ determine social movement activity, the form of that activity, and its dynamics, at the micro-, meso- and macro-levels of analyses.

I. **Influence and control of interest and welfare** is the primary area where inclusion of a power element can most

greatly benefit social movement analysis. At all levels (micro-, meso-, and macro), analysis of variation of influence and control of interests and welfare. Included in social movement analysis, it greatly adds to theory and research. Grievances and consciousness, ideology and demands, action or inaction are all elements very much influenced by the power relationship between the powerful and the less powerful. The participants' defining of the "situation" as being in need of change, or in need of protection from change, is determined from this relationship. Therefore, micro-level analysis of decision-making and rationality of participants of social movements is crucial to the model.

At the meso-level of analysis, the internal operations of the social movement industry are closely dependent on the social structure to which these industries emerge. And the shaping and channeling of demands for change and the social movement's formulation of meaning (in the form of ideology and symbols) are closely related topics at the macro-level. Power relationships inherent in that structure will have enormous impact at these three junctures. The "three dimensions of power" are of crucial importance here. With this model, social movement theorists can incorporate the first, second and third face of power and examine key indicators in explaining the domination, influence and control of interest, and subsequent welfare, of those less

powerful.

Scott's suggestion that we look for the transcripts of the powerful and the powerless gives the powerless credit for recognizing injustice and instigating change. This contribution is an important one for the study of power relationships.

II. All aspects of the raw **acquisition of resources** and the resulting impact on mobilization are paramount to resource mobilization theory, inherent in the very definition of the perspective. Lukes' more distributive question, "Who can get what?" is premised in a competitive scenario where resources are unequally distributed. Here the element of power in determining who can mobilize resources necessary to prevent or facilitate action is of great importance. I propose that mobilization and acquisition of resources varies according to the power relationships at play, and that this will 1) determine individual contributions to the movement activity; 2) determine how social movement activity is linked to the organizational and institutional structures; and 3) influences what resources are available. Power relationships are very much involved in the definition of, and ability and possibility for successful securement of collective goods: shared goals or interests of the organization.

III. Finally, the interplay between social movement research and power theory is closely intertwined in Lukes' third variable: **locating the power relationships.** If we are to discuss the impacts of social power as reflected in Variables #1 and 2, it is first necessary to locate and analyze the power relationships themselves, rather than strictly examining their effects. The location of these powerholders will in turn allow examination of 1) individuals' access to power; 2) the amount of the social movement organization's power within the system; and 3) the rise and fall of social movement epochs on the macro-level. At this level we can also examine power's effect on the form that social movement organizational activity will take.

For social movement researchers, Scott proposes an interesting proposition: using social movements and their organizations to gain access to and locate the power relationships that have been operating concurrently underneath the exterior charades. Occasionally, as was the case with Crenson's study, a city experiencing discontent is compared with one where no such discontent occurs. Yet, comparative analysis is not always available. With Scott's keys to power relationships being social movement activity, community power researchers are afforded the chance to target the power structure via instances of conflict. The hidden and private transcripts of the powerless and the powerful are observable to a researcher, and the public

transcripts that organizes interaction provides a means of comparison and generalization for other similar power situations in similar communities. Both complaints of too much reliance on pluralists' reputational methods and critiques of the elitists' judgements involving real or subjective "interests" can be addressed methodologically.

Summary

Lukes' theoretical approach and suggests regarding power, in combination with Zald's core assumptions, provides a social movement model capable of addressing the criticisms levied against the resource mobilization perspectives. The following study of a case of environmental injustice will illustrate that this case study could not be adequately analyzed without such a model.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

This research involves two projects: an in-depth case study of an environmental justice issue, and an historical analysis of the political economy of the area from which this issue arose. Qualitative methods were relied upon for most of this project.

The researcher lived in the area for over two and a half years prior to "officially" beginning the study. This allowed an excellent opportunity to observe the public day to day political and economic activities in the area. It also allowed time for winning confidences and making important contacts and connections with longtime residents in the city of Jackson which otherwise would not have been available to an outsider.

An extensive newspaper clipping file was established as the jail issue unfolded. Those persons involved most closely to the issue were consulted as to the feasibility of this study.

Case Study and Historical Analysis

In the spirit of triangulation, numerous approaches to gathering data were used. To gather data for both case study and historical analysis, I conducted a series of 20 in-depth interviews with 1) members and supporters of the

East Jackson Concerned Citizens Coalition (EJCCC), 2) ministers and other leaders in the East Jackson community, 3) City Council and County Commission members actively involved in the issue, 4) civil rights veterans, 5) individuals approached for their occupational or prior political position or activity, and 6) local historians. Contacts made through local churches, libraries, industries, political offices, and the local newspaper all served to flesh-out the details of, not only the jail issue, but the history of race relations and decision-making activities through the years. Initially, a list of possible interviewees was constructed from newspaper articles. From there, a snowball technique helped garner additional names for interviews. Most interviews took place in a one-to-one format, using an interview guide (provided in Appendix B). On several occasions, a group of individuals was brought together for the evening for discussion of relevant topics.

Response rate was excellent, with all individuals who were asked consenting to be interviewed. The majority of interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. A copy of the transcription was given to the interviewee for corrections and comments. This helped ensure the validity of the interview. In a few cases a tape recorder was not feasible; in those instances detailed notes were taken. An in-depth field journal was kept throughout the duration of the project.

A historical analysis of the Madison county/Jackson political economy was necessary to trace the evolution of power relationships as they relate to current decision-making in the east Jackson community. Much historical data were collected from the Tennessee Room, located in the Jackson-Madison County Public Library. This resource houses most of the city and county's historical documents. Among the items used were: a thesis and dissertation, city directories dating from 1872-1910, the original charter of the town of Jackson (1854), as well as 1909 amendments to the city charter[1], several historical monographs, census records, articles from the Tennessee Historical Quarterly, a 1920 Social Survey of the City of Jackson, and numerous back issues of the Forked Deer Blade, the Afro-American Sentinel, the Jackson Daily Sun, The Christian Index, and the more recent Jackson Sun, dating from 1939 to present. Interviews with long term residents and local historians also provided historical information. The West Tennessee Genealogical Society provided a 1993 video taped presentation by a local historian.

In order to gather social statistics, the 1990 Population and Housing Census data (tract level) were used. Maps to determine census tract areas were purchased from the Tennessee Planning Office. The Jackson Municipal Regional

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[1]This effectively placed power in the hands of a few by changing the previous form of government. This structure did not change until 1989, and only then under court order.

Planning Commission also supplied useful maps. These included 1) maps detailing city incorporation from 1822 to present; 2) urban renewal maps of the Fite's Bottom and South Jackson areas (1969); 3) City Council and County Commission district maps; 4) maps detailing low income areas by census tract.

Finally, participant observation occurred in numerous settings, among those being a County Commissioners meeting, protest rallies, street festivals, Black History Month presentations and during Just Organized Now Area Headquarters (JONAH) and East Jackson Concerned Citizens Coalition (EJCCC) meetings. Detailed notes were taken at these times.

Entry to the Field

Contact was initially made with a former councilwoman from the jail district. She directed the researcher to others in the community for some primary groundwork before this research officially started. Several months before the official start of the project, residents and professionals in both African American and white communities were approached regarding the feasibility of the study. As the study progressed, so did the number of contacts made.

Human Subjects Review

The University of Tennessee's Committee on Research Participation has approved this research project as of September, 1995 (IRB#: 4781B). A copy of the approved consent form can be found in the appendices of this dissertation (Appendix A).

The data gathered during this research project are presented in the chapters to follow. Chapter IV presents the historical analysis of the area; Chapter V provides a detailed description of the attempt to site a county jail in the predominantly African American east Jackson community. The analysis of the data is discussed in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER IV

PARALLEL WORLDS: A HISTORY OF RACE, POLITICS, AND ECONOMICS IN JACKSON AND MADISON COUNTY

Since political social movements emerge from political and economic structures, I present an analysis of the historical development of the political economy of west Tennessee and Jackson/Madison County. It is necessarily a selective history, beginning with early white settlement and focusing particularly on the role of the economic base in determining separate white and black political structures and power relationships. From the days of cotton to multi-national manufacturing, separate political and economic structures influenced the status of race relations and shaped the form African American protest activity took.

King Cotton: 1821-1865

The economy of Jackson/Madison County, and west Tennessee in general, was originally centered around cotton and corn production. The political system developed to support this agricultural economy.

Beginnings of an agricultural economy

In October, 1818, Andrew Jackson took from the Chickasaw a portion of land between the Mississippi and Tennessee rivers. This rich land drew settlers quickly

(Lamon 1981). In 1821 Madison County was carved out of 561 square miles in the heart of the Western District. Land was set aside for the establishment of a county seat. The area could be reached by horseback or by boat, which required navigating the shallow Forked Deer River by flatboats and keelboats. This and other rivers and creeks were hazardous for travel, since they were full of logs, stumps, and other driftwood. Roads, just being constructed in the region, were crude and almost impassable.

West Tennessee is separated from the rest of Tennessee by a ridge, the watershed to the east draining into the Tennessee River and the west flowing to the Mississippi. The geography of Madison County is varied with both flat and rolling terrain. This topography determined the course of future agricultural endeavors. The western and southwestern part of the county is in the Mississippi Delta where cotton became the predominant crop. Eastern Madison County terrain is gently rolling, and corn was a staple of this region. After white settlement, the desire to get corn and cotton to market increased pressure for "internal improvements" of the waterways and turnpikes (Williams 1944)[2].

In 1827, newspapers urged the construction of railroad lines in the region. The purpose was made explicit:

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[2] Emma Inman Williams, a Jackson historian for many years before her death, described the area in her articles, pictorial history and dissertation. She blended historical data from numerous publications with her own social commentary and personal observations.

entrepreneurs were sought who could "delight in skimming the development of the resources of your infant country" (quoted in Williams, 1944). The railroad was the only means for transporting produce from a land-locked agricultural region. Several lines were completed at this time, linking Jackson more effectively to the outside economy, but the railroad era would occur later (Williams 1944).

By 1837 the town was booming economically, with Jackson the central repository for cotton in the agricultural region. During these early years, the staple crops of corn and cotton determined the occupations and the industries that developed in the town and surrounding area. Williams (1944) describes the enthusiasm of those coming to the area for its reportedly prodigiously fertile cotton-producing soil. As the business of cotton prospered, it appeared that "all business seemed to revolve around cotton," (p. 37) with even the merchants in town accepting cotton in exchange for goods. In fact, "cotton was a good as cash" (Williams 1944, p. 37). The land was cheap and could be purchased in large or small amounts. A "mutual dependence and interest" developed among planters producing the crop, merchants who provided supplies and distributed the crops, and bankers ("West Tennessee Combination Directory" 1872, p. 3). With the aid of the state of Tennessee, a political structure emerged that protected these interests.

A political system unfolds

In 1821, the Tennessee General Assembly made arrangements for the establishment of a county seat in Madison County by appointing three state politicians to County Commission positions. These men in turn acquired fifty acres in the center of the county and designated a site for a court house. In June, 1822, the state awarded land grants to incoming settlers. These early families--Butler, McNairy, Phillips, Shannon, Hays--began to develop the town. With the incorporation of the town of Jackson in August, 1822, several of these settlers and land developers were named by the General Assembly as the first town commissioners. This resulted in two boards, both given "equal powers in all respects" (The Jackson Sun 5/21/1916). The town board appointed a chairman, a clerk and a treasurer, and elected a town constable; the town commission was both an administrative and a legislative body and wielded substantial political power. The early settlers in the town had little voice. The commission made all necessary "by-laws, rules and regulations for the government of the town and for the levying and collection of taxes" and could fire and hire any of its own members (The Jackson Sun 5/21/1916).

The original charter of Jackson was revised in 1837, providing elections for the first time. The revised charter allowed for the selection of seven aldermen for one-year

terms. Over the next 63 years, eleven more revisions were made to the charter.

Two of the most important among these revisions were first, the 1845 reincorporation of Jackson, which allowed for an elected mayor and six aldermen and, second, the charter revision shortly thereafter that established a town council consisting of a Mayor and Board of Aldermen (Jackson Sun 5/21/1916). The town was divided into four roughly equal sized "wards" separated by Lafayette Street running east/west and Cumberland Street running north/south. Two members from each ward were chosen for one-year terms by individuals allowed to vote. Included among the officers were a Recorder and a Constable. These two officers and the mayor were elected for one year. The Town Council had full power and authority over all officers of the town (The Jackson Sun 1916). The Mayor and Alderman form of government continued until 1915.

Politics and early black residents

Almost immediately, white settlers arriving from other states and other parts of Tennessee established occupations to support the two staple crops: corn and cotton. But cotton quickly became the primary enterprise in the west Tennessee area. By 1824 there were two cotton gins in Jackson. Cotton fields were planted as rapidly as they could be cleared. By the 1830s, "all business seemed to

revolve around cotton" (Williams 1944, pp. 33-36).

Early settlers brought few slaves to the area. But the number of black slaves increased with the production of cotton until Madison County had the largest slave population of any county in the region (Williams 1944, p. 38), by 1830, comprising nearly 20 percent of the West Tennessee population (Lamon 1981, p. 10). Economic development was heavily dependent on slave labor, needed to produce the surplus cotton crops. Baker (1993) concludes:

> From the very first, blacks played a major role in the development of Madison County society. Large scale farming based on slave labor took firm hold in the region. Slave field hands were largely responsible for the area's prosperity, but not all blacks were slaves. . . .
>
> (p. 57)

The labor of "free persons of color," Baker adds, was extremely important in the development of the region, also.

Historical recollections of this era reflect the notion of the slave as "well cared for property." "Negroes" of this pre-Civil War era were described as ill-clothed, some "knock-kneed, scarred on face or hands" (Williams 1944, p. 38) having "downcast looks, some stutter[ing] when spoken to if alarmed" (p. 38). Slaveowners were bewildered why slaves would attempt to flee "without any cause or provocation whatever" (p. 38). An article in The Southern Statesman (1/23/1832) after a rumor of slave insurrection, reported that

> . . . we believe that there was never a slave population better satisfied with their condition than that of the Western District . . . at present well-clothed, well-fed, unannoyed by constables, regardless of who is president and in no wise distracted with the nullifying doctrines of some of our southern politicians, nor the tariff, nor anti-masonry, nor the Georgian question. They appear comparatively happy in this humble station of life.

The Jackson charter provided laws to protect landowners' investments in slaves, while making no provisions to protect the rights of slaves. White residents believed that reading "generated discontent" in the black community; therefore, reading and writing were discouraged (Williams 1944, p. 40). Slaves were not allowed to gather, except for public worship. Strict curfews were enforced; passes were required when traveling after curfew. Williams (1944) concludes that:

> Many of the troubles with slaves resulted from their congregating for the purpose of dancing or other pastimes, so the masters did everything that they could to prevent the gatherings in large bodies.
>
> (p. 40)

The 1854 city charter ordinance pertaining to "Slave" (Section 1) reads:

> . . . in order to prevent the evil consequences apprehended from large collections of slaves, no collection of slaves shall be allowed within the limits of the corporation for the purpose of dancing or other purposes, except for public worship, which shall be regulated by the town council by resolutions. . . . [public worship allowed only] if conducted in an orderly manner under the superintendence of some white person.
>
> (p. 17)

The charter also prohibited disorderly conduct, "by

drinking or making noise," and forbade slaves to "hold, occupy, reside or sleep in any house, building or enclosure, other than the premises upon which such owner or employer resides, without the written permission from said owner or employer" (Jackson City Charter 1854, p. 17). The charter also made illegal the trading or selling of "poultry, corn, meats, wood, coal, or anything in the shape of trade" within the town boundaries without written permission of the owner or employer.

By 1830, few free blacks (2,579) lived in West Tennessee, yet were perceived by whites as a threat: "under the circumstances, jealousy and hostility blended together to make the free blacks a 'degraded and troublesome class'" (Williams 1944, p. 39). The free person was at first feared and later, by 1831, forbidden to immigrate into Tennessee. By 1850 only 13 free persons lived in Jackson and only 61 in all of Madison County (ibid., p. 39). In 1860, 83 free blacks lived in Madison County, even though 7,300 free blacks lived in the rest of Tennessee (Baker 1993, p. 61).

All free persons of color were required to register their names in the recorder's office at a cost of 50 cents. According to the charter, under "An Act for the regulation of free persons of color," those individuals who refused to register were turned over to the constable and treated as slaves. Free persons of color were also forbidden to have

slaves as visitors in their homes without written permission from the owner (Jackson City Charter 1854, p. 11).

Post-Civil War Urban Development: 1865-1890

As was the case with the rest of the cotton-driven South, the Civil War had a devastating effect on Jackson/Madison County economy. Madison County, "a central county, penetrated by railroads. . . suffered much of the devastations, cruelties and losses" ("West Tennessee Combination Directory" 1872) as a result of the war. Large tracts of land and plantations were either abandoned or taken in leu of back taxes. Thus, many planters met the same fate:

> [the southern planter is] now a "pauper landholder," unable to command from his wide but dilapidated domain, a sufficient income to meet current expenses . . . His present condition compels the reduction of his land estate into smaller ones, to be disposed of by sales, lease, or rent.
>
> (ibid. p. 2-3)

Politics during and after Reconstruction

Jackson began to recover rapidly in the years following the Civil War. The railroads that had begun construction before the war were completed. And the town grew steadily, "destined to be a great railroad center" (ibid. p. 147). In 1867, the town charter was amended to incorporate Jackson as a city (The Jackson Sun 5/21/16).

Although Tennessee was the first confederate state to

rejoin the Union, the state constitutional convention did not grant Union-sympathetic freed blacks the right to vote. As a result, the 1865 Tennessee State Convention of Colored Citizens met in Nashville to protest the Tennessee Congressional delegation. The Fourteenth Amendment was ratified by Tennessee in 1866, under pressure from state Republicans and federal threats of military reconstruction. The amendment extended civil rights to all freedpeople; black men were enfranchised in February of 1867. The state law coupled with the disfranchisement of the former Confederate populace assured Republican control of the state government. The radical Republican majority in the United States Congress also benefitted from the freedpeople's vote which assured a Republican president in the 1867 elections. Measures[3] were subsequently passed in Congress between 1870 and 1875 to enforce the new rights of freedpeople.

New conditions for black labor were negotiated. This meant a radical democracy for blacks in Tennessee, and particularly in West Tennessee, between 1865 and 1870. Former slaves' status as property was discontinued, bestowing legal status on ex-slaves. Union Leagues and Loyal Leagues were established to educate and mobilize the new black voters. The Freedmans Bureau was formed to listen and respond to freedpeople. The bureau established a federal presence in rural West Tennessee to help shape

[3] Called the Force Acts or Civil Rights Acts.

policy for contract labor, African-American schools, and civil and property rights protection (Couto 1993).

The new political and economic freedom of former slaves threatened the labor supply for cotton production, needed by cotton brokers and cotton manufacturers in the Northeast. During these Reconstruction years, the supply of raw cotton was uncertain and the price increased. Northern textile industrialists depended on the supply of cheap cotton from the south for the developing export trade. Thus, the interests of both southern grower and northern industrialist were best served by the relaxation or outright retraction of Reconstruction policies (McAdam 1982, p. 67).

The result was the development of the cotton tenancy system, the sharecropper system, which continued unchanged until the middle of the 1900s when row-crop agriculture made large numbers of workers unnecessary. Sharecropping involved living on and working another person's land in exchange for a share, or percentage, of the profits from the harvest of the crops grown on that land. In essence, newly freed slaves began a new era of slavery, with an "overwhelming majority of freedpeople enter[ing] the agricultural economy of the post-Civil War South as landless farmers, wage laborers" (Couto 1991, p. 174). The economic stability needed by industrialists in the Northeast was achieved by forcing newly freedpeople into this sharecropper system.

African American farmers under this system were immediately forced into debt, required to take on credit seed, tolls, and food at the landlord's commissary. Living quarters were also owned by the landlord. Similar to the early twentieth century coal camps in Appalachia, the landowners' commissaries were the "company stores," providing loans, food, and other goods at inflated prices. Sharecroppers could never profit to the point of settling these debts. This ensured freed blacks dependency on the planter for their livelihoods and gave the landowners inordinate power and control over the labor force. Consequently, the landowners regained nearly the same control as they had in the slave-economy. "Fraud and coercion" were common at the hands of the landowners (Couto 1991, p. 176). Tenant farmers were powerless to protest for fear of eviction or violence. In addition to a captive work force, the system effectively prevented black landownership (Couto 1991, p. 161).

Since suffrage threatened the fragile economic system, voting privileges did not come easily to the freedmen. Legislation enabling freedmen the right to vote was passed in the spring of 1867 and organizations such as the Loyal Leagues and Union Leagues were established to educate the new voters on issues and candidates. Yet, the leagues and schools were targeted for violence. By the presidential election of 1868, the violence was "open, systematic,

purposeful political terror" (Couto 1993, p. 29). So much violence erupted in West Tennessee that martial law was declared in February, 1869 (Couto 1993).

Meanwhile a counterrevolution was brewing in the South as the Republican majority lost its hold in Washington and the Southern Democrats strengthened (Couto 1991). Retraction of Reconstruction policies began in Tennessee in 1870, before other southern states. New laws passed by the state legislature repealed the laws of the previous state legislature, freezing the Freedmen Bureau and jeopardizing the tenuous protection of working freedmen. African Americans faced unreliable access to public facilities and transportation. The poll tax was instituted, making it difficult for many to vote. Injustices in the sharecropper system continued to remain unrecognized. Access to the new system of free schools was imperiled and by 1875 the black schools had practically disappeared.

While Republican Party candidates relied on the black vote to win elections, their promises of key political positions for African Americans usually went unfulfilled after the final count (Lamon 1981):

> . . . there was a growing hostility in all regions of the state toward the aggressiveness of black politicians and the high visibility of black officeholders. . .
>
> (ibid., p. 52)

After 1886, black participation in the political arena subsided statewide, as "new electoral laws and municipal

redistricting" was initiated (Lamon 1981, p. 52). The Jim Crow laws combined with "precise registration procedures, a secret ballot, and a new and enforceable poll tax requirement" (p. 59) to deny blacks political participation. In the rural counties of west Tennessee, the Republicans did not regain power for decades to come.

New economic opportunities

By the 1890s Jackson, Tennessee was described as "the center of political activity in the [D]emocratic party" in the state (Chandler). But the city nevertheless offered economic opportunities to African Americans not available under the repressive sharecropper system. As Jackson prospered, so too did black-owned and operated businesses, although most were service-oriented enterprises. From 1872-1892 Jackson city directories cited numerous African American laborers, blacksmiths, grocers, barbers, shoemakers, restaurants, and a prominent black physician. Physician Myles V. Lynk established his medical practice in Jackson. Men such as Sandy Scruggs, Cesar Washington, and Henry White operated small grocery, boot/shoemaking, and laundry businesses. However, the majority African American workers were forced into uncertain, low paying, service or domestic employment. Listings of "washerwomen" appeared frequently. In 1875 city directories made numerous references to black employees of the railroad companies.

The jobs were most often identified as brakemen, porters, teamsters, firemen, engineers, or simply "railroaders." Employment with the railroad was relatively well-paying and stable for African Americans in west Tennessee at that time ("Gardner & Gaines' City Directory: 1875-76") and allowed a relatively stable black middle class to develop.

Lane College was established in 1879 by the newly independent Colored Methodist Episcopal Church and was the only black-controlled college in the state (Lamon 1981, p. 41). The newspaper, the "Afro-American Sentinel," was published every Saturday. The newspaper urged black voters to pay their poll taxes and vote Republican. The paper also contained local social news of the black community.

A cadre of black ministers, businessmen, and other professionals emerged as "leaders" in the black community, as the "elite within the lower caste" (Lamon 1981, p. 61). Shut out of the formal political arena and facing increasing hostility from whites, these prominent black individuals nevertheless prospered. "This leadership occasionally took major stands against inequalities within the system, but rarely did it challenge the system, as such" (ibid., p. 61). A hidden political system-within-a-system began to develop.

"The Railroads Were King"--A Legacy: 1890-1939

The development of a manufacturing economy was made possible with the coming of the railroad. Products and

cotton could now be shipped more efficiently and quickly. A new citizenship came with the dawning of this era and Jackson/Madison County was affected for years to come.

Co-development of black and white economies

The rural agricultural economy, devastated after the Civil War, gradually recovered with the sharecropper system. While cotton and agricultural investments were an important staple, the local economy diversified in the railroad era. Memphis real estate agents deplored the lack of southern manufacturing in an 1872 article in a west Tennessee city directory. ". . . [T]oo much devotion to cotton alone . . . and too little material manufactured and exported" had left the south vulnerable. "An intelligent citizenship" was needed which would "not suffer the raw material of their own production to be Exported for the sustenance, profit and wealth of distant States and countries, but who will first MANUFACTURE and CONVERT these materials into the last profitable shape BEFORE EXPORTATION" (Donoho and Bulkley, pp. 14-18). Real estate agents were also quick to point out that previously large landholders were being forced to

> . . . dispose of any unavailable excesses [land], and at far less than their former and intrinsic values; and just here is the 'golden' opportunity for those having sufficient means to buy good and cheap homes. . . .
>
> (ibid., p. 15)

Subsequent economic growth was realized with a steady stream of outside investors and the construction of the

railroads. The railroads had begun moving into the area in the 1850s, but were interrupted by the Civil War; the real boom occurred between 1870 and 1890. By 1900, three major railroad lines ran through Madison County. The railroads were seen as "great developers," responsible for the post-Civil War growth in Jackson. One line, the Mobile and Ohio, located its primary machinists shop in Jackson. The railroads advertised in the local papers, touting the "quick, efficient, cheap freight" as a drawing card to the "northern farmer." "No more favored place on the globe" existed for agricultural endeavors, according to one report (Jackson Daily Sun 1900). City leaders aggressively advertised for manufacturing and commercial enterprises. With the railroads as the crucial link to the nationwide economy, Jackson became a retail and manufacturing center by the turn of the century (Williams 1944).

Even so, cotton was still important. Jackson was considered the center of the cotton district of the region. Cotton magnates such as Parker, McCutchen, Lancaster, and Hayley established a "strict cash market" after the Civil War. They made important connections in the east and in New Orleans for their product (Forked Deer Blade 1/7/1888). New industry related to cotton production emerged; the Tennessee Cotton Oil Mill Company, the Jackson Woolen Mill, and the Jackson Fibre Company all depended on the nearby supply of cotton.

At the end of the century, the drive for industrial development was fervent. A Jackson Board of Trade was established in 1889 and secretary J.W. Gates (then mayor of Jackson) wrote an article for the city directory glorifying the vast economic opportunities in the growing city ("R. L. Polk & Co. Directory"). In 1900, the Jackson Manufacturers' Aid Association was established by leading local entrepreneurs and political figures and assisted in recruiting other industries in the area. In 1907, this organization became the Chamber of Commerce.

The drive for economic development was successful. In 1904 an "influx of new industries to the city" brought 50 manufacturing plants to Jackson (Jackson Daily Whig 1904). By 1906, the city directory listed three cotton buyers for the city, but banking personnel and local Democratic retail businessmen were firmly in control of city politics. The Jackson Democrat, in 1909, called Jackson a "good cotton town" which "derives immense revenue from the cotton business." The paper reported that the "basis of all progress centers on agricultural facilities."

Some residents of the black community benefitted from the new economic prosperity. Many African Americans migrated to Jackson from rural areas to seek urban jobs. "Every black community produced a number of small, black-owned service establishments" (Lamon 1981, p. 45) such as grocery stores and saloons, and Jackson was no exception.

In 1900, a special section in the local newspaper called attention to "The Afro-American Population of Jackson: Its Rise and Progress" (Jackson Daily Sun). The two-page spread was written by Dr. Myles V. Lynk, Jackson's first black physician. Lynk was also a prominent and enterprising businessman. A graduate of Meharry Medical School in Nashville, he established a "large and lucrative practice" in his Anderson Building office. In addition, he established the M. V. Lynk Publishing House (441 S. Liberty Street) to publish black literature, making him the only African American publisher in the United States. He lectured and authored two books: The Afro-American School Speaker and Gems of Literature and The Black Trooper which helped finance his publishing house. The Black Trooper sold 30,000 copies abroad and in the United States (ibid.).

In this same 1900 newspaper feature, prominent African American businessmen were presented in a series of sketches. Isaac Harold Anderson, described as the "wealthiest negro merchant in Jackson," owned and operated a grocery/dry goods store, housed in a three story brick building on the corner of Lafayette and Shannon streets[4]. Wade Hampton, also a groceryman, was noted for owning "considerable real estate in the city and county" in addition to his two story frame

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[4] I. H. Anderson was a minister and member of the state legislature in Georgia before coming to Jackson. He became heavily involved in the CME church, publishing house and Lane College.

building on the corner of Institute and Tanyard streets. Other "progressive grocery merchants" were C. R. Neely and the partnership of Brown and Beasley. A. C. Cain and partner established a "substantial saloon trade," in addition to acquiring real estate in the city. Their enterprise was rated "favorably" by Dunn and Bradstreet (ibid.). But such saloon businesses were made illegal within the city limits by 1907 when the Pendleton Bill was passed by the Tennessee general assembly, in the repeal of Jackson's city charter in an attempt to abolish saloons within the city limits.

The practice of revoking old and established city charters occurred in other southern cities such as Memphis. In their research, Goings and Smith (1995) found that elite interests would claim that "ward politics had mismanaged the city" (p. 382), opening the way for a charter revocation. In the case of Memphis, the city charter was relinquished in 1879 to become a "taxing district." Black representation was eliminated as a result.

In Jackson, Lane College drew students from around the region and country. Students reportedly spent nearly $10,000 a year in Jackson on "board, tuition, clothing, books, etc," contributing to the overall African American economy. In addition to Lane College, the CME Church also launched the CME Publishing House on Shannon Street. This "modern plant" employed twelve or more people; Anderson, who

financed the publishing house, became business manager in 1890.

The publishing house distributed The Christian Index, the "most widely circulated newspaper in Jackson." The periodical was first issued in 1870, enjoyed a healthy circulation, and was reported by Lynk to be the "second oldest negro paper in the United States." The newspaper published social and informative letters from ministers and parishioners around the southern region. Articles also urged black residents to support African American businesses and work toward strengthening the black community.

In addition to the CME Church, seven other black congregations flourished, two pastored by "classical theological graduates" and two other ministers having had "college advantages" (Jackson Daily Sun 1900).

In 1900, three African American doctors and one dentist practiced in the city (ibid.). Lynk supported a medical college for African Americans and in 1900, the West Tennessee University was chartered. This medical, dental, and pharmaceutical college for African Americans was located on the corner of Sycamore and Liberty streets. Classes began in September of 1901 and continued until 1907, when the school moved to Memphis. In all, 216 students graduated from the school before it was moved (McBride presentation; The Jackson Sun 2/15/1996).

African Americans also promoted numerous secret and

benevolent societies, among them national orders such as the Odd Fellows, the Masons, and the Knights of Pythias. These organizations played important roles in the black community, caring for sick members, providing death benefits, and serving as a training ground for emerging black leaders (Jackson Daily Sun 1900; Lamon 1981).

The newspaper noted that African American residents were "discarding the one and two room cabins and buying substantial four and five room cottages" (Jackson Daily Sun 1900). The majority of black-owned businesses were located in the first ward, southwest of the town center. Shannon Street was a center of black business and cultural activity for many years. Residences spread from this locale north, where more prosperous African Americans lived in rather close proximity to white home owners. The railroad had provided a "pretty good living," and had allowed many to buy their own homes. Other professionals such as dentists and doctors located close by. In the early 1920s, Highland Avenue, running north from downtown, developed into the most prestigious street in Jackson where prominent white businessmen, retail merchants and lawyers owned large and impressive homes. Directly behind this main thoroughfare resided the more middle class black professionals. Later such proximity posed problems for whites during school desegregation, as the redrawn school districts required the children of prominent white elites to attend school with

African American children.

The birth of an African American power base

Evidence suggests that African Americans in Jackson became divided over political party affiliation around the turn of the century. Lynk wrote:

> While the negro is naturally republican he no longer votes the republican ticket merely because it is republican. He believes he has now served out his period of gratitude to the republican party and endeavors to vote the ticket that stands for the best government regardless of mere party. (Jackson Daily Sun 1900)

A segment of the African Americans population remained Republican, however. Adam Adamson, "a prominent negro politician," addressed the issue of voting fraud at a 1908 Republican meeting. Adamson believed district election officials were honest, but some African Americans present expressed concern over the lack of counted black votes. In the predominantly black first ward of the city, "dissatisfaction was expressed over the [pre-congressional election] work in the first ward, and on motion the incumbent, Mr. Bray, was deposed and Rev. Kirk, colored, was elected to fill the vacancy" (The Jackson Daily Whig 1908, p. 7). The Democratic party in Jackson was very strong at this time, therefore many were excited over the "apathy" among Democrats in this particular congressional election. Still,

> . . . the [Republican] organization expressed itself very plainly . . . stating that it is not

> to the party's interest to bring out a candidate for any office lower than congress . . .
> (p. 7)

Black economic prosperity based on the railroads nurtured an African American power base in the community. Black leadership formed from this base of economic front runners, ministers, and educators. Free spaces for this leadership and future political activity were provided in the college, the fraternal organizations and the church. These structures fell outside the control of the powerful white establishment and, for the most part, were hidden from the white political arena.

The South experienced a depression in 1914-1915, making living conditions particularly harsh for rural black west Tennesseans. Racial tensions had erupted into violence against African Americans with the consequence of nearly complete political repression. Wartime employment opportunities emerged in the north and many blacks migrated between 1914 and 1918. Many low-wage laborers and poverty-stricken farmers moved to northern cities such as Chicago and Pittsburgh (Lamon 1981). But some moved instead to smaller cities such as Jackson. This pattern of migration northward and urbanward continued during the Great Depression. After the 1920 collapse of cotton prices, the "exodus from the farms continued" with force (Lamon 1981, p. 79). Many more African Americans found their way to towns and cities, including Jackson.

Clouds on the horizon--threats to political activity

This in-migration to Jackson, coupled with vocal black political activity coincided with the second revocation of Jackson's city charter. Jackson re-incorporated in 1909 after the first dissolution of the city charter in 1907. This charter was again amended in 1915 with the desire for "a more effective and business-like management of [Jackson]":

> The board of mayor and aldermen then in authority and all parties and factions in the city seemed to realize that it was necessary to place the administration of this investment of the people in the hands of some officer or officers who would be required to devote all of their time to its administration. . . .
>
> (The Jackson Sun 1916, p. 20)

This amendment to the charter changed the structure of the city government and had a tremendous impact on African American political participation for years to come. This act, passed on March 30, 1915, allowed for a mayor and two commissioners, to be elected at large. All city officials were elected or appointed by this commission. The new "Commission Government" would make it impossible for a black politician to be elected or appointed to any key positions in government. The form of government existed until 1988, and was changed only after a lengthy court battle and federal mandate, initiated in the late 1970s by the black community.

After 1890, strict segregation practices became enforced with increased intensity. African Americans were no longer allowed to use the city cemetery, forced instead to establish a separate burial ground. The Jim Crow years settled upon the South.

Economic conditions at the turn of the century

The migration of rural blacks to Jackson in the early 1900s increased overcrowded and substandard housing conditions. Segregated housing practices dictated available housing opportunities for African Americans, therefore black residents were forced to endure limited cramped quarters. Conditions were further exacerbated by lack of job opportunities, reliance on low-wage labor, and white absentee landownership. A social survey by the Southern Division of the American Red Cross was conducted in May, 1920. The help of African Americans was enlisted in surveying the black community and their work garnered praise for their "thoroughness, and because of the sincere and intelligent desire that was manifested among them in the interest of improvement" (Social Survey, p. 7). The findings from this survey offer a glimpse of life during this time.

> . . . House to house survey shows much overcrowding in the colored sections, and a few instances of overcrowding in the white homes. . . . it is significant to note that 60% of the 998 colored homes which were studied are owned by white citizens. These are representative colored

> homes distributed in four areas, representing the respective wards of the city. . .
> (Social Survey, pp. 36-39)

Surveyors found "outdoor closets," or privies, in 90% of African American homes.

Four African American schools existed at this time: two private schools, Lane College (Colored Methodist Episcopal) and St. Joseph elementary (Catholic), and two public schools, located on the outskirts of South and North Jackson. The northern and southern schools were described as "inadequate" and "far below standard," with Lane the only library facility available to black students. The Jackson public "free" library was "not available to the colored children" (p. 57).

By 1920 the number of industries had dropped to 25 and Jackson was "not what in general parlance would be called an industrial center" (Social Survey 1920, p. 111). Ten industries pertained to lumber and wood and five plants relied on cotton. A large steel products company, two printing companies and an ice and coal company were also operating. The remaining factories produced candy, ice cream and soft drinks. Growth had been stable, consistent with industry in other places, in the past ten years. Local interest controlled a "greater percentage" of the industrial wealth in Jackson than in other areas. The majority of employees in Jackson industries was white, with only 13.7% of black men classified as skilled (p. 112).

The Great Depression years hit Jackson hard in both white and black communities. Yet for the black laborer, a livelihood was a precarious thing. Some area manufacturing such as the Bemis textile mill refused to hire African Americans. Rural farmers had been devastated by the decline in cotton prices in 1923. "Low prices and poor agricultural practices" (Lamon 1981, p. 88) had forced many more into tenancy by 1930. Many others migrated north:

> "I can remember my father was laid-off from his job [with the railroad] during the Depression and had to go to Chicago to get a job . . . he got on in the postoffice . . . "

People were "just poor," recalls this individual. Prominent black professionals suffered also. "It was a sad time," one life-long resident of the area remembers. "Doctors . . . would get paid sometimes with people coming from the rural, [who would] bring them a sack of potatoes or bring food. . . . sometimes they would share whatever they would get . . . but they weren't getting any money." Many lost homes, but those who had worked for the railroad were spared, as many of "these homes were paid for and so they were able to [keep them]." By this time the labor-intensive, semi-skilled jobs that had been available to African Americans were "expendable" as skilled opportunities declined and out-of- work white residents sought employment (Lamon 1981, p. 88). As conditions worsened, black-owned businesses and service enterprises faltered, dependent on black consumers. "Hostility to black independent efforts in

business was rampant," during the time, wrote one local reporter. It was believed that this also added in the decline (Jackson Sun 5/29/72, p. 49).

Birth of a New Manufacturing Economy: Post-Depression Years

In the years following the Great Depression and World War II, the economy of Jackson/Madison County again grew, largely due to the drive for manufacturing. While some railroad personnel had found their own niche in the political structure, old established wealth remained in control of politics. New power brokers were looming on the horizon as the campaign for economic development brought in a new wave of outsiders.

Consequences of the railroad industry

"By 1924 the life of the community was . . . firmly shaped around the staple, cotton" (Williams 1944, p. 37), yet the railroads had made a tremendous impact on the development of the city. By 1939, Jackson was described as having a "rich farming section" with an income supplemented by 35 manufacturing plants, enabling a "diversified industrial payroll" (Jubilee Celebration). Five railroad systems ran through the city, employing 2,500 people, black and white. The three major rail lines, the Gulf, Mobile & Ohio, the Illinois Central, and the North Carolina & St. Louis had shops in Jackson. The rail companies bought and

controlled large tracts of land and their managers penetrated the political structure of the city, occupying key positions in city government (Jackson city directories).

The presence of the railroads helped Jackson escape much of the devastation wrought by the Depression in other areas (Williams et al. 1988). Railroads remained influential throughout the second world war. However, changing technology and expanding highway and interstate systems after World War II made railroad transport less important. One rail line was removed entirely and the GM&O went out of business. The railroad neighborhoods aged and declined as the railroads shops moved out and lines closed, leaving behind communities contaminated with the refuse of the railroad industry. White residents relocated, those who could afford to do so. Many African American residents, however, were forced to stay, in part due to the lack of housing available to them in the white neighborhoods. As the number of whites migrating north of the city increased, African Americans moved into housing vacated by whites.

The high rate of white-owned rental property contributed to pockets of extreme poverty. Those who had settled in the predominantly black Fite's Bottom area to work in the American Creosote Works and sawmills were suffering the consequences also.

> "[The laborers] were trapped. [Fite's Bottom] began somewhat like the mill town [of Bemis] in

> that they worked in the local industries, but the industries changed, and moved, and the conditions were still there--the filth and conditions there were unbelievable."

White landlords, including a few prominent Jackson businessmen and politicians, charged rent by the week, and did little if any repair or maintenance on the substandard housing in the area. Other areas of black rental property were below standard, having no indoor plumbing. One prominent lawyer and landowner remarked that he would tear down the houses before he would run sewer lines to them. When city codes made privies illegal, he did just that.

The once prosperous black business community in the Shannon, Lafayette and Institute streets area suffered during the Depression. Most black-owned and operated businesses were primarily dependent on black cliental. When these consumers could no longer support the establishments, many stores and services simply went out of business and the district began to decline. Racial integration also had an impact, as African Americans patronized white-owned businesses. However, most whites refused to shop at black establishments. The development of the Old Hickory Mall and nearby Hamilton Hills shopping center north of town in 1965 dealt a fatal blow to remaining downtown black entrepreneurs. The major retailers--Sears, JC Penneys, Montgomery Ward, Kisbers, and Hollands--relocated to this new retail area "at one time." A retired city official recalls:

> "That had a major effect, obviously on the retail center of downtown, black and white. And the blacks suffered just as much as the whites, probably even more because some white businesses, retail businesses stayed on and some are still there to this day, but the black businesses couldn't survive and didn't survive. They didn't have the resources, or weren't invited to move out. . ."

And as a result, the black business district practically disappeared.

In the heart of East Jackson, a grassy hill had once been the site of Union College, a predominantly white Southern Baptist school founded in 1825. In the late 1960s, Union College faced renovation work and expansion of an older downtown campus. More significantly to the college, the community around the campus had undergone a population transformation; African Americans had migrated into the area for the available housing vacated by former rail employees. Overcrowded housing conditions and the urban renewal razing in South Jackson pushed many African Americans to take up residence in houses that had been traditionally occupied by white residents. These factors led to Union's decision to move the campus north of town. The administration deeded the old Union site to the county in 1970.[5] Upon Union's

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[5] City planners and developers attempted to persuade the college to stay in the area, fearing a mass out-migration of white residents with its departure. Union, in turn, threatened to move the college to Shelby County if pressured to stay in the area. The college did move, gave the former campus to the county, and acquired a significant parcel of valuable land along Highway 45. In 1971, the city annexed this northern property at Union's request.

departure from East Jackson, rumors that Lane College would acquire the site led to significant white flight. "In a matter of what seemed like weeks . . . the whole area went from a predominantly white community to [a] predominantly black community," one former resident remembers.

The economy transforms--new power brokers

From the late 1940s through the 1970s, "a major effort on the part of the political and business community to seek [a second round of] industrialization" occurred. These "blue chip" multi-national corporations were carefully selected for invitation, a main criteria being the corporation's non-union policy. City and county government worked together to bring in Quaker Oats, American Olean Tile, Proctor and Gamble, Bendix, Florida Steel, and others. According to one respondent, industry had officially "supplanted the agricultural base as the chief economic factor" in Madison County. The Chamber of Commerce became stronger than ever as a community organization.

In 1907, the Manufacturers' Aid Association officially changed its name to the Jackson and Madison County Chamber of Commerce. "The purpose of the organization always has been to attract capital; to attract farmers to West Tennessee . . . and to improve the city's way of life" (Williams et al. 1988, p. 231); the role of the Chamber evolved to include recruitment and retainment of new

industry. By the 1950s,

> ". . . the local business community, who were members of the Chamber . . . basically had a great deal of input in the political leadership of the community"

In the years to follow, the Chamber of Commerce increased the strength of its presence in the political arena. A CEO with a "strong personality" had "built that office in the Chamber as a very powerful factor in the community." Although the chairman changed through the years, the power of the organization was retained. The new industrial giants brought changes on the political landscape. Manufacturers sent their own managerial staffs from northern cities, such as Philadelphia and Cincinnati.

Throughout the twentieth century "the folks that had the money . . . called the shots," remembers several individuals. The "old wealth," families who owned lumber yards, funeral homes, banks, and the newspaper, were listed as powerful people through the years. Attorneys were also noted as having influence through the years.

Rumblings of political activity--setting the stage for a movement

African American political activity was not absent during the pre- and post-Depression years. For the most part, political loyalties of African Americans in Jackson followed the national trends. Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs and projects resulted in a "mass migration out of

the Republican camp" nationwide (Marable 1984, p. 17) during the 1930s and 1940s. Numerous reports were made of local African American individuals who spoke out or acted quietly on behalf of the black community. The NAACP was organized in Jackson in 1921 (Williams et al. 1988), and had been the political voice for African Americans through the years.

In the late 1930s, Milmon Mitchell, a NAACP leader in Jackson and west Tennessee, and a representative of the Atlanta Insurance Company, traveled throughout west Tennessee establishing branches of this insurance company. Simultaneously, he was also encouraging clients to begin chapters of the NAACP. The Atlanta Insurance Company sold insurance to African Americans and initiated or sponsored several NAACP chapters. The primary goal was voter registration. In the beginning, the company sought out the black middle class, professionals and business owners, excluding tenant farmers due to the violent white tactics to prevent the organization of the NAACP in surrounding rural counties. But Mitchell also used his NAACP position to express protests in Jackson.

Early in 1940, the local Montgomery Ward store had separate water fountains, including one posted "For Whites Only." Individual African Americans unsuccessfully complained. After Mitchell joined the protest, the manager removed the sign "rather than installing a separate and equal fountain for African American customers" (Couto 1993,

p. 129). Couto describes those 1940 Jackson NAACP members as,

> . . . successful middle-class African Americans of the city and adjoining area. Lane College, the school founded in 1887 [sic] . . . attracted well-educated professional African Americans to Jackson. This stratum of people found the petty segregation practices, such as separate water fountains, particularly offensive. Ministers, teachers, professors, and two doctors were listed among members of the 1940 board of directors of the Jackson NAACP chapter.
>
> (Couto 1993, p. 129)

Mitchell, six Jackson ministers and NAACP members organized a boycott of the Piggly Wiggly and Kroger grocery stores in 1940 also. Store managers had stopped black teenagers but not white teens from assisting customers with their grocery bags for tips. The boycott of these stores was successful (Couto 1993, pp. 129-130). Other issues of concern to NAACP members involved Jackson city and Madison County police brutality (ibid.).

In the 1950s the local NAACP stood with African American teachers on the issue of inequality of public schools in the area. As opposed to white public schools, "Negro" public schools were traditionally "very inadequate facilities" and had been underfunded and neglected by the white school board for years. Numerous state inspections repeatedly called for the schools to "be abandoned" or reconditioned. Inspectors remarked in one report that "suffice to say . . . these facilities are a disgrace to any civic-minded community" (Jackson City Schools History p. 5).

Located on the edges of town, the schools never received new books, equipment or other school supplies. Teachers spent the summer repairing outdated text books: "Everything was hand-me-down," remembers one teacher from that era.

The salaries of black teachers were substantially lower than comparable white salaries. High schools operated on an eight-year elementary, four-year high school plan, while white schools provided for six years of elementary, three years of junior high, and three years of high school. A former teacher remembers this as driving action: "That's the reason blacks fought for these things, because they were not separate but equal." A 1952 state law requiring all public schools, black and white, to have certified librarians was a significant step toward change. Activism for the integration of schools followed shortly thereafter, preceding the civil rights movement in Jackson.

Action through the civil rights movement--"we were right"

News of the sit-ins in North Carolina reached black citizens around the nation. The events in Birmingham, Alabama were broadcast on national television. Across the country, African Americans mobilized to acquire civil rights, and the South was a hotbed of activity. Black residents in Jackson, Tennessee took notice.

Around the South, numerous accounts circulated about the terror rural African Americans experienced in their

attempts to vote or register others to vote (see Richard Couto's Lifting the Veil, 1993). The registration process was laden with tactics that stalled or impeded registration. In some parts of the South and West Tennessee, registering to vote brought serious threats, even death. Yet in Jackson, the voting process appears to have gone relatively smoothly.

A retired education employee recalled her experiences of registering to vote as an African American in Brownsville, Tennessee, just a few miles away from Jackson.

> "Some decided 'I'm going to register anyway.' And do you know what would be said? You'd go to the courthouse, and they would say 'see Mr. so-and-so. You go in that office there.' You'd go in that office, they'd say, 'you're in the wrong office, go in so-and-so.' They gave you the runaround."

And yet, in Jackson,

> "It wasn't as bad as it was in Brownsville. But I will be honest. I can't off hand tell you when voting started in Jackson . . . I can remember my father saying he voted, and since I was 18 I'd register to vote . . . I don't remember having any problems. . . ."

Some African American individuals explain this difference through the proportion of blacks to whites: "You have more problems when you are in the majority," explained one person. When whites felt outnumbered by African Americans, their attempts to dominate were more intense. "Consequently," one individual remarked, "they kept a hammer on [African Americans] all the time," with tactics such as curfews and voter registration harassment.

While life was relatively less repressive in the city, African Americans in Jackson did not have equal rights. "Jackson was completely segregated at that time," recalls one civil rights activist. The two communities never mixed socially. Two county fairs, one for whites and one for African Americans, were held a week or two apart in the fall. Public water fountains and restrooms were segregated. Restaurants refused to serve black customers. Clinics and hospitals had separate waiting areas. African Americans were forced to sit in the balcony of the local theaters. Local banks would not hire black female tellers, nor would the city road department allow black men to drive city vehicles. Public transportation was segregated, with blacks relegated to the last three rows on the bus. Several African American interviewees remember being turned away from white churches.

> "We went there one Sunday and they wouldn't let us in. And I said, 'I'm never going into that church again. I don't know what those people have in there but it can't be church. . . the next Sunday some others went back, and they let them in, and the pastor dismissed church. . ."

The locally owned and operated newspaper had particular norms regarding black news, such that birth announcements, engagements or military notices for African Americans did not appear. An activist during this time remembered the son of an African American family killed in Vietnam. The paper would not print the story. During the civil rights era, the newspaper staff had instructions from owners and editors to

file articles regarding the movement "in the bottom drawer of the desk," reportedly so as not to "stir up blacks in Jackson." Other general news items pertaining to African Americans were buried in the paper. Death notices were listed under the heading "colored death" in the classified advertisements.

> ". . . blacks did get their death notices but they got 18 point headline. Now a headline, an inch high headline is 72 points, that's the difference. White people got 24 points and above and blacks got 18 and 14 points headline . . ."

This policy served to keep news from within the black community out of the white public's eye. African Americans had their own internal means of communication during the 1960s. A locally owned and operated African American radio station and a local black newspaper were important in getting the word to others in the community. But the "major means of communication in the black community has been, and still is, the church."

> "You got to remember . . . that among blacks they've got their lives and they've got their institutions and they're doing their thing, they're doing their thing socially, particularly in religion. Now churches has always been the central for politics, social, but you didn't read about it, and [the white community] didn't hear about it [from the black community] . . . .

Movement activities in Jackson started in the late 1950s with black-organized boycotts of white retail stores, recalled some activists. In 1960, shortly after the death of the civil rights workers in Mississippi and the lunch counter sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina, activity

increased. "What happened elsewhere," sparked activity in Jackson, recalls one activist, despite attempts by the local people to keep the news out.

> "Martin Luther King, and seeing him and seeing what was going on in Selma. It was on television. The whole world saw it. . . . I can't remember any high dramatic moment that set it off here."

Although the NAACP appeared to take charge of the civil rights movement in the early 1960s, the organization had, in fact, been working since the early 1920s for civil rights in Jackson and west Tennessee. But, in the 1960s, Lane students were involved. "We campaigned through Lane College, so a lot of Lane College students participated," remembers one NAACP member. An active youth NAACP chapter was comprised of Merry High school and Lane College students. Dr. William R. Bell, a local dentist and businessman[6], was president of the NAACP during the 1950s and 1960s (Williams et al. 1988). Other ministers, prominent educators, and local figures were also involved. Activists remembered how the black community organized boycotts and protest demonstrations:

> "We started boycotting the city buses and we boycotted the lunch counters and the stores that didn't employ blacks, and it was really out of this boycott, this economic boycott, that forced people to change. . . ."

> "We used to spend a lot of time going through communities and writing new [NAACP] memberships .

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[6] Dr. Bell and Joe Merry would later be the first African American members of the Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce.

> . . my adolescent adventures were demonstrating and picketing. . . . It was risky business . . . had an element of adventure to it, too."

Another activist has vivid memories of the Woolworth lunch counter sit-ins downtown. Students sat at the counter to be served. Whites taunted them, pouring mustard on the protesters or throwing tulip bulbs dug up from nearby flowerbeds. These demonstrations always ended in arrest, even though the protesters were on public property.

The black community, along with some concerned whites, staged a massive boycott of the local newspaper. Subscriptions were canceled in large numbers over the paper's policy of prohibiting African American engagement announcements. Black wedding announcements began appearing within six months.

Some black residents viewed the moving of black political activity into the open as the most important change wrought by the NAACP.

> "I think the group activity then helped because they took it to court. That was the only reason they got the federal mandates. Because when they did meet and all that meant that people paid money [to the NAACP] and they would have rallies...and that was how they were able to put it in court. Once you put it in court that mandated a lot of things. [The NAACP] was the leader."

Concerned white citizens were also active during this time. A white married couple who taught at Lambuth University called a meeting at their home to which they invited the Lane College vice-chancellor and others. From this meeting, the Civic Action Council of Jackson was formed

in December, 1968. Within 48 hours of the first meeting, a cross was burned in the hosting couple's front yard. Others as a result of their involvement with the committee lost jobs, or were accused of being members of the Communist Party. The volunteer group met for years and was comprised of "businessmen, industrialists, a physician, housewives, clergymen, a dentist, and educators" (CAC document, 1971). The group was particularly concerned with school desegregation which generated a long grueling battle.

Civil rights activists of the era speak highly of the city mayor from 1967 to 1988 and his pro-civil rights stance. He initiated a race relations committee, approaching the new local industrial leaders to participate.

According to respondents closely involved in civil rights activity, ties with powerful newcomer business interests also stimulated change. Plant managers and others following these industries to the area in the 1960s were stunned by the nature of Jackson race relations. Some incoming industries openly deviated from racial norms. In other cases, connections between industry CEOs, associated high ranking business officials and the local political body were quietly effective:

> "I remember the contractor saying to me, 'Hey we're building the plant for you, where do you want your black restrooms and where do you want your white restrooms?' And I said, 'Are you kidding?' He says, 'No. You mean you're going to be different?' I said, 'Yeah. One restroom . . ."

Activists had protested the refusal of local banks to hire

African American banktellers. As a result, three of the four banks agreed to revise their policy, if all would agree to do so. One bank president refused, which prompted the following:

> "I got the chairman of the board of our company. He was coming to town. . . . I said '___, I've got a little favor to ask. . . . I know how you feel about civil rights. Will you have lunch with this bank president . . . he'll listen to you.' There was a little arm twisting when you have that big account at the bank. ___ was not the kind to tell him, 'we're going to move the account.' He just said 'don't you think it'd be in the best interest of this community if we would accomplish this? I don't want to mess with your internal affairs but we've been happy with our plant here and we think others will come, and we'll help to bring others, but we can't bring them in to a community that can't solve its problems.' ___ was gentle. Still happens that way."

Pressure was also placed on the locally-owned newspaper:

> "The Jackson Sun wouldn't print pictures of young couples, engagement pictures, on the social pages. Or if a new baby was born to a black family, or a son serving over in Vietnam, they wouldn't print that. We got them to do that. Went down, took three of the biggest advertisers in town, twisted their arms and said 'they're not going to advertise unless you do it'. . . . "

Activists also approached the public hospital, the street department and health clinics.

Other cases of industrial leaders' intervention in political affairs have occurred. One notable example involved actions to permit liquor sales and liquor by the drink, both politically charged issues but deemed essential for the local economy. As the drive to recruit industry intensified, so too the desire to present Jackson as a

cosmopolitan and progressive city. Entertaining out-of-town executives was difficult without up-scale restaurants. But without a liquor-by-the-drink ordinance, restaurateurs were reluctant to locate in the area. According to one respondent, "The Chamber and the business community recognized that," and so in a move "orchestrated by business leaders in the community," a committee managed to get both referendums on the ballot and they were passed.

The Fruits of the Labor: Changes in City Government After the Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement had galvanized the black community in Jackson. The social movement activity brought changes and forced many issues regarding segregation into the open for the first time. Still, African Americans in Madison County had a lengthy history of litigation over questions of school desegregation and changing the form of city government. Many black residents have said that "every gain made [by the black community] has been in the courts." A court battle that involved Thurgood Marshall was required before school desegregation took place. And the fight to change the three-man form of government took years to resolve.

This significant long-term court battle giving black citizens new political opportunities involved a change in the form of government. Prior to the change:

> "Things just really weren't right . . . At one time, blacks were just afraid to speak up . . . but they finally just decided that we're gonna say something. . . . I think that uprising in the '60s really helped people to speak up. People were afraid to speak up, because, you really didn't know who to speak to . . ."

The desire to change the form of city government was an outgrowth of civil rights activity. The "three man commission" system of government had remained basically unchanged since 1915. The system was seen by the African American community as a major obstacle to black representation, since the probability of electing a black Commissioner-at-large was believed to be nil. After the civil rights movement, many African Americans addressed the lack of a direct voice in the political arena. Black grievances throughout the years had been made known to white power holders through "liaisons," or "point people" within the black community. Prominent spokespersons for the African American community had quietly and subtly made requests, complaints and inquiries one-on-one with powerful white parties. This form of politics did not necessarily mean that issues would be addressed. Such networking was hidden from the general public, from the white community in particular. Yet a long history exists of African Americans speaking to issues of concern in the black community at a time when outspokenness or overt political action would have been dangerous. After the 1960s political activity, African Americans demanded greater democratic participation.

The three-man commission in place since 1915 was powerful, "controlling everything," according to several interviewees. The commission also served as the Jackson School Board and as the Street, and Health and Sanitation departments.

In 1975 Wesley McClure ran for Jackson city Commissioner. He was defeated. He claimed to run for the Commission "with the view that a legal case would subsequently be made" (Jackson Sun 3/12/95). He became one of the original plaintiffs in a court battle to replace the three-man commission system of government. James Buchanan worked with McClure and others in the courts for more than 11 years to establish Jackson's city council form of government; after winning the federal lawsuit in 1988, he subsequently became one of the city's first black officials (Jackson Sun 2/23/95). The court ruled Jackson's "Commission Government" unconstitutional. Elections were held that same year: Brenda Monroe-Moses, Anna Parks-Covington and Buchanan became Jackson's first elected African American city officials.

The Ramifications of the Power Shift: Politics Today

Before the 1989 election of a new mayor and city council, Jackson's political scene was described as a very "closed" with a tightly "closed control group." However, the change opened up the political process and allowed for

the election of nine representatives from nine districts. This signaled to some a "major shift in the allocation of influence in the city," according to one official. This provided opportunities for "new alliances" among the previously disenfranchised Jackson residents and the new power group, created with the ousting of the three-man commission. Many African American residents believe this "provide[ed] visibility in policy making arenas." However, the new charter was written to retain the city mayor's power, according to another respondent:

> ". . . the mayor has too much power . . . the way [the charter is] weighted now. . . . I think it was put together [because of] a fear that maybe too many blacks would get on city council and therefore you need a strong hand . . . to keep these other nine hands contributing, but not much . . ."

One African American woman, active in politics, explained:

> ". . . you have to remember that the former Commissioners had a lot to do with how that charter came out. It wasn't designed for anyone like me to be a part of it. It was supposed to be pretty much just like it was. . . "

Nevertheless, the city council has the power to vote on issues and city business. Ultimately, however the mayor has the power to appoint individuals to key positions. As of 1995, three African American women and six white men made up Jackson's city council. Some of these individuals, and their recent opponents, are employed as assistant high school principals, substitute teachers, owners of funeral

homes, building contractors, managers of service stations.

In addition to the city council, the Madison County Commission is comprised of twenty-five men and two women, who represent ten districts including the city of Jackson. Four members are African American men. The County Commission also has a mayor. Most of the Commissioners are self-employed, small business owners or operators, contractors, farmers, real estate or insurance agents.

> "Collectively, the County Commission's got a lot of power. They're the governing body of this county. . . they've got control of the purse strings . . . they control and appropriate [tax] money. They write the laws for the county, they can decide to build jails, they can purchase ground, they can sell ground, they can give benefits to new industry coming in . . . ."

A consensus among Commissioners is required for any action.

Varying interests and rivalries have resulted in internal battles relating to county and city matters, especially in regard to jointly funded programs. Concerns such as city/county school funding, the public library, or the senior citizen center are joint property of the City Council and County Commission, a highly contentious situation. Highly publicized "squabbles," "turf wars," and a history of contention have been known to paralyze government in debates in these areas, as well as the recent jail issue.

The City Council and County Commission, and corresponding mayors, are the visible power entities for

Jackson and Madison County. Nevertheless, many respondents referred to these entities as working within the "good-ol'-boy network." In this arena, "the moneyed group," the "old wealth" headed by a socially exclusive local elite, still has a significant role in informal decision-making, the arena often being hidden "on the fifth hole at the country club," or "over a drink in the poker room."

Another piece of the powerholders is also more covert. One Jackson Sun editor made the following observation:

> Consider metro Jackson's four most powerful elected/appointed bodies: Jackson City Council, Madison County Commission, Jackson-Madison County School Board and the Jackson-Madison County General Hospital Board. Now consider how many of these 48 people are also top-rank members of Jackson's large corporate executive community. You won't run out of fingers on one hand counting them . . .
>
> (Jackson Sun 9/18/95)

The editor continued to ponder why the elite of the corporate talent, new to the area, was not presently represented in these four panels. In an earlier editorial, he speculated that those making decisions were "a group of political insiders, business honchos and developers of mixed political leanings" (Jackson Sun 5/8/95).

One respondent, active in city politics, remarked: "You will always have economic power. And economic power will preserve its own interest, that's just the way the system works." He explained how "business people" and industry required order and stability to succeed, and preserving that order is a governmental task. However, he continued, the

power lies in who casts the official vote, i.e. City Councilors and County Commissioners. But behind that process, "at some level or other, they will perhaps be influenced by the economic groups and by others who have interests."

Some respondents believe that this is the primary reason the Chamber of Commerce wields significant power. Through the years, and especially since the drive for outside manufacturing investors, the Chamber has evolved into "a very powerful factor in the community," playing an often unseen role in decision-making effecting the city and county. One respondent remarked that the practice of the wealthy running the town had changed in name only: "Now they call it the Chamber of Commerce," she laughed.

The economy of Jackson has undergone significant growth in the last few years, primarily in the northern sections of the city. Recruitment efforts by the Chamber of Commerce and economic development committee have continued to net large industries such as Delta Faucets, Alumax and Kerr and increase the flow of outsiders to the area. Conflict is evident between the old protectors of the status quo, still elected by the community at large, and new movers and shakers, working in official or unofficial capacity behind the scenes. As an editor remarked, "it's a matter of the good old boys versus the better old boys" (Jackson Sun 5/8/95).

Summary

Two economies developed and so, too, did two political entities evolve, one in the white community (the dominant powerholders) and one in the black community. The white power enjoyed open reign. Their position in the economy played a large part in determining who would be political leaders for the area. During the early 1800s, the land owners and planters had tremendous power, owning land, capital and labor. Up to the Civil War, the town of Jackson existed for the purpose of distributing their agricultural products.

The Civil War disrupted this arrangement somewhat, allowing the emergence of a retail and mercantile class. The political arena, which included the city mayor and aldermen, was comprised of bankers, leading businessmen and retailers. As the railroads grew in power, so too did the presence of railroad men in city politics.

More recently, with the influx of national and multi-national industries, corporate and local managers have played significant roles on the political landscape via the Chamber of Commerce. Established since the early 1900s as a powerful player in politics, the Chamber carefully controlled the industrial interests allowed to locate in the area, and decided who would be given the cold shoulder. The

Chamber today is a leading proponent of industrial development and safeguardian of the ideal business climate. The grumbling of today's changing power structure can be seen when interests clash. The "old established money people," the old wealth active in politics throughout the years, are still represented in the system via a cadre of representatives on the City Council and County Commission.

A political system also developed in the black community. This provided a "haven" not present in the rural surrounding counties. At the end of the 1800s, an African American professional class was able to establish in Jackson. There is a growing body of literature on the black "elite"--those in the community occupying status as business owners/operators, educators, ministers, or whose work were afforded some level of comfort and prestige. Reconstruction paved the way for the development of such an elite in urban West Tennessee after the civil war.

In Jackson, the presence of Lane College, the powerful CME Church, black publishing houses, a black medical school, and an assortment of businessmen. During the heyday of the railroad empire, African Americans found employment as engineers, pipefitters and porters. Typically homeowners with stable professional occupations, this segment of the black community saw that their children had educations above average for rural black children, some attending St. Joseph, a private black Catholic elementary school. Lane provided

an atmosphere of exposure to arts and music and drew in other professionals to the area from around the country. Individuals emerged as leaders in the community and they were highly respected and influential within the African American political system.

Perpetuation of a political ideology was possible through the existence of this political system also. Black residents met, talked, and planned at church, through Lane events, or during the everyday business in the community. The community had its own means of communication and indoctrination through such publications as The Christian Index, published by the CME Church. In these ways the community shared information and ideology.

A means by which to deal with grievances in the community was also established, via negotiators. "Liaisons" or "negotiators" moved between the black political system and the dominant white power structure. This became a means of relaying grievances and political action in a non-threatening manner. This method of political action continued through and beyond the Civil Rights Movement era.

The East Jackson community, and the black community in general, changed through the years. With integration, African Americans have located to other neighborhoods throughout the city and county. The East Jackson area today is aging and declining economically, but is fighting to keep the area intact. African Americans are returning home to

the area after a lengthy hiatus in other parts of the country. Economic development has been a focus in the last few years. And the communication structure appears to have survived into the 1990s. A "channel" of communication exists within the black community, hidden for the most part from the white community. "We have several black organizations and we all talk regularly especially when an issue occurs," explained one resident. Many who are members of one or more citizens' group or organizations are also on boards of other organizations, in addition to church activities. With all this cross-networking, ". . . at some point or another we're gonna meet," remarked a member of EJCCC.

However uneven, city and county economic development strategies have brought in a diverse population and outside corporations, those "not a part of the old establishment" who desired a business-friendly climate and politically stable atmosphere. Change has come about in part, due to "economic necessity:"

> "[Large northern industries] are not going to locate in towns . . . that's bigoted. They're going to bring in black managers. . . Do you think Jackson could have the blue chip industries that it's got if it didn't have a progressive attitude, a much more progressive attitude in racial matters?"

In addition:

> "All the other plant managers and their staff that came have stayed. They're the new segment in the community. The outsiders. They're the ones who have changed this balance of natives to outsiders. This has changed the whole complexion of the community [over the last 12-15 years."

These new faces have been actively involved in the political scene, **though not always in a visible way.** Today there exists a more representative government, especially for African Americans, yet in situations where conflict erupts among the political districts, or corporate interests are threatened, those in the background are able to influence decision-making.

This interplay of economics and politics played a key role in the controversy over the proposed siting of the new county jail. As will be apparent in the following presentation of the East Jackson case study, both activists and those in power played a significant role in the outcome of the protest.

CHAPTER V

ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY: THE JAILS OF MADISON COUNTY

Many East Jackson residents were not surprised by the decision to site a county jail in their community. Through the years, African Americans had believed their community unfairly targeted by those seeking to site undesirable industries and facilities. The proposal to site the jail in East Jackson was perceived by African American residents as "business as usual."

The Madison County jail is a 68-bed facility built in 1936. By the early 1970s, county officials were forced to examine possible solutions to overcrowded conditions. One solution involved the building of a new jail, an action that would be a guaranteed political issue. At that time, a special subcommittee formed by the Madison County Board of Commissioners proposed that a new jail be built on top of the Jackson Police Department building. But the Commissioners rejected the proposal. In 1976, the Commissioners again proposed building a 144-bed jail, but a petition killed the project. The jail was again at issue in a 1982 federal lawsuit to ameliorate the living conditions of the inmates, but still no new jail was built.

Another jail committee was established in 1987 which recommended property next to the local penal farm as the site for jail construction. Yet, "[the Commission] promptly

put it on the shelf and didn't do a thing" stated a member of the jail committee. This person believed that the county rejected the proposed 400-bed jail for two reasons. First, the predominantly white Westover community, the site of the penal farm and the proposed jail, protested the choice. Second, as the respondent recalls:

> "They didn't want to spend the money and they realized that building a jail doesn't make any politician more popular . . . these guys just didn't want to touch it. They don't want to tell the community, 'Well I voted to spend $10 million to build a jail, and because of that I'm going to raise taxes 1 to 2 percent.' . . . [Commissioners] **HATE** to raise taxes."

Once the Commissioners had shelved the proposal, the jail issue remained dormant until June 1994. At that point, the catalyst was a federal judge who ordered the county to keep no more than 58 inmates in the current jail. Public support for a new jail was stimulated by several events. First, the Jackson/Madison County area had experienced tremendous population and economic growth over the previous decade with a concurrent increase in the crime rate. Public sentiment was aroused by highly publicized incidents of convicted offenders being released on bail for lack of jail space. Second, a drug sting early in 1994 had netted 126 arrests but jail space was available only for ten. Support for a new jail was further heightened by a brutal murder committed by a convicted rapist released on bail because the jail was filled to capacity. Editors of the local paper demanded action on a new jail.

On July 1, 1994, the Madison County Board of Commissioners met to once again discuss a site for the construction of a new county jail. The Law Enforcement Committee was formed by the Commissioners to address the siting problem. With only one African American member, the committee first proposed building a new jail on the open lawn in front of the Jackson Police Department. A second proposal suggested a piece of county-owned land in the East Jackson community, commonly referred to as the old Union site[8]. Earlier on the day of the Commissioners' meeting, an editorial in the local newspaper, The Jackson Sun, predicted the reaction to the second proposed site: "[the Union] site will probably raise the wrath of many East Jackson residents--something Commissioners are no doubt counting on to pressure the city into giving up its police department property" (7/1/94). The Commissioners did not decide on a location at this meeting. The president of Lane College, a traditionally African American college located four blocks from the Union site, protested the proposal. "We don't intend to sit idly by," he promised (Jackson Sun 7/2/94).

East Jackson is Targeted

On July 5, 1994, the Jackson City Council rejected the Police Department site. According to a reporter in

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[8] Union University, a Southern Baptist-affiliated college, was founded in 1825.

attendance, "in less than half an hour, eyes turned toward East Jackson" (Jackson Sun 7/6/94). African American residents immediately responded. East Jackson community leaders quickly called a press conference following the council meeting. Said one individual,

> "We are the dumping ground for everything that is negative. No longer can we accept the dumping on us because no one else wants it."
> (Jackson Sun 7/6/95)

Many residents, including the County Commissioner of East Jackson, believed the assumption "ridiculous" that Union's old campus was the only alternative site. "There were other properties that the county owned that the jail could have been constructed on," recalled one individual, "it was just the total disregard for the black community when they selected that site." Even at this early date, East Jackson leaders felt the issue was polarizing the Jackson community along three fault lines: east v. north Jackson, city v. county, and white v. black. East Jackson felt unfairly targeted for the facility. Residents "disliked" the "perception of the predominantly minority part of town being seen as a 'dumping ground'" for the entire city, particularly when the northern section of the county had been experiencing tremendous economic prosperity (Jackson Sun 7/10/94). East Jackson residents promised action. Said an African American minister, "You're making a big mistake putting this jail in the middle of this community--take this expert's opinion" (Jackson Sun 7/6/94).

Numerous justifications for the East Jackson site were offered by the Commissioners in the following months. One reason involved the county's ownership of the old Union College site. After Union vacated, other county offices and buildings were moved to the Union College site over the years. Initially, when the county acquired the Union site with a state grant, one member of the county government advocated the development of a "justice complex." His plan failed, but Madison County officials used several of the Union buildings to house the county Sheriff's office and, more recently, the juvenile justice center. One city official recollects that the Union complex quietly "took on a life of its own," before nearby East Jackson residents could object. They were neither aware of these decisions beforehand nor involved in discussions about the use of the site. This casual attitude is suggested in remarks by a juvenile judge: "[Union] is the most feasible place. Once it's built, I don't think they'll even know it's there. It's becoming a government complex now with the sheriff, General Sessions Court and Juvenile Court Services building" (Jackson Sun 7/10/94).

Residents vigorously asserted that the site was a residential neighborhood, not an appropriate area for a county jail. The county mayor countered, "There is no neighborhood," in the vicinity of the proposed site (Jackson Sun 7/6/94). Some argued that the Union site was

appropriate since most of the land was not currently used for any other purpose and, additionally, that a jail would mean economic development for the area. Residents heard rumors that "leading citizens of Madison County" were purchasing property around the site with the hope of developing support services there: law offices, bail bondsmen, eateries ("Southern Communities" 1995). In a comment that infuriated local residents, a Commissioner stated in a Memphis television interview that East Jackson residents should welcome the jail since it would make it more convenient for them to visit their relatives ("Southern Communities" 1995). A local newspaper columnist expressed her opinion that those who pay the most taxes the right to choose the new jail site. According to her, since black residents failed to contribute tax monies because they did not work. It was unfair for them to dictate where service facilities are placed.

But arguments **against** the Union site were equally or more prolific. The site is a spacious green hill covered with large, old trees. Nearby Lane College, established in 1896, regularly holds reunions on the hill. The area is surrounded on two sides by residential housing, on the third side by a small, thriving black business community, and on the fourth by downtown Jackson. Local entrepreneurs believed in investing in their own community and located their businesses there:

> "We need to put our money back in our neighborhood. Young kids need to know that we [African Americans] own this building."

The County Commissioner from the area stated,

> "We're trying to make this a vital area and a jail, regardless of how you structure it, is still a jail. It carries a negative connotation. For the people in that area, they wouldn't feel safe. And the impression it would give younger people would also be negative . . ."
>
> (Jackson Sun 7/10/94)

Residents resented the public perception of East Jackson as a "dumping ground" (Jackson Sun 7/10/94). They felt the jail would defeat their efforts to "improve the image of East Jackson" (Jackson Sun, 7/13/94). Concern was expressed for the large number of children using the T.R. White Sportsplex located directly across the street from the proposed site. The Rothrock Stadium across the street hosts Lane College home football games. The site was also targeted for "playing a focal role" in an Empowerment Zone grant pending for central and East Jackson (Jackson Sun 7/10/94).

East Jackson residents resented being left out of the decision-making process. "The community stepped out and said 'look, we don't need this here for these reasons,'" recalled a member of the citizens' protest group. He remembered that "[the County Commissioners] got more angry and wouldn't even listen" when approached by community residents. Concerned citizens began to regard the issue as one of **justice** and **race**.

Throughout the remaining summer months and early fall of 1994, suggestions for alternative sites were proposed. The city mayor and some others suggested an expansion of the present location rather than constructing a new jail: "It's my opinion the best location for a jail in Jackson and Madison County is right where it is" (Jackson Sun 7/8/94). Another suggestion was the front lawn of the county courthouse. Others pushed for the expansion of the penal farm location. But residents of the predominantly white, working class Westover community objected to the penal farm expansion, claiming they were tired of being dumped on also (Jackson Sun 7/22/94). A petition from the Westover community garnered 75 signatures and that option was dropped.

Mobilization of a Community

Despite vocal opposition and numerous protests, Madison County Commissioners voted 18 to 7 to site the new $10 million, 277-bed jail at the old Union College location in October, 1994. Area residents quickly and vehemently spoke out against the decision. An African American woman began talking with neighbors and other residents. A fellow activist described her activities:

> "___ pretty much on her own stepped forward and started to protest and to say something needs to be done about this. Her first step . . . was to hold a prayer vigil at the site. . . . she worked with a young lady then employed at JONAH, to get flyers and things out. They began to call people

> and this little core group formed and they kind of took off from there. And that's how [the East Jackson Concerned Citizens' Coalition] originally started."

"It was common [African American] folk off the street," that initiated the East Jackson Concerned Citizens' Coalition [EJCCC], stated one member. The group was defined as a grassroots organization, and would later embrace individuals from "all walks of life" and of all racial backgrounds.

> "You had laypeople, you had professionals . . . you had some people who lived in the area, domestic workers and they came out and expressed their views . . . churches were involved . . . local black businesses were involved, especially those businesses in the area . . ."

Many believed that the early days of the group established the tone the organization would maintain:

> "The grassroots entity was **the** entity that made this thing happen, because it was your average Joe off the street, not your big time business owner or large church pastor."

Lane College students were very active in the struggle. The EJCCC also approached a preservation society (Preservation of East Main Street, or POEMS) and several white and black individuals who had spoken out in protest. The goal of the EJCCC was straightforward: to inform the predominantly white Madison County Commission that East Jackson residents would fight the proposal.

The Commission vote was racially polarized. Of the 23 Commissioners, 17 were white and 6 were black. All but two white Commissioners voted for the Union site and all but one

African American Commissioner voted against it.

> "This [Commission] is probably one of the most instrumental bodies in this county in polarizing the race issue. It is a black and white issue because you [Commissioners] make it one."
> (Jackson Sun 10/18/94)

Other residents of East Jackson spoke of a form of government that was "insensitive" to the voices of certain sections of town.

> "Those [Commissioners] are the same good old boys who wanted to give you the dump. Give us Wal-mart, not a jail."
> (Jackson Sun 10/28/94)

> "If they were talking about putting a jail in Cherry Hills or North Jackson[9], every political candidate would be there fighting. What's not good for any other community, is not good for our community."
> (Jackson Sun 10/28/94)

> "The real issue is about respecting a community that is being ignored."
> (Jackson Sun 12/13/94)

> "It is a slap in the face when citizens of any residential area are not apprised of or asked for their input in the building of a jail or any major development of this magnitude."
> (Jackson Sun 1/23/95)

On October 27, 1994, the EJCCC held a rally at the T.R. White Sportsplex, across the street from the proposed site. The rally drew 400 people, according to the local newspaper. Throughout the night, members circulated a petition against the proposed jail siting. Speeches were made, one by a local minister who called for the East Jackson residents to organize:

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[9] A predominantly white neighborhood.

> "We are here because we are tired of being the dumping ground for the county. It's time to let the County Commissioners know that we're going to march around that site until the walls come tumbling down."
>
> (Jackson Sun 10/28/94)

It was announced at the rally that EJCCC had retained the services of a Memphis lawyer.

In early November, yet another location was suggested by a County Commissioner not on the Law Enforcement Committee. This proposal targeted land close to the existing Jackson Police Department. A preliminary investigation of the site was conducted and presented to the entire Commission. Meanwhile, another issue emerged. The old Union College had been a hospital during the Civil War and soldiers at one time were buried on the eastern slope of the hill. These bodies were later moved to Corinth, Mississippi. But, because of this history, laws required an archaeological team be contracted to determine the historical significance of the site.

On November 22, another County Commission vote was taken on the Union site. Forty residents attended the meeting and spoke out against the Union site. Yet, the vote of 16-9 reaffirmed commitment to the site.

Dumping Ground for the City--An Historical Trend?

In the months that followed, East Jackson residents were vocal in their opposition to the jail. But, the local newspaper, still pushing for a new jail, was resigned to the

Union site. A minister, in response to the local newspaper for justifying the Union site, likened the future jail inmates to trash, stating that the Sun was thus "providing a disservice to the community that is served while dressing up garbage and placing cologne on stink" (Jackson Sun 12/13/94).

In January, 1995, the EJCCC filed a lawsuit, citing "extreme constitutional violation" of the civil rights of the neighborhood residents targeted for the jail. EJCCC claimed that the decision to build a jail in the primarily black neighborhood was a form of racism. The key allegations included:

> The decision to put a jail in East Jackson marks the **continuation of a pattern of locating undesirable facilities** and businesses in areas predominantly inhabited by black residents.
>
> . . . The pattern of discrimination can be supported with evidence.
>
> . . . A discriminatory purpose has been one of the primary motivating factors in locating the jail in East Jackson.
>
> . . . The location was accepted without first conducting an environmental impact statement. (Jackson Sun 1/18/95)

"What we did was set up groups of people specifically to go out into the community and really see the community and what's there," explained one participant. Members went through the community noting condition and sites they and other residents defined as "undesirable." Residents listed, among other things, an abandoned dump, factories, a

recycling center, and two Superfund sites. A member concluded:

> "I would say that East Jackson for too long has been a containment zone . . . It's where they keep what they consider their undesirable people and their undesirable by-products."

On January 23, 1995, a six foot high chain-link fence was placed around the site. Construction began even though an injunction hearing was scheduled for the following Monday to determine whether or not to permit construction before the court settled the case. Two days later, six African American city and county officials pledged at a press conference to support the East Jackson protest. Said one city council member, "We commit to do whatever we need to do to resist this arrogant action" (Jackson Sun 1/26/95).

A few days later, on January 27, another anti-jail march and rally were held on the site. An estimated 250 people including 150 Lane College students, marched around the construction site, chanting "No Jail!" Said a local activist present,

> "This [jail] is a repression of our human rights. The County Commission and the media portrays East Jackson as a barren . . . place when 99.9 percent of the people who live here are hard-working, tax-paying people."
>
> (Jackson Sun 1/28/95)

Protesters promised to continue the fight: ". . . they can put a fence up, but we can still go on fighting." Remarked a minister, "This is our neighborhood. It's holy ground." (Jackson Sun 1/28/95). Also present were members of JONAH

(Just Organized Neighborhood Area Headquarters), a local black community organization with branches in several west Tennessee locations. In the mid 1980s, JONAH had prevented a regional hazardous waste facility from being built in nearby Henderson County.

The following Saturday the local NAACP office joined the neighborhood in the legal fight against the jail. The local NAACP president stated:

> "Just as we have had to fight for equal access to education, employment, and housing, our opposition to the new jail in our neighborhood is an extension of our struggle for basic human rights."
> (Jackson Sun 1/29/95)

With increased protest and the pending lawsuit, the issue was transformed into a civil rights issue and the siting decision was deemed a racist act.

> "It appears to be that if you're black, you have to accept whatever is put upon you. That's the way it was years ago."
> (Jackson Sun 1/29/95)

> "This is just a form of racism. Racism is still here."
> (Jackson Sun 1/29/95)

> "Putting that jail there says a whole lot. People aren't concerned about the black community--they don't care how a black man feels."
> (Jackson Sun 2/3/95)

East Jackson residents insisted that this issue echoed racist acts in a county that had historically discriminated against African Americans. One woman felt "her people" were still being abused by those in power:

> "Ask the [county] mayor how he would like for the jail to be in his backyard. This is sophisticated racism. It's '95, not '65, but there's still slavery."
>
> (Jackson Sun 1/29/95)

On January 30, approximately 80 people attended the injunction hearing. The issue was whether or not work on the site should continue before the lawsuit was settled. The plaintiffs cited as reasons for the halting of construction: the racial motivation of the decision; the lack of an environmental impact study; the failure to follow normal decision-making procedures; the residential quality of the neighborhood; and the barring of residents from the decision-making process. The local NAACP president declared that African Americans "have to come to this courtroom to get any justice" (Jackson Sun 1/31/95).

The defendants in the case argued that several white neighborhoods were located equally close to the site. The presiding judge asked for specific evidence of racism in the decision-making, remarking that predominantly middle-class, whites had opposed a new Wal-Mart Supercenter yet been forced to accept it. County Commissioners reported that they were receiving calls all day from those in agreement with the Union jail site and pronounced the proceedings "a waste of time." Several days later the judge refused to halt construction, stating that it would not be in the public's interest to stop the county at this point, citing public safety and the urgent need for the jail. He

substantiated his decision by pointing to the lack of evidence of racial discrimination and the lack-of-proof that the area would be harmed by the jail. He rejected the argument that the area was indeed a residential neighborhood. Although the judge remarked that his decision did not mean EJCCC would ultimately lose their case, the editors of the local newspaper reported that he would hear the civil rights suit.

Members of EJCCC perceived the decision as a disturbing blow. "We thought we had all our pawns in place, but Judge ___ said we didn't have enough evidence to stop it. It gave the county the green light to go on," recalled one member. The struggle subsequently lost momentum. But shortly thereafter, the EJCCC received a boost from a local grassroots neighborhood economic development organization, the East Jackson Economic Development Commission (EJEDC):

> ". . . there were a lot of us with the EJEDC that felt that that fight needed to continue . . . it wasn't planned that way, but what ended up happening is a lot of us who were involved in the Development Commission began to attend those meetings, and to push for reorganization and trying to get that movement going again."

New EJCCC leaders were elected at this point.

Black community leaders called for African Americans in Jackson to stand up "to those forces that oppose the empowerment and survival of our community." They believed the judge was too close to the situation to deliberate in a non-biased fashion. "The community must understand that the

conspiracy to put the jail in East Jackson runs deep in city and county governments and we have few friends." Residents believed that no other clergy or organizations were coming forward to denounce the siting "on moral grounds" and that the black community stood alone (Jackson Sun 2/7/95).

On February 22, Lane students attended a St. Paul CME Church ceremony devoted to "returning strength and dignity to the African American male" (Metro Forum 3/1-7/95). At the end of the ceremony, one student stood, announced a desire to take action, and began marching toward the jail site. About 200 to 300 Lane students followed him, marching in protest down Hays Avenue to the jail site. They peacefully occupied the site for 20-30 minutes, demanding to be heard. The Lane College president arrived and spoke to the students and the police; the students dispersed without arrest. The Lane president congratulated the students for standing up for their beliefs. When some disagreement surfaced as to whether damage had been on the site, he personally paid $900 for a "damaged" gate, and accepted responsibility for the protest. Several male students, calling themselves "The Men of Black Enigma" claimed credit for starting the march.

Numerous white citizens joined in the demand for an alternative site. Many of these residents, including former civil rights activists, felt too much progress in race relations had been accomplished through the years to risk it

now over the jail siting. Their voices joined EJCCC's in calling for a compromise.

Hidden Power Moves and Conflict Divides

On March 3, the county mayor asked several of the Commissioners to consider an alternative site. The city owned property adjacent to the Merry Lane Public Housing Courts, south of the courthouse and on the other side of the major thoroughfare that designates the East Jackson area. The site, now a vacant lot, had been cleared during urban renewal in the 1970s. While the black community's reaction varied, many residents felt the suggestion of a new site to be a sign that some individuals were willing to compromise and discuss an alternative. Some believed a jail could help reduce the crime rate in the housing complex. But some Merry Lane Court residents were opposed to the idea. The County Commissioner representing the area was taken by surprise. He stated:

> "That's my district and I wasn't even notified of it. Residents were not informed. We've got to change the way we do business and get input from every phase of the community. You have to be fair and above-board and not the antics we've been using heretofore . . ."
>
> (Jackson Sun 3/7/95)

At a special meeting of the Law Enforcement and Property committees, discussion centered on the opposition of four Law Enforcement committee members to consideration of a new site. They refused to discuss the possibility of

an alternative site. They refused to change their positions on the matter, especially after investing $50,000 in testing the site. One Commissioner said that he would not be intimidated by "threats" from the black community.

A few days later, the EJCCC held a meeting to determine their position on the Merry Lane Courts site. Activists opposed a jail in any residential neighborhood, black or white, but agreed that the main focus of the fight would remain the East Jackson site. "It would be up to the [Merry Lane] community to decide whether they wanted a jail in their community," stated the group's spokesperson (Jackson Sun 3/6/95). The Commission asked the county mayor to request the land from the city as long as the agreement was unconditional. This location was the sixteenth proposed jail site in 20 years.

The city council voted to offer the land for the new jail on March 7. But on the morning of the vote, the city mayor was contacted by four County Commissioners. "The essence was, 'Get your damn nose out of our business,'" the mayor told the newspaper. The Commissioners continued to threaten: "If you all vote to let the county have it [the Merry Lane site], we'll vote to give it back to you." Another Commissioner remarked that he would not change his position if the county was doing so in response to the protests, stating, "I do resist the pressure of unlawful protests" (Jackson Sun 3/8/95).

Other Commissioners expressed a willingness to change sites, but only with the strong support of EJCCC. EJCCC members therefore announced that they would not take any legal action on the part of Merry Lane Court residents, though the coalition was still divided on what stand to take.

Meanwhile, the county representative for Merry Lane Courts met with residents to work out a plan. He stressed that these residents deserved the "same rights and privileges" as others and he helped devise a plan endorsed by Merry Lane residents. Residents in the public housing complex would be relocated in three to five years. The land would then be deeded to the county for expansion of the jail facility and the Union site would be deeded to the city in return. Most members of the EJCCC endorsed this plan. But some question remained about the logistics of dealing with a federal housing authority.

In the meantime, a third party organized a meeting to help resolve the stalemate. This third party was made up of ministers and individuals from the community and was sponsored by a local Catholic Minority Reconciliation Committee and a community Multicultural Action Team. The plan involved bringing together the Commissioners and members of EJCCC and NAACP. The meeting was held on March 17 at a restaurant in town. The local United Way Executive Director served as moderator. The racially mixed group of

about 50 individuals met and expressed near unanimous consensus for the alternative Merry Lane Court site. However, only six Commissioners attended and only one of those who had previously voted for the Union site.

As the second vote on the jail site neared, EJCCC members feared that there might not be a majority of Commissioners needed to change the jail site location. The local newspaper informally polled the Commissioners: some complained that they were not sure they were hearing the real concerns of East Jackson. The group had installed a new coalition president[10]. Other Commissioners believed they "did [nothing] wrong or out of the way in selecting [the jail site] where we did" (Jackson Sun 3/19/85), and that "the majority of Madison County . . . have [sic] been in support of the Union site" (ibid). The county mayor commented that "some . . . who object to moving from the Union site are some of the most conservative people we have on the Commission" (ibid).

Just prior to the re-vote, the EJCCC was contacted by two "important [African Americans]." Periodically, the group had been approached by some in the community that their struggle was "useless," that "historically in Jackson you can't win." Now these individuals stressed to the group

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[10] The new president was relatively unknown to many white leaders. Although originally from Jackson, he lived in New York for a number of years, returning in 1986 as a small business owner.

that the jail situation had been taken care of, the winning votes were secure and that EJCCC members need not attend the meeting. "We fought and we brought this issue to the forefront," emphasized an EJCCC member, angered at this request. Furthermore, the member continued, "Supposed we did lose and they don't see us [at the meeting] and the black community's going to say, 'Well, they don't care no way,'" and the grassroots momentum would die. The group decided to attend the County Commission meeting. The Commission held firm and on March 20, 1995, the body voted 13-10 against taking the first step in moving the site: approving $30,000 to test the alternative Merry Lane Courts location.

The Commission balked at the testing fee needed to study the Merry Lane Court site. But upon hearing that there were alternative ways to pay for the testing, the Commission voted 13-10 to consider the Merry Lane site if the city of Jackson paid for the testing. The city mayor supported this proposal and with the Commission's unofficial willingness he went about the business of securing the $30,000 needed.

The county Commission was divided. The small group of white, conservative Republican Commissioners refused to waver in their support of the Union site. They resented the interference of the city mayor and city council in the county's political dealings. They questioned the private

sources paying for the testing at the Merry Lane Courts site, claiming the issue had become a "political football." The chair of the Law Enforcement committee, a 77 year old white politically conservative male, was the strongest of Union supporters. He rallied the small group and was very outspoken on the issue:

> "I can tell you one thing, the people in Jackson have had it with these people who asked to move this thing. It's going to be a big backlash if they do it . . . I'm not going to [put the jail in] that rathole down there."
> (Jackson Sun 3/28/95)

> "We feel like it's competitive and we're not going to lay down and say we're going to take it. We're going to fight it because we're in the right."
> (Jackson Sun 3/29/95)

Two pro-Merry Lane Commissioners were threatened by the Chair and his pro-Union supporters who stated that another proposal to move the jail site to their district would be made if the jail site was moved to Merry Lane Courts. When asked if this was a threat, the Chair of the Law Enforcement committee replied, "If you want to look at it as such, it might be."

The Economic Factor

Some Commissioners alleged that the Chamber of Commerce was lobbying for the site change. This small group of Commissioners threatened to pull county funding from the Chamber if this was the case. Although Chamber officials denied the accusation, some respondents claimed that the

Chamber had been involved, albeit on a quiet, individual basis:

> "[The jail issue was] not only hurting us, [it was] hurting Jackson, and I don't believe Jackson wants to send that image, and the mayor indicated that. He supported us . . . so did the Chamber, but the Chamber had to be more reserved . . . That was big business people that supported us. The Republican party had scrambled, part of them was supportive and part of them wasn't. Why? Because the Republicans have big money, they got whole lots of people coming in here . . . [the jail issue] was hurting them . . ."

The chairman of the Chamber's board of directors stated that, while the Chamber had no official position on the issue, individual members were quite possibly acting as private citizens. He stressed that the jail issue had not been discussed in meetings and remarked, "We don't see it as a business issue" (Jackson Sun 3/29/95). The president of the Chamber also denied any role in the jail siting process.

The city mayor personally contracted, as a private citizen, to have the site tested and relied on a group of seven business leaders to raise the funds. Those raising the money were: the president of Metro Waste Management recycling company and chairman of the NAIA local tournament committee[11]; manager of JC Bradford and Company, stockbrokers; president of Touchstone Company; owner of Dugger Business Forms; a dentist and former Commissioner from East Jackson; owner of River Oil Company and co-host of

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[11] There were rumors that the EJCCC would boycott and protest at the NAIA tournament, though this did not happen.

TRTV's[12] "Let's Talk"; and the vice-president of First Tennessee National Bank in Jackson. The arrangement was declared legal by the Municipal Technical Advisory System, though some wondered what suspicions this action might raise. Those donating said they did so "out of a charitable sense of what was best for the community in relieving strife over the jail issue" (Jackson Sun 3/31/95). The mayor refused to provide a list of contributors because some had asked to remain anonymous (Jackson Sun 4/5/95). The money was raised from approximately 40 to 50 people in the area.

Shortly thereafter, the Law Enforcement Committee scheduled a pro-Union rally for "the people who want to build the jail at Union" and "haven't been heard." About 30 people representing the "silent majority" came to the meeting March 30. The local newspaper's editorial page editor published the following shortly after this meeting:

> "The Madison County jail debate comes down to this: White County Commissioners don't want to give the impression they're being pushed around by black people. . . . the Commissioners don't want to be perceived as pawns of the protesters. They don't want anybody to think Lane College students waving signs or the marchers changed their minds. They have made the jail site issue one of win or lose. They don't want to lose."

Meanwhile, residents at Merry Lane Courts announced a willingness to accept the jail, if a list of 10 issues would be addressed in exchange. These issues included a request to widen a street, include a bus stop, and hire area

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[12] A community access cable station.

residents to work in the jail when completed. The EJCCC agreed to drop the lawsuit if the jail site were changed. Meanwhile, the group was granted 60 additional days to reply to a Madison County motion to dismiss the lawsuit filed in January. The group began to solicit donations from local citizens and churches to pay mounting legal fees.

On April 14, the results of the testing were made public. There were no environmental risks present at the Merry Lane Courts site. Some Commissioners were happy and the EJCCC was "cautiously optimistic." Letters to the editor during this time echoed the sentiment. One letter written by the president of the Community Multicultural Action Team and minister of the First Presbyterian church, endorsed the new site and added,

> . . . We affirm the people of East Jackson in their reasoned attempts to have the jail located outside their community. To change the site would not be capitulation, but recognition of the wishes of a large segment of county residents. We urge Commissioners to move the site to Merry Lane as an act of respect, cooperation and unity.
> (Jackson Sun 4/14/95)

Yet, the chair of the Law Enforcement Committee stated, "That's not going to have a bit of effect on us at all because we're not interested in the site to start with" (Jackson Sun 4/14/95). A few letters to the local newspaper questioned the numerous re-votes and the funds already spent on the Union site.

Support for the alternative Merry Lane Courts site came from citizens of both political parties. The local

Republican Party, which dominated the Commission after the August election, was not unanimous on the issue; nine of the thirteen Republican Commissioners would vote to keep the Union site. Some leading Republicans in the county were "disappointed," one leading Republican stating that "I'm not going to hold it against them. I will say I don't feel the same about them [the pro-Merry Lane Republican Commissioners] as I used to" (Jackson Sun 4/15/95).

April 17, in a close 13-12 decision, the Commission voted again to keep the Union site for the proposed jail. The Commission meeting was "hot-tempered," with "impassioned and surly debate in which Commissioners preached, interrupted each other and shot remarks back and forth" (Jackson Sun 4/18/95). The pro-Union supporters expressed worry about liability over possible hazardous waste. They complained that the streets in the area were too narrow. The Commissioners criticized the lack of comparable assessments for the two sites. They were also concerned that even if EJCCC dropped the lawsuit, the residents of Merry Lane Courts might file suit on their own behalf.

One Commissioner from an adjoining district and not originally a member of the pro-Union committee stated that "pressure" turned him away from the alternative site. He said that "several elderly women" and "industry leaders" had called asking for his support of the Merry Lane site. He stated, "Frankly, I think that's extortion and the wrong

kind of pressure" (Jackson Sun 4/18/95). He later reported that his decision was based on rumors of "violence and bloodshed" if the alternative site was not chosen. After some disagreement over the origins of this rumor, the Commissioner later recanted, saying his decision was based on the "undesirable" nature of the Merry Lane site. The Commissioner received the following response in a letter to the editor from one of the "elderly women":

> "Maybe I am wrong, but all these years that's how I thought your elected officials represented you, by listening to your views. I cannot see how he felt pressured. I have known ___ since he was a child and have worked on several civic endeavors with his mother. He sought my support and I felt comfortable in expressing my feelings to him. . . . If Commissioner ___ cannot listen to the concerns of his constituents, then he is in the wrong place."
>
> (Jackson Sun 4/25/95)

The pro-Union supporters were brazen in expressing their feelings about their victory. Said the chair of the law enforcement committee and key opposition to the site change, "I guess we showed 'em who had the power . . . It's time for them [the city] to run their own business and for us to run Madison County's . . . we've got the votes now to do what we need to do and they better recognize that" (Jackson Sun 4/19/95). He felt that the county had been mistreated, but that "the people spoke tonight . . . It wasn't the money people, it wasn't the big wheels. . . ." (ibid.) He caustically told the East Jackson residents, "We don't always get what we want in this world" (ibid.).

Adding insult to injury, the Commission reconsidered prosecuting the Lane students who had protested on the Union site in late February. Twenty students had been positively identified from videotapes of the rally. The damage to the fence had been lowered from the original $800 to $485. Said one of the pro-Union supporters pushing for prosecution, "If I went to one of these individuals homes, and kicked the fence down and was screaming and cursing [they would prosecute]" (Jackson Sun 4/18/95).

The Community Reacts

Attendance at the following EJCCC meeting was low, with only 17 people attending to discuss alternative action. They began selling bumper stickers: "No Jail in East Jackson!" to cover legal fees. The group had called off all protests prior to the meeting, but vowed to carry out the federal lawsuit. "The only thing that has ever been a benefit in our community is the courts. That's nothing new for us," remarked the EJCCC vice-president (Jackson Sun 4/19/95).

Jackson residents' reaction to the vote was immediate. A conservative Republican columnist criticized the pro-Union Commissioners in their posturing, believing such action not in the best interests of the party (Jackson Sun 4/21/95). Another columnist commended the few pro-Merry Lane Republican Commissioners who withstood party pressure:

> "It is even sadder that [the Commissioners] felt the need to show blacks that we are relatively powerless, because that is something that blacks already know."
>
> (Jackson Sun 4/22/95)

The local newspaper's assistant editorial page editor, an outspoken critic of city-county government, was forthright in his retort:

> This is one time I'm proud to be an outsider in the Jackson-Madison County community. . . . The only thing missing from last Monday's Madison County Commission meeting to set it apart from the 1950s was the presence of hoods and white sheets . . . . It is a pitiful curse that at a time when Jackson-Madison County is exploding with growth, prosperity and new potential, the community is saddled with a good-old-boy, racist political leadership . . .
>
> (Jackson Sun 4/21/95)

An African American minister stated in his column:

> "They would rather keep their pride and not use wisdom when making decision that impact the total county. The 13 [pro-Union Commissioners] come from an era of shortsightedness, racism, bigotry and are really anachronisms. The only time we know there is a County Commission is when it votes on issues like this . . . . If there is any hope, it is that this issue caused some people and groups that were not talking to each other to begin to have dialogue and join hands. A movement of good intentions was started and that good will not be defeated by forces who lack the sophistication to truly lead this country . . .
>
> . . . The fight must continue on grounds of right and wrong."
>
> (Jackson Sun 4/22/95)

Shortly thereafter, the local newspaper examined the merits of a metro form of government for Jackson-Madison County. The paper's stated purpose in covering such a topic was to "inform the community and to lead the way in

reopening debate about what is the most effective and efficient way to provide services and manage continued growth of Jackson-Madison County into the next century." (Jackson Sun 4/23/95) The jail issue had resurrected this issue occasionally debated since 1973.

The jail debate raged on, as city elections loomed in May. Among the candidates for mayor was the Commissioner from the East Jackson district. In a surprising turn, the chair of the pro-Union contingent announced that he, too, would be a write-in candidate for city mayor. He admitted his chances were "slim" but said he would count each vote as "a pat on the back" for his adamant stance not to move the location of the proposed jail. "My telephone has rung off the wall . . . 80 percent of the county agrees with me," he claimed (Jackson Sun 4/25/95). After the election results were tallied, he had garnered 160 votes of the 6,111 cast, only 3% of the total vote. His highest number of votes (35) from the 13 precincts came from the South Side precinct, a district 95% white, yet he did not do well in other predominantly white precincts. The East Jackson Commissioner amassed 1,130 votes. The incumbent city mayor won handily, with 77% of the vote. The African American voter turnout was stronger than in November, due in part to the jail issue.

Late in April, the local paper published an article about a community in West Virginia concerned over a prison

closing in their neighborhood. According to the article, the community's worries didn't begin until the closing was announced. "With a prison we have no problems. It's the safest neighborhood in the state," remarked one ex-prison guard interviewed. "So many people think that because you live across the street from a prison that you're in extra peril," he continued, but that if prisoners escape, "they sure don't want to stay to pet the bloodhounds" (Jackson Sun 4/30/95). The African American newspaper ran quite a different story a week later. A report examined nearby Gibson County's jail that had recently expanded, forcing many nearby residents to relocate. The article reported on other cases where residents were "fighting to stop the injustices of higher ranking officials in their communities," (Metro Forum, 5/3-9/95) by protesting a proposed jail siting or expansion. In one community, local and state government officials had planned to site a maximum security prison a few yards from homes and a school. The report stated that, in this case, those siting the prison did not think the community of "poor, elderly, and children" would fight. Closer to home, one person interviewed in the article denounced Madison County Commissioners for "misusing their power" under the "good-old-boy system" (ibid).

One Last Attempt

During the first week of May, a petition to move the jail site to Merry Lane circulated among County Commissioners. Two originally pro-Union Commissioners initiated the petition, claiming to have changed their minds. In order to resurrect the issue, those who voted for the Union site were required to call a special meeting. One Commissioner claimed that he had rethought his vote and believed it in the best interest of the public to get the jail built as quickly as possible--by dropping the lawsuit and changing to the Merry Lane site.

The pro-Union spokesman responded by saying, "I think it's a power play again just like they've been pulling . . . we'll just see who wins" (Jackson Sun 5/2/95). He and the Law Enforcement Committee rushed to open bids for excavation and leveling work at the Union site, even though the fourth re-vote was scheduled in four days. On Friday, the $47,100 bid was awarded, although not binding until reviewed and signed by county leaders. The pro-Union supporters urged the county mayor to quickly sign the bid.

The newspaper described the meeting as comprised of two groups:

> . . . one side had rich Republicans and working class people, ministers, blacks and whites. The other side had conservative 'little people' fighting what they saw as a power move by the elite. . . . the group that came together to fight the jail issue was unusual and broad . . . a biracial group that spanned the community. . . . on the other side, the feelings were just as

> intense that moving the jail because of the lawsuit would be wrong . . ."
> (Jackson Sun 5/9/95)

Pro-Union forces attempted to stall the proceedings. They enlisted two women from the Merry Lane Residents Association voicing opposition to the jail. An ex-Commissioner "and friend of the Commission" filibustered for an hour by reading passages from Robert's Rules of Order. Afterward, the County Commission's lawyer determined that no laws had been broken in calling for the re-vote (since none existed), nor was the Commission in violation of the Rules of Order. After two hours, the Commissioners who called the special meeting made a motion to move the site. The Commission voted 16-9 in favor of building the jail at the Merry Lane Courts site. The crowd, though pleased, was quiet and reserved in their response. The adamant pro-Union site supporter would only say, "It's not over . . . They [supporters] know I'm not dead yet" (Jackson Sun 5/9/95).

Merry Lane residents announced the next day that they would fight the decision, although it was unclear just how many residents were actually opposed. The EJCCC claimed to have met and discussed the decision with the residents and arrived at an understanding. The group accused the staunch pro-Union leader of "muddy[ing] up the water." The Merry Lane residents admitted that he had encouraged them to fight the move, saying, "Evidently he is set on helping us because

he did invite us to speak [at the commission meeting]" (Jackson Sun 5/10/95).

The decision to move the jail site was a victory for the EJCCC. On May 6, the US District Court Judge officially dismissed the EJCCC lawsuit against the County Commissioners. The EJCCC had no objections.

However, the matter of prosecuting the Lane student protesters persisted. On May 15, the Commissioners voted to charge 17 students with criminal trespassing, but not vandalism. No students could be identified with actually damaging the gate. "[W]hat they did was wrong. They need to pay the consequences," stated one Commissioner (Jackson Sun 5/16/95). If convicted they faced 30 days in jail and $50 fines. The president of Lane urged the students to appear in court on June 29, and eleven students did, pleading guilty to trespassing, a misdemeanor charge under the expungement law, and paying fines and court costs totaling $158 each.

No lawsuit had been filed by the residents of Merry Lane Courts as of June, 1996.

Summary

Remarked the vice president of academic affairs at Lane College,

> "The momentum has begun in this truly 'grass roots' initiative. Now people of all races and backgrounds who care about this community's

> continued prosperity should join the effort and work toward this common goal."
>
> (Jackson Sun 6/25/95)

And this has in fact occurred. The EJCCC became instrumental in focusing attention on the site. The group evolved from a single-issue organization into a "positive" force in the community. Members actively worked toward ways to revitalize East Jackson and in early Summer, 1996, helped establish "The Village," a multi-use research and community center on the Union site.

The new county jail will be sited next to Merry Lane Courts, a predominantly black public housing complex.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. First, I analyze the decision to build a county jail in East Jackson as a case of environmental injustice. Then, I show how the enhanced resource mobilization model can be useful in analyzing this case study. Data were presented in the previous two chapters in the form of an historical analysis of the political economy of the area and case study of the jail siting issue. The economic, political and racial themes in these two chapters reveal a pattern in race relations that led to present day decision-making. In this chapter, I draw these themes together by presenting the historical, economic, political, and racial trends in the area, the demographics of East Jackson, and a comparison of East Jackson to the overall issue of environmental justice. Finally, I assess the utility of the enhanced resource mobilization model for this research.

The Argument for Injustice

East Jackson residents argued that the proposal to site the new county jail in their neighborhood was racist and unjust. They believed their community to be unfairly targeted for an undesirable facility because of their perceived lack of power to prevent such a decision and

because of past racially motivated decisions. Was the County Commission's attempt to site the jail in East Jackson a case of environmental injustice?

Dealing with the waste: the issue of environmental injustice

Classism and racism conjure images of institutional discrimination that can be seen throughout society. A form of institutional discrimination receiving attention today has an environmental aspect not normally found in discussions of race and economics.

This recently recognized form of discrimination concerns the disposition of the by-products of economic production: who must deal with the waste? Just as the benefits of economic production are not shared equally, neither are the costs, manifested in the pollution resulting from production processes. Environmental injustice has been defined in numerous ways but primarily as the "unequal burden of pollution and toxic waste [and other undesirable facilities] placed on poor and minority communities" (Camia 1993, pg. 2257). This form of discrimination derives from patterns of decision-making that benefit some at the expense of others. The consequence of such discriminatory decision-making processes is disproportionate exposure to environmental risks.

According to theorists working with the topic of **racial**

formation, the more blatant, observable system of racial discrimination has "mutated" (Winant 1994; pp. 125-129) in the United States since the passage of civil rights legislation in the 1960s. As Winant states,

> The enactment of civil rights laws meant that the state officially rejected the norms and values of white supremacy. But it did not mean that long-standing racist practices, often informal or even unconscious, would cease. It did not mean that racist attitudes had disappeared. . . . For the post-civil rights era, the sources of racial inequality would be far more dispersed.
> (1993, pp. 125-126)

Racial hegemony, writes Winant, replaces the old means of racial domination with co-optation of a black middle class and a pluralistic form of democracy that preached of an open system whereby every African American's "fate was totally in their own hands" (ibid pg. 126). In addition, institutional discrimination that was once "direct" in the United States has been made illegal, forcing discrimination to take indirect and therefore more covert forms.

Environmental analysts might argue that environmental racism, or "the siting of a disproportionate number of the nation's industrial and waste facilities in or near minority residential areas," (Petrikin 1995, pg. 7) is one example of this more subversive domination. Those seeking to site undesirable facilities chose communities they believe would not resist such decisions: African-American and other communities of color. Such residents typically lack the political representation and the resources needed to combat

the more powerful interest groups, political leaders, business leaders, and other outside investors. Consequently, they are not active in the decision-making arena. Even governmental environmental agencies may, as Winant suggests, "retreat behind an official policy--or facade--of race neutrality," (1994, pg. 128) by using "objective" impact studies, risk analyses, or other quantitative technological wizardry in site selection and approval (see Szasz 1994). Those making siting decisions often remark that race played no part in the decision-making, but rather "good science" proved this location most suitable for the landfill, hazardous waste facility, or prison. This indirect form of racism is difficult to pinpoint.

The patterns of environmental injustice vary. In some cases, environmental injustice is the result of a history of economic development activity. The residential communities of people of color today were once white neighborhoods whose residents worked in the nearby polluting factory. Housing and industry developed together but whites were eventually able to migrate to better neighborhoods. Non-white residents were less mobile due to poverty or housing discrimination. A second pattern of environmental injustice occurs where housing for minority residents is built near existing toxic hazards because of lower land costs. Finally, other cases of environmental injustice derive from

industries being deliberately sited in those residential areas with little power to prevent it. Or, as suggested above, environmental injustice may result from a "neutral" siting policy, or procedure, that identifies the characteristics of the land as "suitable" for such a facility (Austin and Schill 1994, pg. 9).

Beginning in 1978 with the revelations about Love Canal, citizens across the United States became aware of environmental problems in their own communities, problems that were not easily addressed by lobbying Congress. Love Canal perhaps is the most frequently cited example of a working class or lower income neighborhood forced to contend with the by-products of industrial production and regulatory failure to enforce existing laws. In 1982, citizens from Warren County, North Carolina, a predominantly African American county and the poorest county in the state, faced arrest for protesting the dumping of PCB in their community (Ferris and Baker 1995). In a time of unprecedented production of hazardous/toxic waste, regulatory action was failing. Szasz offers two explanations for this regulatory failure. First:

> . . . problems of bureaucratic organization and administration and [second] the impact of strategic resistance by regulated industry. . . (Szasz 1994, pg. 33)

Safeguards for the pollution industries had been imbedded in the regulations; due process and procedure made regulation at best slow and time consuming. Second, large

regulated industries were well-equipped with the resources--legal, technical, and financial--needed to withstand a long and tedious battle with regulatory agencies and others who might contest their business as usual (ibid, pg. 34). As a result, the system of environmental oversight bogged down. The situation worsened in the 1980s, with the Reagan administration's dismantling and weakening of the already ineffectual agencies. Many of the accomplishments of the modern environmental movement were effectively taken back by the administration (Szasz 1994).

The current grassroots environmental movement has been attributed to the practice of "decentralized siting" of hazardous facilities (Szasz 1994). Developers faced mobilizing citizens' groups individually, a type of "community-by-community confrontation" (Szasz 1994, pg. 36) over the proposed siting. Residents in different areas mobilized around their local situation. As a result, each group believed it stood alone in the battle against toxic facilities. Residents became less confident in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) in the face of lax enforcement of existing facilities; this nonchalance on the part of RCRA stimulated the growth of grassroots organizations. Thus poor implementation and lackluster performance of the new regulatory design of the toxic waste industry resulted in opposition and citizen protest at the grassroots level (Szasz 1994, pp. 36-37).

As the grassroots groups grew in number and began networking, community residents became more aware of pollutants and toxins in their lives. Residents learned of others involved in protests over land use decisions. This spurred mobilization at the local level. The focus of movement activity shifted as the number of grassroots movement organizations grew. Conservation and preservation were not key elements in the grassroots ideology, but rather "land use, social impact, human health,"--issues not being addressed by the national environmental movement (Szasz 1994, pg. 40). Unlike the national movement, grassroots movements responded to the ongoing contamination of communities (Edelstein 1988; Kroll-Smith & Couch 1991; Norris & Cable 1994) or to proposed sitings of hazardous waste facilities or other locally unwanted land uses (LULU) such as prisons, airports, or power plants (Lake 1987). The grassroots movement was "sporadic and isolated" before 1978, but after 1980,

> [l]ocal hazardous waste protest groups formed with increasing frequency. Groups began to assist each other. Soon more permanent bonds were forged. In a mere decade, a complex social movement infrastructure was built. Ideologically the movement grew more and more radical.
>
> (Szasz 1994, pg. 69)

The environmental justice movement differs from the national environmental movement since the latter is comprised of working class men, women and people of color. Leadership emerged from the grassroots; activists are

typically volunteers rather than paid professionals. The goals and basic ideologies also differ. The environmental justice movement focuses on the threat to human life--specifically the health of family and community. In contrast, national organizations have placed their energies in legislative reform, working within the system (Cable & Cable 1995).

Citizens mobilize and question the "legitimacy" of an accepted "democratic ideology," and "traditional cultural values" (Cable & Cable 1995, pp 103-104) which promises protection from harm. Grassroots activists re-examine the power relationships between economic and political entities. They scrutinize environmental protection agencies and traditional values, perceiving government as the agent of the powerful. The normal routine of power relationships' "business as usual" is questioned. Self-education frequently leads to the **perception of injustice.**

From a basic concern for human welfare and the questioning of industry's free-hand, activists begin analyzing class inequalities. Environmental action is an awareness-building activity and leads many to question and analyze systemic patterns of economic and political power in society and the inequalities that result. From this point, the concept of **environmental justice** is born, and

> . . . refers to the belief that both environmental benefits and environmental costs should be equally distributed in society, and that corporations

> should be obligated to obey existing laws, just as individuals are so obligated.
> (Cable & Cable 1995, pg. 107)

In addition, environmental justice encompasses more than this concept of environmental equity, that being the "equal protection of environmental laws" for all citizens (Bryant 1995, pg. 5). Environmental justice involves overall quality of life, controlled by "democratic decision-making and personal empowerment," a condition of multi-dimensional well-being for residents and community (ibid, pg. 6).

Areas with a history of environmental degradation are targeted for further exploitation. Decision-makers see these areas as lacking the resources to protest, a sure bet for siting a facility because the community will not be likely to protest. Vulnerable communities are lower income neighborhoods, with "older people, people with a high school education or less" and people of color (Pardo 1990, pg. 1).

The site distribution of prisons and jails also varies by race and income. Construction of prisons and jails has increased tremendously since the War on Crime began in the 1980s. New prison construction is either planned or underway in a majority of states in this country (Carlson 1995, pg. 189). Prisons have generally been defined by the general public as "undesirable industries," (Carlson 1995, pg. 189). Jail sitings have not been viewed in an environmental justice context even though the patterns of

siting decisions appear similar to those in the siting of hazardous facilities. In other words, the "practice that has fit the politics of least resistance" (Carlson 1995, pg. 189) exercised in the siting of pollution industries has been deployed in the siting of prisons and jails.

The rationale for siting toxic and hazardous waste facilities is used to site jails and prisons. One documented case involves a community in East Los Angeles, California. In March, 1985, the state of California initiated plans to site a state prison in Los Angeles county. The targeted area was within a mile of the Boyle Heights neighborhood, a predominantly Mexican-American, low income, Catholic community. No environmental impact study was conducted and no public hearings were held. Residents only heard of the proposed prison after the decision had been made. However, residents mobilized quickly to form "Mothers of East Los Angeles."

> By summer 1986 the community was well aware of the prison site proposal. Over 2000 people, carrying placards proclaiming "No Prison in ELA," marched from Resurrection Church in Boyle Heights to the 3rd Street bridge liking East Los Angeles with the rapidly expanding downtown Los Angeles. This march marked the beginning of one of the largest grassroots coalitions to emerge from the Latino community in the last decade.
>
> (Pardo 1990, pg. 2)

The prison siting was not the first instance of unwanted land use decisions impacting east Los Angeles. The majority of the group's members had been relocated at least once for a freeway. Pardo elaborates:

> The Mexican American community in East Los Angeles, much like other minority working-class communities, has been a repository for prisons instead of schools, hazardous industries instead of safe work sites, and one of the largest concentrations of freeway interchanges in the country, which transports much wealth past the community. . . . Increasing environmental pollution resulting from inadequate waste disposal plans and an out-of-control "need" for penal institutions to contain the casualties created by the growing bipolar distribution of wages may not be limited to the Southwest.
>
> (1990, pg. 5)

The Madison County jail siting incident in Jackson, Tennessee is an example of environmental injustice as the result of historical political and economic development patterns.

Most of the East Jackson community of today was once a white working class neighborhood employed by the nearby Gulf and Mobile railroad industry. Housing and railroad developed together but whites eventually moved to other neighborhoods with the decline of the railroad empire, leaving behind a Superfund site (the Inselin Yards), an abandoned garbage dump and an expanding industrial park. When the predominantly white Baptist college, Union, relocated north of the city due to an increasing African American presence, so too did the remaining white residents. People of color were less mobile due to impoverishment worsened by the economic downturns of the 1920s and the Great Depression. This poverty, coupled with discriminatory housing practices greatly limited options available to the black community. The white flight opened the area to black

immigration.

In the case of the Fite's Bottom ghetto, impoverished, lower income and working class blacks employed in less prestigious, more manual labor-intensive jobs lived close to their work sites, the Creosote plant (now a Superfund site) and a sawmill. Conditions in the area were substandard by all accounts, with substandard living conditions and little or no running water indoors. Much of the property was owned by prominent and powerful individuals from the white community who charged rent on a weekly basis and who refused to renovate or refurbish the housing. Only when plans for constructing a highway by-pass emerged did the owners agree to sell. The plans to build a new Civic Center and main post office stimulated urban renewal projects in the old South Jackson business district.

The second situation qualifies as a case of environmental injustice because housing for minority residents was built near existing toxic hazards due to lower land cost. Cheap housing was made available to those working nearby and "company town" conditions prevailed. The decision to raze south Jackson and Fite's Bottom was met with resentment by some residents who were not involved in the decision-making process. The indignation, in part, was due to fear of moving into the Merry Lane housing projects built in 1937. The question whether to continue with urban renewal was decided with an at-large referendum. The vote

favored of urban renewal. Residents were relocated, many to the East Jackson area. Others scattered to areas allowing black residents. The community was not relocated as a whole. As one individual remembers,

> "It really changed the whole complexion of the black community because, well, they just had to get out. You had to move out. There really wasn't much of a plan [for relocation]. It was a very difficult time for blacks in the city to relocate because there was a limited number of housing within their income."

Therefore, much of the environmental degradation in the African American community occurred prior to black occupation, yet institutional racism taking indirect forms determined the availability of housing and the location of that housing for most of the African American population. Until recent history, only a few areas within the city were open for housing to African Americans. Recently African Americans have moved north of the city, to the more affluent, predominantly white neighborhoods being constructed today. But the East Jackson census tracts around Lane College are primarily African American, the area targeted for the new county jail.

Socio-Demographic Profile of the Area

Most of East Jackson lies in a low income district of the city, according to U.S. Census data and the Jackson Regional Planning Commission (1992). The East Jackson Economic Development Commission defines East Jackson as the

area bordered by North Parkway to the north, Highland Avenue to the west, College, Royal and Magnolia streets to the south, and the city limits to the east. This area falls within Census Tracts 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 11. Of these, all but Tract 4 are designated low income. The proposed Union jail site is in Census Tract 9, surrounded by tracts 5, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

As Table 1 shows, per capita income and median household income for tracts 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11 are far below the city average.

Table 1: Per capita and median income, and percentage living beneath the poverty level, Jackson, Tennessee

	per capita income	median household income	percentage beneath poverty level
Tract 4	$10,891	$21,742	16.6%
*Tract 5	$4,921	$9,285	50.7%
*Tract 8	$5,935	$7,991	54.6%
***Tract 9**	**$5,656**	**$11,714**	**38.4%**
*Tract 10	$5,252	$12,279	40.7%
*Tract 11	$6,066	$10,847	39.6%
Tract 14.01	$8,890	$17,721	17.3%
Tract 16.01	$15,887	$36,586	5.4%
Jackson city	$11,268	$21,063	21.0%

The percentage of individuals below the poverty level living in these tracts is much higher than for Jackson in general. When compared to the new growth area (Tract 16.01) in the

northern part of the city, the bipolar socio-economic factors are clearly visible.

When examined by race, the portrait is even more revealing. In tract 5, African American households make up 91% of the population. Of those households averaging less than $5,000 per year, 98% are African American. Fifty-five percent of all African American households in this tract average less than $10,000 per year, compared with 21.6% of all white households. Over 91% of female-headed households with children under the age of 5 live below the poverty level. The unemployment rate for Tract 5 is 11.5%.

In tract 8, 68% of all households are African American. Fifty-seven percent of all black and 55% of all white households average less than $10,000 per year. The unemployment rate for Tract 8 is 15.4%. In Tract 9 (88% African American), Tract 10 (83% African American) and Tract 11 (100% African American) the same holds true. Of these three tracts, 43% of all white households average less than $10,000 per year, compared to 44% of black households. In Tract 11, an entirely black census tract, 85% of all households earn less than $25,000 per year; the unemployment rate is 17.3%.

To summarize: the tracts in close proximity to the proposed jail site suffer from above average unemployment rates, low per capita income, and high percentages of poverty among female-headed households. These are older

sections of town, with older housing and higher percentages of rental property. Today, the East Jackson community is struggling economically. The tracts within the community have the highest poverty rate and highest unemployment rate of any in the city.

Based on this evidence, the proposed siting of a county jail in this community is an example of environmental racism. Yet, patterns of race relations throughout the years laid the groundwork for the decision. The evolution of the political economy of this area sheds more light on this phenomenon.

Historical Trends: Economic, Political, and Racial

Based solely on the demographic evidence, the proposal to site the jail East Jackson is a case of environmental injustice. But to understand this decision more thoroughly, it is important to examine the long history of decision-making leading up to that proposal.

White domination, grounded in the slave-based economy, can be traced to the early 1800s. Later, the political structure that developed during the Jim Crow years with the three-man Commission protected positions of power and economic interests. Exclusion of African Americans from the decision-making arena has always been an important mechanism in maintaining white hegemony through the years. African Americans had little democratic voice in the white political

power process, where decisions impacting the community were often made.

With the proposed Madison County jail, County Commissioners were forced under a federal order to build a new facility because of overcrowding. When attempts to site the jail in the white working class neighborhood of Westover drew protest, the Commission targeted a low income African American community. The decision was made without input from residents in East Jackson. As one city official stated, "The purpose of the [siting] process is to legitimate the decisions." The Commission first made the decision to locate the facility, then followed the protocol for the siting. By this time, considerable money and effort had been invested in the East Jackson site. The jail proposal occurred relatively quickly and African American County Commissioners were caught off-guard. As one official explained, black politicians did not have time to accrue "debts" and "call favors" politically to avoid the decision which were standard political practices among the Commissioners.

Residents were outraged that their initial protests went unheeded by the County Commission. A small group of County Commissioners refused to discuss the issue with residents, stating publicly that they would not submit to pressure from the black community. Members of the Law Enforcement committee asserted that they had made the

decision "objectively," based on numerous criteria, one being that the county owned the land. Residents were barred from a public forum when County Commission meetings were held at inconvenient times for most working people.

Residents, however, believed the form of city government to be more open and representative than in the past. Residents felt they had a voice via local, elected representatives. This allowed for true grassroots activity to emerge. Citizens believed they could approach the political system openly through protest as a result of the change in city government. JONAH, a rural citizens' coalition, had been able to organize in Jackson in 1989 because of this more open political system.

Residents and black leaders in the community defined the proposal to site the jail in their neighborhood as racist and morally unjust. Young black activists who valued a more participatory democracy returned to Jackson from other parts of the country; they, too, helped mobilize the community to take action on its own behalf by defining the proposed jail as a social justice issue. There was ample evidence. White protest in Westover had forced Commissioners to change an initial proposal. But when African Americans protested, the Commission refused to listen to their grievances. Research by East Jackson residents revealed that the jail would not be the only unwanted facility located in the community. There already

existed two neglected Superfund sites and an abandoned, improperly capped garbage dump. Residents were tired of the perceptions of their community as a "dumping ground for everything negative."

How does this case compare with other environmental justice cases? How does the grassroots movement that surfaced in Jackson compare with other environmental justice movement organizations? It is important to note that, unlike most white grassroots environmental groups, the African American grassroots group--EJCCC--began with an assumption of discrimination, unequal power and a perception of injustice. Black social justice groups begin movement activity with an understanding of political and economic inequality. In the case of the EJCCC, members defined the situation as "socially unjust" from the beginning. White grassroots environmental groups, on the other hand, become politicized through action, coming to understand the inequality inherent in the American political system via their involvement in social movement activity. Further research is needed to more thoroughly explain these contrasting ideologies.

The Enhanced Resource Mobilization Model

The question guiding this research involves how power might be incorporated into social movement theory to enable a more complete analysis of protest activity. In this case,

the protest activity involves grassroots mobilization in the face of environmental injustice. The data for the analysis involves not only the case study, but the historical investigation of the political economy of the area.

To review, the model, a synthesis of the works of Lukes and Zald, is used to explain the relationship between power relationships and the impact these relationships have on social movement activity. Power relationships impact interest, welfare and freedom; the ability to acquire resources and define the collective good; and occupy a position within the social structure. The following outline will be discussed in more detail below:

I. Power relationships influence and control: interest, welfare and freedom

* and in turn affect rationality and decision-making of participants

* affect the internal operations of the social movement industry

* determine a social system that can "shape and channel" demands in regard to the construction of meaning of action

II. Power relationships may enable or prevent the securement of: resources/collective goods

* and therefore determine individual contributions to social movement organization activity during and throughout the movement activity

* determines the social movement activity and links to the organization and structure

* determines what resources are available, how resources are used; or the nature of the collective good at the structural level

III. Power relationships occupy a "position" in the structure, the dynamics of which create and perpetuate their place in the political and economic system

* this determines individuals access to power
* the social movement's power within the system
* the rise and fall of social movement epochs (professional or grassroots)

Since all other analyses stem from these power relationships, it seems important to start by locating them within the social structure. Ferreting out these relationships was only possible with historical analysis in order to establish who, how and in what capacity the powerful came to acquire their power, and what relationship they have with the less powerful.

The **location of the power relationships** is discerned with an examination of where power relationships are within the political economic structure and how those power relationships evolved (III). The location of present power relationships can be explained through the economic, political and racial relationships that developed through the years. I also refer to Scott's suggestions for analyzing and determining the location of power relationships. He asserts that instances of resistance, or insubordination, are indications of the dynamics of the power structure and the transcripts normally hidden each from the other.

> The hidden transcripts of dominant and subordinate are, in most circumstances, never in direct contact . . . political analysis can be advanced by research that can compare the hidden transcript of subordinate groups with the hidden transcript

> of the powerful and both hidden transcripts with the public transcript they share.
>
> (Scott, pg. 15)

Due to the historically hidden dual political systems--the dominant white political power structure and the power system within the African American community--the dynamics of power relationships present in Jackson/Madison County might not have surfaced, had it not been for the jail protest. The jail issue made visible the political schisms among powerholders, particularly within the dominant political structure. As the historical analysis concludes, the dominant power structure traditionally operated in a tightly controlled manner, particularly during the three-man form of Commission government. Decision-making was not always visible, and the transcript of the powerful was carefully guarded so as to present a united front to the masses.

The current powerholders are experiencing change and conflict with the influx of outside corporate interests who, in this case, became involved when economic interests were threatened. The recent conflict within the dominant power structure surfaced when ideas of how to resolve the jail issue differed. Established power resented perceived influence and interference by outsiders. The instability that ensued portrayed the power base divided; normally hidden transcripts among the powerholders were made more public than usual.

This current status of relationships within the political structure is important when analyzed in conjunction with power relationships **between** black and white communities and the impact of these relationships on protest activity.

The black community actively participated politically for years prior to the Civil Rights Movement, though not always in an open manner. The passive and hidden activities of slaves are well documented elsewhere and will not be expounded upon here. After the Civil War, and with the development of the black business community, higher educational facilities and the church, political education and discussion could take place within the safe confides of the African American community. African American leaders began to speak out and became active in politics, so much so that by 1915 the white power structure changed the city form of government to prevent any chance of an elected black city official.

Thereafter, black political activity submerged and the transcripts hidden. Political activity took the form of **negotiators**--prominent, respected, and influential black individuals who served as liaisons between the two communities. Grievances from the black community were often communicated to the white powerholders in this way. In the black community, private political discussions took place in clandestine NAACP meetings. As one member recalled, "they

held the meetings in secret." Residents also met at church meetings and functions, or within the numerous black fraternal organizations, away from interference from the white structure.

Likewise, white powerholders talked politics at the country clubs, served on each other's industrial boards, and socialized at exclusively white fraternal organizations, away from the black community. Only through private, individual or small group meetings did any political discussion flow between the dominant white political structure and the African American community. According to accounts, this approach to racial conflict resolution continued to occur **during** the civil rights movement.

"The form of resistance mirrors the form of domination" (Scott, pg. 104), and so we find this practice of making grievances known over the back fence, in private, in quiet, without open protest or demonstration. In this way, the **form** of black political activity was influenced, but it was not prevented. Even during the civil rights movement while Lane students and other activists were conducting sit-ins at Woolworth's and on public transportation, instances of prominent black leaders "working things out" with the white dominant power welders were present. Some individuals speak of a mother or father who were "diplomats:"

> "My father was instrumental in getting the roads blacktopped out in the rural communities, where black residents lived, because the roads were paved as far as the white; community was and then

> it just went into gravel. So he did things like that outside of any organizational structure. He wasn't a very high profile, high visibility person, but . . . he knew who to talk to . . . he could talk to white men and negotiate with them . . ."
>
> "[One-on-one negotiations] happened a lot. And I guess maybe I sort of grew up like that . . . sometimes you get more done by just on the one-on-one . . ."

There were no guarantees demands would be met, and many times they were not. On occasion the powerholders would grant wishes in what some saw as "patronizing, pacifying" gestures. During the Civil Rights Movement, when protest became more open, demands would be quickly met before much demonstration could occur. In the early days of JONAH, small projects initiated by the group would be surprisingly taken care of, thus preventing a budding organization from claiming a victory. As one member of JONAH explained:

> ". . .the people in the low income community have never been allowed political victories . . . we [JONAH] planned all these different issues. . . very simple issues, just so that we could make sure people felt a victory . . . well, within a week [the issue was resolved], and the reason was that before they would allow the people in our community to feel victorious because of being active, they went out there and just did it . . . because when people are victorious it motivates them to go to the second level and to continue to be active and speak out against whatever problems or issues that they want to deal with."

The change in the city form of government would change this traditional approach. After 1989, and the elimination of the three-man rule, the "average Joe on the street" and African Americans from low-income neighborhoods felt a sense

of voice. While still heavily influenced by the old white power structure, African Americans now occupied seats on the County Commission and city council.

These elements all came together in the case of the East Jackson jail issue. Not only was conflict brewing among the current powers that be, but a new form of government gave residents a sense of political representation. Citizens expressing grievances regarding the proposed jail site side-stepped the traditional "diplomatic" procedures, mobilizing neighbors in a true grassroots fashion before allowing the networking of traditional black spokesmen and women to supersede.

A rift within the black community illuminated this disagreement. Negotiators from the black community, who today occupy positions within the white power structure (Chamber of Commerce, governmental and industrial/service board positions), attempted to intervene for the community and resolve the conflict. The grassroots protest group rejected this traditional form of political activity, seeking instead to critique the old methods of conflict resolution, blend traditional black leadership with participatory democracy, and loudly speak and act on their own behalf. "The grassroot people got the leaders involved," argued one activist. While the Civil Rights activities in Jackson were spearheaded by African American professionals, most notably the NAACP, the East Jackson jail

protest differed in that it was initiated by community residents, with leaders becoming involved afterward.

Thus a window of opportunity opened for a grassroots organization to mobilize and succeed. Pressing the issue, the EJCCC put traditional powerholders in a position from which some Commissioners refused to back down, or, Scott (1990) refers, show weakness. This put economic interests as stake, as racial tension threatened the stability of the area. These factors all contributed to the resolution of the issue.

To summarize, knowledge of the location of power relationships, and the history of those power relationships, are vastly important in the understanding of individuals' accesses to power, the social movement organization's power within the political system, illustrated here with pre-Civil Rights activity and the grassroots activity of the EJCCC.

Now that it is clear how power relationships developed and operated between the white and black community, and the impact those relationships can have, we can return to the first piece of the enriched theoretical framework (I). **Power relationships**, it is proposed, **can influence and control the interest, welfare and freedom of individuals via a dominated social system**. Power might be realized at the first, second, or third dimension, according to Lukes.

Defining someone as personal property and treating them

as such is a most basic example of power of one person over another. Before the Civil War, power was maintained by the slave owners through laws. Those with the power to do so made black gatherings, ownership of property, and reading and writing illegal. These are all perfect examples of the first dimension of power: pure force used to maintain this power relationship.

After the Civil War, and as slavery became illegal, other forms of domination were developed by the powerholders. These appear to occur at a second dimension of power. Actual cases of violence, threats of violence, segregation practices as set forth by Jim Crow laws, poll taxes, white-controlled media, and white absentee ownership of property in the black community were barriers to acquiring any power in the white power structure.

After the Civil Rights Movement, white power was forced to find more hidden forms of domination: racial formation. After the passage of civil rights legislation, white methods of control had to be even more submerged and hidden because overt discrimination had been made illegal. The forms that domination took evolved and became more indirect as "the whites found ways around [acceptance of civil rights]" legally. In Jackson, the first private school was formed on the day that a federal mandate ruled in favor of integrated schools. Public places such as swimming pools were closed or now required such a high fee that many people of color

could not afford to patronize the facility. Hospitals were renovated, doing away with semi-private rooms. Access to city records required going through an individual for assistance, who might or might not "have the time" to help you. Gaps in the public meeting transcripts have been noticed in the official minutes from City Council and County Commission meetings. These methods of control are examples of the second dimension of power. But could these methods of mobilizing bias also operate at the third level, where power takes on a social psychological dimension? Over time, did African Americans internalization the white/black power relationships as the norm, accepting of the status quo through apparent "mutual consent?"

Scott (1990) addresses the issue of hegemony. His argument is compelling, and his discussion of the role of power relationships in determining the interests and shaping demands is relevant. He gives credence and respect to the proletarian, who at times is described as quite dupable and easily controlled in some power literature. I do not completely dismiss the supposition that the dominant elite can cultivated an ideology that prevents action by preventing thought of action in the collective minds of those without power. But I do not believe this provides a complete explanation.

In this case, total hegemony did not occur. Residents had alternatives to the white system as the second power

structure developed in the black community. Fraternal organizations were formed to care for black residents. Black-owned and operated newspapers circulated in the community. Black controlled educational facilities offered an African American perspective. This resource, according to Lamon, was not a new phenomenon:

> The concept of black community, however, was not new; it had existed under slavery. The newness came as freedom provide blacks the mobility to gather in large, highly visible, physical communities and enough protection for self-sufficient black institutions to thrive in public. Their communities and their institutions soon produced a diverse and indigenous core of leaders . . .
>
> (Lamon 1981, pg. 46)

This topic is related to a vital issue in social movement research: the true nature of the social movement participant? Can rationality exist free of the interactions of powerful forces? Is the participant of social movement activity inherently reasonable, rational and logical or inconsistent and unpredictable, coerced by the motivations of the powerful? If the interest and ideology of individuals can be shaped, determined and influenced by a powerful entity, what does this say about the rational actor?

Resource mobilization theory purports the participant in movement activity to be a rational actor. From this supposition, studies have emerged to explore the concept of rationality and the participant. Olson (1965) in his work on "rational choice" theory, believed a rational person

would not participate, since s/he would receive the same benefits by abstaining (i.e. the free-rider theories; see also Fireman and Gamson 1979). Based on micro-economics, Olson states that the individual will always seek to maximize his/her profit, or reward, for the least amount of cost. The tautology has been criticized with later research in the field. Yet, inclusion of a power variable, one which enables us to examine the factors influencing and controlling interests and welfare, seemingly contradicts the "rational" participant in social movement activity.

Collins (1982) examines this question of rationality and determines that movement organizations do "not depend on rational calculations" (pg. 28), but rather rely on an ability to arouse emotions of moral feelings, righteous ideology, or emotional interests re-examined in moral terms. Only in this way, argues Collins, can the self-interest calculations be converted into common interest for a group endeavor. A **non-rational** sentiment must be collectively shared. Collins states "whoever knows how to arouse these [nonrational] feelings in others has a crucial weapon" in building solidarity. The powerful state or other dominant entity has achieved its "valid and powerful" legitimacy over the people by establishing a sense of reality in people's minds, a very Gramscian idea. In other words, the main way to exercise power is to **influence** what others take for granted. Thereby conscious decision-making rests on

unconscious premises. The irrational belief in the validity of the powerholders creates its own identity by "controlling what frame you allow other people to operate within" (pg. 75).

In this case study, African American leaders throughout the years aided in fostering a sense of indignation in the face of an unjust white power structure. In 1890 issues of The Christian Index, the CME Church stressed that it was every African Americans' moral obligation to strive for a strong community. The Civil Rights Movement was explained as occurring in part because "we were right" and the rest of the white political structure could no longer deny such visible racism. In recent cases of protest, activist and community residents continuously commented on striving for justice, of achieving the moral "right." In the cases of grassroots activity in the black community there existed a feeling of a quite reasonable moral obligation to act and become involved in the protest. Many times, when protest activities have developed, there has been a sense of threat to residents' children.

So too, with the Madison County jail issue. A continuous message resonating from the black community insisted that the siting of a jail in this residential area would be ethically wrong. It does not appear that the white powerholders were successful in validating the unjust, unequal power relationship by means of a third face of

power. In fact, the black political structure effectively socialized the community to resist.

The white power structure that evolved was capable of influencing **public** demands in the black community, but more importantly the form that social action took through the years. Milmon Mitchell's quiet inductions of NAACP chapters and boycotts of Piggly Wiggly were effective during the Jim Crow years. Up until, and during, the Civil Rights Movement, when open political activity was not rational, the community worked through negotiators. The form of activity changed again, to open grassroots movement activity after the change in the form of government, as embodied by the jail protest. But the construction of the meaning of such action seems to have germinated from the black community, and was made clearly evident in the jail protest.

The potential for protest existed throughout the history of the area. However, individual and organized grievances and protest took different forms throughout the years. Therefore, the internal operations of the movement for social justice and civil rights has been influenced by the dominant political structure. African Americans waited for conducive social and political environments before participating in more open political protest. This phenomenon has been researched by McAdam (1982) and Couto (1993). McAdam determines that the Civil Rights Movement actually grew out of established organizations and networks-

-black churches and colleges, and NAACP chapters. These internal organizations continued to sustain the movement during times of "environmental constraints," where social movement activity could not openly occur. Couto (1993) has also determined that "resistance . . ." in the African American community in west Tennessee " . . . continually emerges because it never stops" (p. 253). People are able to maintain their sense of "dignity and value" (p. 253) in the face of seemingly insurmountable oppression by retreating into "spaces" within the "infrastructure of politics within the subordinate group" (p. 254) such as family, church, schools, and work. According to Couto, more overt protest is enabled through the establishment of public spaces such as the NAACP and JONAH. He concludes that "when public space for resistance is closed off, some people retreat to private spaces" (p. 255). In essence, Rupp and Taylor (1987) also address this with their concept of "abeyance:" social movements finding refuge in existing organizations and networks during times of non-receptive political environments. My findings concur with McAdam, Couto and Rupp and Taylor.

McAdam contends his research regarding black resistance movements lends credence to the elite model of American politics, but is uncomfortable with ascribing such complete power of decision-making processes to an elite segment based on his historical research. Couto also concludes that

emancipation efforts "transcend[s] the normal politics of pluralism" (1993, p. 260). In his research, political maneuvering took place between individuals as "members of the dominant groups often seek[ing] informal political channels to find out just what a protesting group desires" (p. 260). I argue that the inconsistencies troubling McAdam (1982, pg. 233) regarding indigenous power are explained by the evolution of the dual hidden power systems and the use of these individual negotiators during times when public action is not rationally an option.

By incorporating power into the enhanced resource mobilization model such analysis of rationality, decision-making, construction of meaning, and the internal operations of social movements is possible and more meaningful.

Finally, the theoretical model addresses the **role of power relationships in allowing or preventing the securement of resources and collective goods.** The power to influence the mobilization of resources[13] necessary to prevent or facilitate action is of great importance to the study of social movements. As the data in this study suggests, resources are not openly available to all. Yet, previous resource mobilization research fails to include an analysis

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[13] Resources may take the form of tangible materials: money, office space, copy machines, telephones, etc.; or intangibles: skills, time, networking with others and pre-existing relationships for mobilizing members, for example.

of power relationships in resource acquisition and definitions of collective good.

In Jackson, the African American community's ability to mobilize resources varied throughout the years. Goings (1995) finds African American protest in the complete lack of resources. In Jackson, as the data bears out, it was necessary for the African American power system to provide resources denied by the local dominant white political structure. After the Civil War, the black community mobilized money, knowledge and connections from internal and outside interests to secure colleges, businesses and other means of livelihood. These interests in turn, grew to allow the community some measure of independence and self-socialization. Eventually, political action could emerge when resources such as money, communication, meeting space and other means of support could be secured through the black power system, out of reach of the dominating white power structure.

During times when the dominant political structure became more repressive, as was the case during the Jim Crow years, resource securement was scarce and often hazardous. Social movement activity was forced to assume a different form, hence reliance on "negotiators" discussed earlier.

Mobilization tactics of the EJCCC were determined by structural conditions, also. The economically depressed East Jackson residents began with few tangible resources.

They relied heavily on their ability to mobilize neighbors, black businesses, and pre-existing organizations such as the NAACP, JONAH and the East Jackson Economic Development Commission. Original members used what was available to them to do this: the barbed-wire fenced jail site became the symbol of injustice. During prayer vigils, the site became the platform from which to relay their message of social injustice. This message was picked up by the local newspaper. With little physical resources available to them, EJCCC members organized and mobilized others in an attempt to get their message to the County Commission. As momentum grew, the group used Lane College facilities and the local NAACP office for meetings and support, solicited legal representation and took donations to cover lawyer fees.

Power relationships are also very much involved in the definition of, and ability and possibility for successful securement of collective goods: shared goals or interests of social movement organization members. This data suggests that African Americans' individual contributions of time and energy, and their willingness to take risks were fostered by a black power system capable of fostering a sense of "doing the right thing," also discussed earlier. During times of repression, the definition of a collective good borne of a shared economic and political state inspired individuals to "keep the faith" and take action on social justice issues

when the time was more conducive to movement activity. Ideas and beliefs have traditionally been nurtured through the African American church, colleges, and organizations like the black fraternal organizations or the NAACP. Church congregations, college classrooms and NAACP chapters also provided politicized workers for the Civil Rights Movement, already indoctrinated with an collective identity and understanding of "the way things are." This ideology enabled the fostering of a perception of action for a collective good in the face of institutional wrongs.

So, too, was this sense of collective good evident in the EJCCC organization, as discussed earlier in this chapter. In addition to this, the East Jackson community had been taking strides, prior to the jail issue, to develop economically, and engender a sense of pride in the neighborhood. Organizations such as the EJEDC had worked to bring black-owned businesses and residents back to the area. The defining of the collective good was supported by these convictions also.

This model has allowed for a more thorough treatment of social power relationships and how they affect individuals' perceptions of and subsequent participation in social movements activity. The role of social power in the development and achievement of collective goods is also made more clear with the use of the enhanced resource mobilization model. The model also provides for inclusion

of analysis of social movement industry's internal processes as influenced by power relationships. This piece of the model proved to be beyond the scope of the data collected for this project. However, further research should analyze how social movement activity is linked to the organizational and institutional structures (micro-meso level of analysis) and in the internal workings of the social movement industry itself (meso-level) in regard to power relationships.

Conclusions

The enhanced resource mobilization model has satisfactorily explained the dynamics of the recent jail protest in Jackson as well as the events leading to this social justice issue. Because of the inclusion of a power variable, analysis of the economic and political trends can be included in the explanation of protest in the African American community.

The blending of Zald's core assumptions and Lukes' power analysis questions has yielded a new theoretical perspective which brings a discussion of power relationships into social movement theory.

The development of this model is timely. During the interviewing for this project, the first African American churches were burned in the South in the summer of 1995, not far from where many of these interviews took place. Even at that early time, residents from the black community spoke of

these acts of arson as a strike at the heart of the black community. They believed the church burnings to be a power move designed to terrorize and intimidate African Americans in the one place where the community had historically felt safe. Another activist believed the church burnings an attempt by someone to turn white and black communities against one another, "to set us against each other. And we have to be careful not to let them, to not let them be victorious."

It is imperative to recognize the power element in this most recent attack against the black community. In destroying such a traditionally safe space, clearly this is an attempt to diminish African American political power by assaulting the heart of the infrastructure of the black community. Social scientists, and especially those doing research within the field of social movements, are strongly urged to immediately investigate this cloud on the horizon.

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"Jackson City Directory: 1900-01"

"McCowat-Mercer Printing Company's City Directory of Jackson, Tennessee: 1906"

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT

My name is Lachelle Norris, and I am a graduate student of sociology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I am currently conducting research for my dissertation and I have chosen to examine the current and past political and economic conditions of Jackson, Tennessee. Of particular interest to me is the recent county jail issue. I am gathering information from residents, as well as community and political leaders on both sides of this divisive issue. It is important for my research that you participate, as all perspectives are necessary.

Your responses will be held confidential to the best of our ability. You will not be identified by name in the final report. I will be audio-taping and transcribing our conversation, and the interview should take no more than two hours to complete. These transcripts will not be viewed by anyone other than myself and my advisor. I will, however, provide a copy of the transcript to you for your comments and clarifications if you so request. The tapes will be destroyed after transcription, but I will keep these transcripts and consent forms securely locked in a file cabinet at the University of Tennessee for a period of three years. At that time, the materials will be destroyed.

Your participation in this project is completely voluntary and you may end your participation at any time, without penalty, for any reason.

Minimal risks are associated with participation in this study. I foresee some apparent benefits: this issue is an important one, and one currently facing many communities around the nation. Understanding the social dynamics surrounding such divisive issues is important for community stability.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please sign and date the form below to indicate that you understand the above statements and agree to participate. If you have any questions or comments, or need to contact me at any time, I can be reached at (901) 935-7892, or contact Dr. Sherry Cable at (615) 974-6021.

Thank you for your cooperation.

X_____ Date _____

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Version A--Interview schedule for members of EJCCC:
background questions: "Let's begin with some basic background information...."

Your birthdate and birthplace?
Your father/mother's birthplace?
Your father/mother's work?
Your work?
Your education?
Your marital status? How long?
Any children? (ages? if grown: occupation, residence)
grandchildren?

How long have you lived in Jackson/Madison county?
moved away, come back?

How long have you lived at this residence?

Any relatives living here?

Do you belong to any organizations here, church, clubs, fraternities?

Power
Traditionally, has the African American community been recognized by those in power? Historically, has the community been represented in politics? active in politics?--in what way? How about today?

How has the community made grievances known? In the open or covertly? involved in decision making that affected it?

Who has the most power in the Af.Am community? In the city and surrounding area? How do these individuals hold on to this power? How do their decisions affect the Af.Am community?

"Tired of being the dumping ground--" and "we always get what no one else wants--" what other undesirable land use decisions have been made in the past? Were there protest over these? What was the outcome?

EJCCC

The jail issue--how was reaction to this the same/different from other protests in the past? Was there any attempt to involve the community in the decision to put the jail here? What prevented or facilitated these attempts?

How did you get involved in the group? Why? Were you involved in other issues of any kind in the past?

How did the group originate? By whom? Why?

Who's been most involved in the group? Why did they get involved?

Where are they from? Are they employed in the community; hold positions in the community?

Are these the decision-makers for the group? (how do decisions get made in the group).

What role has Lane played in this? Has JONAH been involved?

newspaper: coalition and supporters = elite? Agree?

Justice issue...much talk of this in the community?

"no debate..."--you felt this was important. Why?

What were some of the resources the group used?

Explain some of the strategies/tactics that you believed most effective. How did you keep folks involved?

lawsuit--proof of a pattern of continued discrimination can be supported with evidence...can you speak to this?

What was the turning point in this issue, leading to resolution?

Will the group stay intact after this issue is settled? what would you like to see the group involved in next? will you continue to be active? Do you feel the group has "real" power now?

Any more from the Merry-Lane Courts residents?

Having participated in this protest, what would your advice be to other community groups facing an undesirable facility siting? What have you learned from this experience?

[additional questions if civil rights activists:]

When were you involved in the civil rights movement? for how long? here? what issues were you involved in? why did you get involved?
What kept you going?

[if in Jackson area] Could you discuss the atmosphere here before and during the civil rights movement?

Before the movement-- What was the African American community like during these time? Where was it? Was there a prosperous black business district? did residents feel autonomy or oppression? what were race relations like then?

Were you involved in the NAACP then? Citizenship schools at Lane? Did you hear of the Haywood county incidents (lynching)? Did you know Milmon Mitchell? (Montgomery Ward fountains?; Kroger and Piggly Wiggly boycotts?)

Did resistance exist before the movement? were they hidden forms of resistance? what were they and what form did they take? how were folks able to carry out these forms of resistance? spaces (church, family, Lane?)

How did the civil rights movement come to Jackson? What triggered the movement here? where did the desire for change come from? (values, traditions)

What was the role of Lane College during the movement? Congress on Racial Equality (CORE)? SNCC; Southern Christian Leadership Conference?

Who were the main actors in the civil rights movement here? how were they involved in the civil rights activities? where were they from?

Was news of the civil rights movement activities reported in the local paper here? if not, how did news travel?

What took place? what were the issues/targets? what were the outcomes? what was gained, and what was lost?

Impact on the future-- what were some of the consequences of civil rights action years later? for the community and for you?

Have you been active in JONAH?

Have there been any other issues protested in this community since the movement and before the jail issue? What were they? What was the outcome? Why positive/negative?

What issues are most pressing in the community today? in Jackson? in Madison county in general?

What are your hopes for the future?

Version B--Questions for public officials:
background questions: "Let's begin with some basic background information on you."

Your birthdate and birthplace?
Your father/mother's birthplace?
Your father/mother's work?
Your work?
Your education?
Your marital status? How long?
Any children? (ages? if grown: occupation, residence) grandchildren?

How long have you lived in Jackson/Madison county? moved away, come back?

How long have you lived at this residence?

Any relatives living here?

Do you belong to any organizations: church, clubs, fraternities?

When were you elected to the commission/council?

How long have you served?

How did you decide to become a commissioner? other family/friends in politics?

Describe the type of government you feel best for the community at large-- for groups in general.

Who are the powerful people in this area? how did they get that way? is it corporate or family power? how do they keep this power?

How are most decisions made that effect the city/county? how have decisions historically been made? is this changing?

How have voting districts been decided--when were these drawn up?

Who owns the industry here? local or multinational? what power do they have? what kind of contact does this group have with representatives, locally? Has this changed over the years?

Who are the investors? what power do they have? what kind of contact does this group have with representatives, locally? Has this changed over the years?

Who are the small business owners? what power do they have? what kind of contact does this group have with representatives, locally? Has this changed over the years?

What power does the working class have? lower classes? what kind of contact does this group have with representatives, locally? Has this changed over the years?

What land parcels are owned by the city/the county? do these bodies determine to what uses the land is put for the city? county?

VITA

Gwendolyn Lachelle Norris was born in Anderson, South Carolina on September 28, 1963. She moved with her family to Crossville, Tennessee where she attended public school at Homestead Elementary. She graduated from Cumberland County High School in 1981. She began Tennessee Technological University in September, 1982, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Sociology in August, 1986. That fall, she entered the Master's program in Sociology, accepting a teaching assistantship at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She received the Master's degree in 1988. In January, 1989, she began work on the Doctorate of Philosophy in Sociology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, receiving this degree in August, 1996.

She has accepted a position as assistant professor at the University of Tennessee, Martin, Department of Sociology.