



PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS PROJECT

Marika Gould, Ryan Payne, and Justice Benjamin



*Black Panthers
Line Up At a Free
Huey Rally in
DeFremery Park*

Oakland, California. July 28, 1968.

Gelatin silver print 13 1/8 x 19 1/2 in.

Photographed by Stephen Shames



"We Demand Decent Housing" #4 of Ten-Point Program

The Black Panther Newspaper: "We Demand Decent Housing"



Thematic Relevance

- Widescale visibility was achieved by the Black Panther Party through means of direct action
 - Protests and demonstrations, BPP newspaper was consistent visual of community and organizing
- Gaining visibility through direct action became key in garnering the influence necessary to enact change
 - *"To develop political and economic power in a capitalist society, you need capital."*- Bobby Seale
- Direct action was seen as quantifiable, direct action = direct change



The "Stay Dangerous Movement"

You never know who's swimming naked until the tide comes in.

-Nipsey Hussle

It's better to be perceived as a threat than as a target.

-YG



- The “Stay Dangerous” movement or culture is a way of life for particular members of low-income and Black communities.
- This way of life acknowledges the inherent dangers that those from both inside and outside the community can present.
- Members tend to focus heavily on the act of self-preservation as a result of how they are perceived externally in addition to prevalent internal pressures (e.g. police, neighborhood opposition (“opps”))

Opposition to the Thirty Meter Telescope, Mauna Kea, Hawaii

- Native Hawaiians believe the volcano Mauna Kea is sacred and should not have any construction built on it
- Scientists and Astronomers believe that the summit is perfect for a telescope and plans to build one have been on the horizon since the 1960s.
- The most recent plan for the Thirty Meter Telescope has been faced with years of protest, beginning in 2014
- The most visible act of resistance was summer 2019, when about 1,000 protestors convened at the mountain to halt construction, and many stayed in tent camps for months
- As of 2021, construction has been halted due to the pandemic, with plans to resume in 2022



Early 60's to 70's: Black Panthers Newspaper

- Early 60's: the Black Panther newspaper followed a strict objective which was to demand and take up space for marginalized communities and underscore the stories that had been undervalued through mainstream media.
- From 1968 to 1971, it was the country's most-read Black newspaper.
- 'It reflected that the idea of resistance to police oppression had spread like wildfire,' Judy Juanita, a former editor in chief, adds. "It showed that this pattern of oppression was systemic (Lipsky, 4)."
- The paper produced a sense of camaraderie among the Black community, where "there was food, socializing and performances by Party band The Lumpen (Lipsky, 3)"

Tenants' Rights Movement

- By early 1907-1908, renters, “predominately in Jewish socialist immigrant workers’ neighborhoods of the Lower East Side and the Bronx,” were not satisfied with and went against rent increases because renters did not have leases and could be evicted in a few days.
 - By the end of the 1930s, “in short, rent strikes began to fit into the legal system,” ultimately legalizing picketing as a tactic to stop landlords from evicting them out of their respected communities.
- Due to the pandemic, and with the rise of the Tenants’ Rights Movement, though, we saw more division between renters and Upstate legislators.
 - Upstate legislators are now seeing a demand for change due to presistent, long-lasting protests occuring in the streets of Albany, issuing a halt within the local justice system by dismantling the myth of economic equality among members whose lives have been deeply affected by local legislators in New York City.

Shared Activism through Visibility

- Native Hawaiians were able to achieve their goal of halting construction on the summit of Mauna Kea by having protests that were organized to block construction materials from arriving. Some even stayed at camps along the summit access roads for months to be ready at a moment's notice to protest any further encroachment by TMT. Famous actors including Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and Jason Momoa shared their support via social media and other media outlets, increasing prominence for this movement.
- Black Americans have experienced financial hardship and economic instability because of America's housing system since the early 20th century. Since the pandemic, the Tenants' Rights Movement prompted Upstate legislators to redirect their focus and commit to Black Americans who live in the city so that every marginalized group, instead of a small percentage within the state of New York, will be able to experience rent stability and Black liberation.

Shared Activism through Visibility (cont.)

- Much like the ideology presented forth by the BPP, at the heart of the "Stay Dangerous" movement is a need for armed self-defense. Those who follow aspects of the movement ultimately follow a goal to seclude themselves from the public eye out of necessity, but many do not reach this goal without embracing external perceptions and prominence. Many members of the movement (most popular being YG and Nipsey Hussle) have used the stereotypes and prejudices reflected on them by these external perceptions to "reverse the script" and gain the assets needed to enact change. Unlike the BPP, members of the "Stay Dangerous" movement are more fragmented which means they have less solidarity (less solidarity amongst communities in particular). Nevertheless, the influence and impact is real enough to where communities attract some of the same governmental pressure as the BPP did at their peak.

Final Statement

- Unification efforts by members of the "Stay Dangerous" Movement, like in the BPP's case with Photographer Stephen Shames, must be deliberate and purposeful. Self-described as one of "America's leading photographers dealing with real social issues," he was enlisted to photograph what he saw fit at BPP events by Bobby Seale himself, because he trusted his ability to artistically capture powerful statements. Seale believed in the power of a united front, and that unification between the races was a great way to gain proper visibility. Moreover, the fight for Mauna Kea's protection by Native Hawaiians has seen success due to their ability to gain visibility and support through staging effective protests, garnering international prominence by incorporating high profile celebrities (such as Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson and Jason Momoa) and by not shying away from using the justice system by litigating for results. Similar to the Black Panther Party joining forces with the Peace and Freedom Party, a primarily white organization to gain Huey's freedom, Native Hawaiians have partnered with environmental organizations that are typically primarily white and better resourced to achieve their goals.

References

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