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Part 3

Community, Agency, Citizenship

Collective activity does not come automatically in any community, it is through the collective mobilization of community that the power of citizenship is realized. The chapters in this section focus on community and its ability or inability to mobilize its collective citizenship. Marcus Board and Tyson King-Meadows develop a profound critique of not only the neo-liberal negative impact on progressive change, but they also indict the system of descriptive representation found in Baltimore as the community protested the continued killing of Black men. Their analysis points to the need for communities to go beyond the electoral process which then depends on the representatives to do the right thing. In the end their argument is that the politics has to begin with a politics that develops a clear agenda that comes from the community. David Wilkens addresses a critical problem that is faced by over 80 Native nations: that is the manipulation from the outside of their supposed self-determination. His analysis focuses on the need to internally intervene on the expelling of members from tribal rolls leading to greater political and cultural presence. Alfonso Morales's chapter takes a counter-intuitive approach in a powerful argument for local self-determination through a local marketplace. He shows how the activity in the market by participants throws then together creating a space that they can claim outside the direct influence of the larger capitalist market economy. Amy Zimmerman addresses the apparent statelessness of El Salvadorians as they pull together a new identity constructing a citizenship that connected them to their new space and the communities they left behind. Her chapter conceptualizes the notion of a community-oriented citizenship that goes beyond a state sanctioned citizenship.

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8 The Baltimore Uprising and the Stunted Transformation of Urban Black Politics

Marcus Board and Tyson King-Meadows

Introduction

Although some scholars and observers rightly hail the 2015 Baltimore Uprising as an act of resistance against systemic oppression, the Uprising was also a moment of interrupted promise. Revolts and rebellions are often the result of ongoing legacies of domination being met with resistance which has reached a tipping point and sparked direct action from the masses.[1] For the most part, the Baltimore Uprising was no different. The tipping point for large-scale protest in Baltimore came as a result of the fatal injury to West Baltimore resident Freddie Gray Jr. while in police custody. And although the "riot" portion of the Uprising occurred on April 25 and April 28, 2015, the legacies of domination in Baltimore have been evident for much longer.

Despite decades of Black descriptive representation at every level of city government following the historic 1987 election of Mayor Kurt Schmoke, by spring 2015, Black Baltimoreans were still battling multiple afterlives of enslavement. This included their dissatisfaction with inadequate government services, financial exploitation, labor expropriation, housing segregation, and pessimism about economic prospects. For instance, when comparing findings from the 2009 Baltimore Citizen Survey to findings from its 2014 counterpart, one sees "a 19-point downward shift in overall satisfaction, an eleven point upward shift in perceptions that neighborhoods were unsafe during the daytime, and a 14-point downward shift in overall ratings of police."[2] Findings from the 2014 survey also showed that Blacks in Baltimore were more likely than other racial groups to be unsatisfied with city and neighborhood cleanliness and also dissatisfied with the (un)availability of cultural and recreational resources. All this being said, what made the Baltimore Uprising different from other racial uprisings in America was when and where it happened.

Large protests in Baltimore began the day before Gray passed away on April 18, 2015. This was six days after he was initially arrested near the Gilmor Homes housing project in the Sandtown-Winchester neighborhood of West Baltimore. Before protests began, footage circulated of Gray being taken to the police van but unable to carry his own weight. Gray was denied medical assistance for his asthma, and after an approximately 45-minute ride he would emerge from the van with four broken vertebrae and a crushed voice box.[3] The 2016 DOJ report would confirm that Baltimore Police regularly engaged in "rough rides" where they would leave detainees unbuckled while driving recklessly to increase their likelihood of injury.

The Uprising also occurred during the second term of America's first Black commander-in- chief; in a major city dominated by Black elites, a home to two historically Black universities outside of the deep South, and in a city with a vibrant arts and culture infrastructure. And perhaps most notably, the Baltimore Uprising occurred in the

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city that headquarters Black America's oldest traditional civil rights organization, the NAACP. Thus, it surprised many that the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) would generate such enthusiasm for direct action in Baltimore, a city whose elites are better positioned from a racial politics standpoint than most anyone in the country to show decisive support for racial justice.[4] However, in this chapter we show why the 2015 Baltimore Uprising is precisely what we should have anticipated given both the ideological heterogeneity of Black Baltimore and the damage wrought on the urban poor by neoliberalism.

Our chapter examines the experiential, political, and community divisions of Baltimoreans immediately prior to and during the 2015 Uprising as a fulcrum from which to understand how twenty-first century neoliberalism oppressively dominates urban Black politics. Specifically, we examine the lived circumstances, diverse visions of citizenship, and the myriad hurdles facing Black Baltimoreans pushing for a community-centered model of government-resident interactions. Our analysis pushes back against the idea that the Baltimore Uprising predominately represents a community-building effort to collectively resist the larger carceral state, reaffirm citizenship rights, and advocate for greater economic opportunity. We draw attention to the mainstream rejection of radicalism, which complicates narratives that otherwise oversimplify the challenging lived experiences in Baltimore. In short, we work through the Baltimore Uprising to delineate the limits of Black political capital for community building and the grave limitations of neoliberalism for community members.

To that, because the 2015 Uprising cannot be disentangled from the election of Barack Obama, it also cannot be separated from the burgeoning M4BL. Seemingly emboldened by the Obama phenomenon, supporters of neoliberalism opined about the end of Black and identity politics (as a euphemistic call to end radical politics itself), further promoting race-neutral "color-blindness" as the way to dismantle systemic racial inequality. In contrast, the M4BL reinforced the radical position: that depoliticizing race is a neoliberal farce. Movement organizers sought to double-down on the origins of identity politics as intended by the Combahee River Collective – advocating the right to center radical Black, intersectional, queer, and feminist politics in political discourse. Movement organizers also stressed that violence was not the goal of the Uprising. Indeed, while the Baltimore Uprising concluded after widespread violence, the Uprising began with a full week of non-violent protest. Protestors demanded policy action to dismantle systemic oppression and demanded justice for Freddie Gray Jr., a victim of police brutality. Yet, protesters were berated by (mostly white) onlookers, from former Baltimore Mayor Rawlings-Blake, and President Obama himself. And, while protesters called attention to the ubiquity of police brutality and of diminished economic prospects, there was little evidence of broad community support for M4BL's inclusive political discourse which assimilated radical, Black, queer, and intersectional feminisms to call into question the tenets of neoliberalism.[5] We contend that the scholarship on and practice of anti-oppressive community building focuses too heavily on political consensus as a basis for strong communities and often sidesteps what radical pluralism can do to bring communities together. Focusing on consensus rather than pluralism tends to artificially elevate the short-term mobilization effect of social pressure. Instead, we assert that politically transformative community building requires sustainable and long-term action that must either assimilate contradictory worldviews or produce more inclusive political ideologies. We conclude that select groups of Black Baltimoreans – including elected officials – privileging consensus over radical pluralism are thereby discarding the political substance necessary for building inclusive and transformative political agendas.

To layout our examination of how neoliberalism shaped the 2015 Uprising, we utilize multiple methods to conduct a deep case-study of life in Baltimore and to assess how

Blacks reacted to the death of Freddie Gray Jr. Drawing first upon an analysis of data from the city-commissioned Baltimore Citizen Survey (2009–14), we outline resident satisfaction about city services and employment prospects prior to the April 2015 event. This quantitative assessment lays the empirical foundation from to assess how Baltimoreans faired under the city's neoliberal governance approach in the six years prior to the Uprising. Next, we leverage a content analysis of more than one hundred newspaper articles from the *Baltimore Sun* and other newspapers, in addition to the April 2016 US Department of Justice (DOJ) investigative report about police brutality in the city. Throughout the content analysis, we examine the local and federal accounts of police-resident interactions.

Our findings highlight three factors that were suppressively withheld from grassroots Black Baltimoreans and which reinforce the lack of community agency: (1) selective coalitions: prioritizing collaborations with elected officials; (2) ideological exclusion: radical left politics being relegated to social movements outside of formal political discourse; and (3) invalidating agendas: political exclusion pre-empts the development of anti-oppressive norms, expectations, and goals. Taken together, our assessment of Baltimore reveals the contexts that are shaping the political agendas emerging throughout the Uprising, thus illuminating how neoliberalism neutralizes community resistance and community agency.

We begin this chapter by briefly examining findings from the Baltimore Citizen Survey (2009–14). We then define neoliberalism, outline our theory of community agency, and then utilize this theoretical perspective to examine how neoliberalism undermined the promise of the Uprising. In the conclusion, we advocate for inclusive interpersonal networks and norms as a means through which resistance can be transformed into community agency.

Quality of Life in Baltimore Before the Uprising

We analyze six years of data from the Baltimore City Survey (BCS) to examine residents' perceptions of city services and quality of life in the years prior to the 2015 Uprising.[6] Unlike periodic principal investigator-driven federally- or state-funded surveys and data gathering initiatives, the BCS was an annual, city-commissioned scientific "citizen satisfaction survey" of adult residents (those 18 years and older) which was designed to ascertain their perceptions about government services. The BCS utilized a random-digit-dial household and cell-phone sample collection technique, collected a representative sample from each of the city's nine planning districts, and appropriately weighted the responses by the city's demographic characteristics.

Following the lead of King-Meadows, we draw from select questions on the BCS to ascertain the experiential and attitudinal divisions within Baltimore City residents. Specifically, we showcase a six-year trend (2009 to 2014) in resident perceptions across three areas – overall satisfaction, availability of good jobs, and rating of police protection – and then turn our attention to racial differences in perceptions about quality of life in 2014, the year prior to the Uprising. To complement our analysis of the 2014 BCS individual-level data, we exploit three objective measures of aggregate-level socioeconomic circumstances: zip code distress, zip code racial diversity, and planning district three-year average for reported crime.

The trend data in Figure 8.1 and Figure 8.2 show a precipitous decline in overall satisfaction and a sporadic uptick in beliefs about job opportunities after 2009. Figure 8.1 shows that Baltimore City residents were largely dissatisfied with city services and between 2009 and 2014. Except for the baseline year, less than fifty percent of respondents reported being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" over the six-year period.

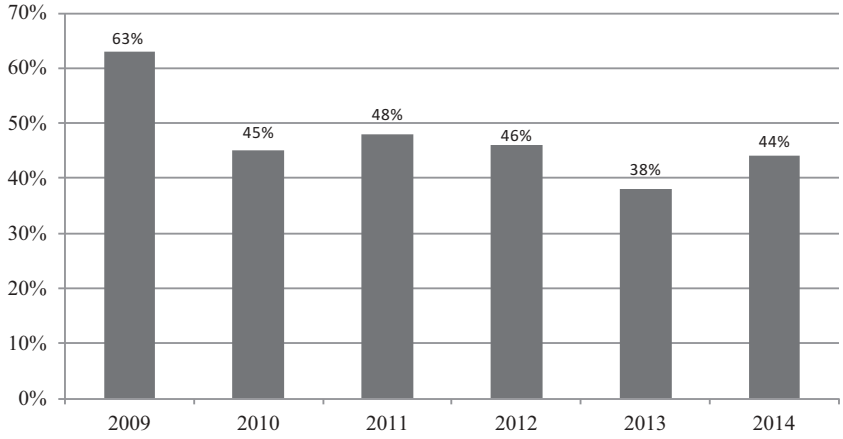

Figure 8.1 Overall Satisfaction with Baltimore City Services, 2009 – 2014
Note: Percentages reflect combination of Satisfied and Very Satisfied responses.
Source: Baltimore Citizen Survey, relevant years

The trend data in Figure 8.1 and Figure 8.2 show a precipitous decline in overall satisfaction and a sporadic uptick in beliefs about job opportunities. Figure 8.1 shows that Baltimore City residents were largely dissatisfied with city services and between 2009 and 2014. Except for the baseline year, less than fifty percent of respondents reported being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" over the six-year period. By 2013, only thirty-eight percent (38%) of respondents indicated being satisfied or very satisfied, a drop of 25 percentage points from the inaugural year. By 2014, overall satisfaction

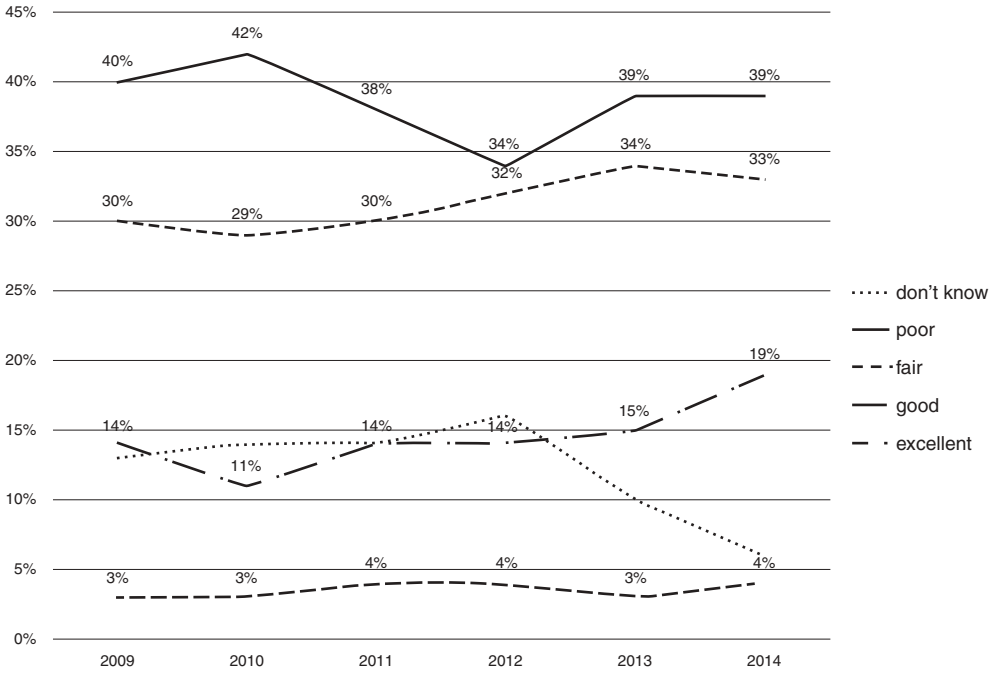

Figure 8.2 Perceptions about availability of jobs in Baltimore, 2009 – 2014

among city residents had only increased by six percentage points. Figure 8.2 shows that a large proportion of residents generally believed that economic prospects were dim in the city. In 2009, seventy percent (70%) of respondents choose "poor" or "fair" when asked about the availability of good jobs.[7] By 2012, only sixty-six percent (66%) reported that job opportunities were "poor" or "fair", with fourteen percent (14%) indicating that opportunities were "good." We believe that the small uptick in economic optimism from 2010 to 2012 may have reflected a belief or even an observation that the administration of Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake (2010–16) was delivering or had delivered on her promises of economic expansion. (City Council President Rawlings-Blake was elected in November 2011 to a full term in office after taking over for the final year of the term for former Mayor Sheila Dixon who resigned following a conviction for embezzlement in 2010.) In 2014, seventy-two percent (72%) of respondents reported that job opportunities were "poor" or "fair", while nineteen percent (19%) choose "good" when asked about opportunities.

Data in Figure 8.3 show significant levels of resident dissatisfaction with police protection prior to the Uprising. In the inaugural year of the BCS, only forty-six percent (46%) of respondents rated police protection as "good" or "excellent," with a full seven percent choosing the "don't know" response option. Thirty-one percent (31%) of respondents choose the "fair" response option. In the two subsequent years, 2010 and 2011 respectively, forty-seven percent (47%) of respondents choose the "good" or "excellent" response option, and a lower proportion of respondents choose the "don't know" response option. An uptick in 2013 in important to note here: nearly half of respondents answering the question – 48 percent – indicated that police protection was "good" or "excellent." However, by 2014, that uptick was dramatically erased: only

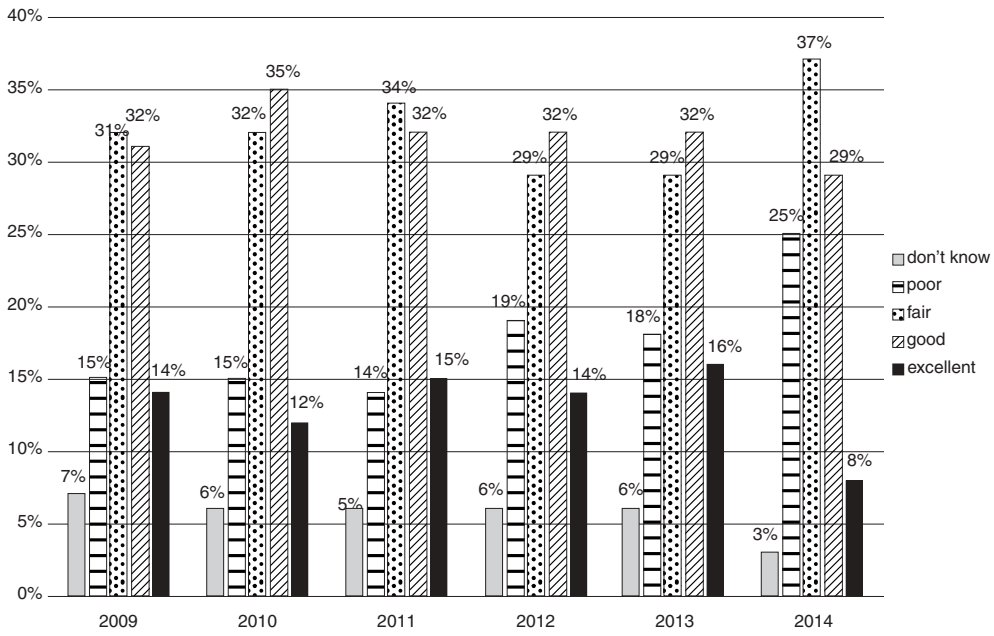

Figure 8.3 Rating of city service: Police Protection, 2009 – 2014
Note: Along with rating 20 other city services, residents were asked to rate 'Police Protection' over the past 12 months using the "poor" to "excellent" scale.
Source: Baltimore Citizen Survey, relevant years

37 percent (37%) of respondents choose "good" or "excellent," a drop of eleven percentage points. Moreover, in 2014, there was an increase in the proportion of respondents who choose the "poor" and "fair" options and a decrease in the proportion of respondents who choose the "don't know" option. In other words, by 2014 not only were Baltimore City residents more dissatisfied with police protection than they ever were in the life of the BCS, but they were also less likely to report that they could not make a decision. Given that the City commissioned an outside entity and worked with said outside entity to handle the logistical aspects of fielding and analyzing results of the "citizen satisfaction survey," the finding of persistent dissatisfaction cannot be easily dismissed as an artifact of misleading question wording, principal-investigator bias, or sample selection bias. In addition, the analytical report for the 2014 BCS drew particular attention to the high proportion of dissatisfied respondents from specific locations in the city, highlighting the importance of social location in shaping the perceptions and experiences of residents.

Moving away from the trend data, we turn our attention to the 2014 survey. Following again from King-Meadows (2019), we use multiple items to measure resident perceptions about quality of life. We combine answers to seven questions to construct our *Availability of Resources Index*. We normalized responses to range from 0 to 1 and summed those responses (1 = Excellent). We followed the same procedures to construct our *Perception of Safety Index* (1=Very Safe), which was derived from answers to five items, and to construct our *Seriousness of Problems Index* (1 = Very Serious), which was derived from answers to fourteen items. Finally, we measure resident evaluation of the city police using two variables: *Favorability of Police* (0 to 1, with 1 = Very Favorable) and *Rating of Police* (0 to 1, with 0= Poor and 1 = Excellent). To examine objective measures of resident conditions, we focus on three aggregate data measures that reflect the spatial (locational), temporal, and historic circumstances in Baltimore City. Our first measure is socioeconomic cumulative disadvantage derived (*Zip Code Distress*) by utilizing the Distressed Communities Index created by the Economic Innovation Group, Inc.[1] Our second measure is a computed Herfindahl–Hirschman Index (Zip Code *HHI*) score for each zip code using four racial categories: non-Hispanic whites, non-Hispanic blacks, Hispanics, and non-Hispanic other racial minorities. An HHI of 1.0 indicates a locale where everyone has the same race, whereas an HHI of 0.0 indicates a racially/ethnically diverse locale. Our third measure is respondent exposure to crime (*3-YR Crime Average*). We utilize the reported 2011–13 three-year average of total violent and property crime in each planning district, data released in Comstat Data Reports by the Baltimore City Police Department. The three- year average is preferable to both a one-year statistic (e.g. 2013) and a rate (e.g. the percentage of a district's total reported crime relative to the city's total reported crime) because individuals are more likely to notice (and to be concerned about) the sheer volume of criminal activity in their environment and whether it has increased or decreased.

Table 8.1 shows a pattern of substantial racial differences in perceptions about quality of life in the year prior to the 2015 Baltimore Uprising. On average, white respondents were significantly more likely to report high levels of satisfaction with city services, availability of resources, and with the police. There was a 0.11 white-black difference in overall satisfaction, a 0.15 white-black difference in perceptions about available physical and lifestyle resources, a 0.12 white-black difference in rating of police, and a 0.13 white-black difference in having a favorable perception about the police. While there were no significant differences amongst the racial groups regarding their overall perceptions about safety across the city and in their neighborhoods, there

Table 8.1

All White Black Other Minority				
Overall Satisfaction (1 = Very Satisfied)	.48	.56	.45	.38
Availability of Resources Index (1 = Excellent)	.40	.50	.35	.41
Perception of Safety Index (1 = Very Safe)	.62	.62	.63	.59
Seriousness of Problems Index (1 = Very Serious)	.65	.63	.66	.63
Rating of Police (1 = Excellent)	.41	.49	.37	.43
Favorability of Police (1 = Very Favorable)	.49	.59	.46	.42
Objective Measures				
Zip Code Distress Score (0 to 100)	76.7	64.8	81.4	81.4
Zip Code Herfindahl–Hirschman Index (0 to 1)	.58	.52	.60	.60
Planning District 3-YR (2011–2013) Crime Average	4347	4469	4375	3798

were racial differences in perceptions about neighborhood safety at night time and about downtown safety at night time. Whites and other racial minorities were less likely to feel safe being in their neighborhoods and being downtime at night time. The objective measures show similar racial differences in the socioeconomic circumstances facing residents and illustrate the different socioeconomic worlds that the respondents existed in immediately prior to the 2015 Uprisings. On average, white respondents lived in less economically distressed communities than did other respondents (64.8 versus 81.4, a difference of over 16 points) and in less racially/ethnically homogenous communities. Whites also lived in communities with a higher volume of reported total crime. This last statistic does not mean that whites lived in neighborhood with a higher degree of crime than did blacks and other racial minorities; rather, we suggest the racial differences underscore the underreporting of criminal activity which often happens in distressed communities.

Our analysis of the Baltimore City Survey (2009–14) enables us to make two conclusions about residents' perceptions of city services in the years prior to and immediately before the 2015 Uprising. First, residents were generally dissatisfied with overall services, with the police, and the availability of good jobs. Second, the perceptions of city services, socioeconomic circumstances, and experiences with City life were not uniform across racial groups. These experiences and perceptions were also not uniform across economic groups, zip codes, or planning districts.

Our findings parallel what Lawrence Brown documents in *The Black Butterfly: The Harmful Politics of Race and Space in America*, where the phrase "denotes not only where Black Baltimoreans are geographically clustered but also where capital is denied and structural disadvantages have accumulated due to the lack of capital access." For Brown, "Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and the State of Maryland each allow[ed] and enforce[d] racial segregation in ways that structurally advantage wealthier and demographically whiter neighborhoods." Those actions reflected deep anti-black and anti-poor sentiments, hence, as Brown writes, "the Black Butterfly is more than a demographic description; it is a political, an economic, and a sociocultural description."[8] We contend that the intensity and duration of perceptual cleavages about quality of life in Baltimore (and the mechanisms responsible for said quality) reflect the inability of neoliberal governance to deliver substantial benefits for impoverished and minority communities. Such cleavages underscored the necessity for City residents to have connected their frustration, which was manifested in the non-violent protest and

violent expressions underpinning the 2015 Uprising, to an anti-oppressive politics that was more holistic in nature and radical in its attempt to transform urban black politics.

Anti-Oppressive Politics Are Not Neoliberal

We borrow from several scholars of race and gender politics who define neoliberalism as both oppressive inequity and as a subversive political perspective. Neoliberalism is grounded in a political ethos that is combining core liberal and conservative tenets within ideals of modernization, free-markets, and equality. In practice, this approach is politically transformative, but in subversive ways that detract from community agency, resistance, and radicalism. And in spite of their inextricable connections, neoliberalism shifts focus from ongoing legacies of oppression to advance corporate privatization, competitive capitalism, and norms of equality.[9] It is in this committed refusal of the state to take responsibility for reconciling systemic oppressions that we recognize neoliberalism as antithetical to the transformative resistance politics of the M4BL.

But the onslaught of neoliberalism did not predestine a particular type of opposition. In other words, to paraphrase Antonio Gramsci, oppressive constraints are no guarantee of resistance. Yet, in the context of Baltimore, scholars have long documented the resilience and determination of activists, community leaders, and protestors to challenge repression, political exclusion, and deprivation.[10] Nevertheless, systemic oppression does not guarantee the actions of oppressed people.[11] And as bell hooks explains in *Feminist Theory,* although oppression is indeed about the absence of choice, seldom is choice truly eradicated.[12] We must therefore avoid the traps that instinctively separate oppression from resistance and assume a causal connection between radicalism, resistance, and community agency.

We expose these traps in this chapter as we differentiate the relationship between systemic oppression and community agency. Community agency in this radical context is defined as collective organizing towards countering oppressive structures. And thus, as we identify the contributions necessary for developing sustainable community agency, we must also reinforce the fact that not all resistance is created equal.[13] And thus, this section identifies three factors that are present in the Baltimore Uprising and which each detract from the sustainable development of a radical politics rooted in community agency.

Giving particular attention to contemporary social, economic, and racial landscapes, we argue that developing community agency around resistance politics must be politically transformative – that is, assimilating contradictory worldviews or otherwise creating more inclusive political ideologies. This argument is grounded in a belief that incorporating radical agendas is necessary for systemic change. Our argument is set opposite neoliberal notions of diversity and "melting pot" philosophies. We reject meritocratic and marketplace approaches which impose competitive processes and presuppose (or outright disregard) the prerequisite of equality. We reject these assumptions on the grounds that ongoing legacies of oppressions work to guarantee that anti-oppressive agendas are insufficiently considered and applied.[14] Thus, our theory of community agency centers the needs of historically marginalized communities and acknowledges that the ongoing legacies of oppression fundamentally undermine neoliberal affinities for egalitarianism, markets, and merit.

Our argument for community agency is that the requisite political transformations are produced in processes that prioritize the needs, survival, and advancement of historically marginalized groups. What we find amidst the Baltimore uprising, however, are three factors that detract from these priorities and needs: 1) selective coalitions with

Table 8.2

Publication	*No. Articles*	*Date Range*	*Modal Publication Year*
Baltimore Sun	57	April 2015 – June 2020	31 in 2015
New York Times	6	July 2009 – May 2020	-
Washington Post	5	May 2015 – June 2020	2 in 2015
CNN	3	April 2015 – June 2016	2 in 2015
Star Tribune	3	June 2016	3 in 2016
Vice	2	April 2015	2 in 2015
NPR	2	June 2019 – December 2019	2 in 2019
CBS	2	April 2015 – May 2015	2 in 2015
The Guardian	2	August 2016	2 in 2016
African American Policy Forum, Al Jazeera, The Atlantic, City Lab, Department of Justice, Daily News, Economic Policy Institute, Instagram, The Intercept, Los Angeles Times, Mother Jones, Movement for Black Lives, NBC, Time, The Transnational Institute, Tumblr, USA Today, The Verge, Wall Street Journal	12	July 2005 – June 2020	4 in 2020 2 in 2019 3 in 2015 3 in 2014

elected officials; 2) ideological exclusion of radicalism in particular; and 3) invalidating anti-oppressive agendas broadly through neoliberalism. Although each of these priorities could be understandable given Baltimore's socioeconomic and political struggles, we contend that such prioritizing further cements the neoliberal hold on the imaginations of community groups seeking greater agency.

Our argument is that contemporary community agency, particularly among historically marginalized groups, must be built on transformative anti-oppressive politics. Transformative politics are those aiming to invalidate oppressive worldviews en route to more inclusive political ideologies.[15] The idea that anti-oppressive agendas are at the core of sustainable community agency is because they demand systemic accountability. But in the case of the Baltimore Uprising, selective agendas and ideological exclusion combine to invalidate anti-oppressive political agendas – a point we discuss further towards the end of the chapter. Our focus is therefore about identifying and controlling for the ideological exclusion that is suppressing community agency even in the resistance, revolt, and masses' direct action in the Baltimore Uprising.

As such, our argument contrasts with scholars who emphasize the general need for inclusion, cooperation, and communities building coalitions with elected officials. Cutting against this conventional wisdom, we contend that the 2015 Baltimore Uprising contradicted multiple assumptions undergirding community agency by privileging neoliberalism. Through our content analysis of over one-hundred and five articles primarily from *Baltimore Sun* (The Sun), in addition to the DOJ report resulting from the

investigation of the Baltimore Police Department, we find strong supporting evidence for our arguments. As documented in Table 8.2, our articles span from as early as April 21, 2015, and as recent as June 10, 2020, amidst calls for defunding and abolishing the police. The majority of *The Sun* articles we examined – 24 in total – are from the last two weeks in April of 2015 covering the events of the Uprising. Reports about the Uprising in *The Sun* are reinforced and corroborated by other news sources we examine, e.g. *New York Times, Washington Post*, CNN, Al Jazeera, *The Guardian*, National Public Radio. We set aside whether these news sources are commonly perceived as being ideologically aligned to focus instead on how these sources help us to distinguish radical left politics from neoliberalism. We therefore use the sources as entry points for understanding the effect of neoliberalism on the Uprising. Below we examine the issues of selective coalitions, ideological exclusion, and invalidating agendas.

SELECTIVE COALITIONS

We situate the Baltimore Uprising at the crux of two intertwined Black histories: the formative years of the anti-oppressive Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) and the peak of Black electoral and neoliberal politics in the election of Barack Obama. In 2015, these histories were at an ideological crossroads. In spite of a shared enemy in white supremacy, a fundamental disagreement persists around questions of capitalism, respectability politics, and the role of electoral politics. While political misalignment is no sin, it is still particularly detrimental to the development of community agency among historically marginalized groups.

The damage of political misalignment is magnified, we contend, by the embrace of respectability politics by contemporary figures in Black electoral politics.[16] Black respectability politics shifts government responsibility away from institutional practices and towards pathologizing the very vulnerable communities enduring the harms of exclusionary practices.[17] This approach frames indigence as dispositional not as situational, as predominately a failing of personal and moral responsibility and not as an outgrowth of an oppressive socioeconomic structure. President Obama and Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake trafficked in Black respectability politics, perhaps most explicitly when they characterized some protesters as "thugs".[18] It was not lost to observers that Obama's "thugs" comments were among his first comments about what was happening in Baltimore despite the weeks-long non-violent protests that preceded the violence. In other instances, Obama also voiced support for the counter-protests of #BlueLivesMatter and #AllLivesMatter.[19] Meanwhile, with respect to the M4BL, the former president repeatedly chastised movement organizers and activists as uselessly "yelling" and distracting from what he held as the most important form of engagement: voting.[20] Such comments deprioritize the aggressive policing practices of the Baltimore Police Department, the ongoing socioeconomic afterlives of racial enslavement discussed in the previous section, and draws attention away from the institutional practices (e.g. qualified immunity and police unions) thwarting systemic change. We assert that such an emphasis detracts from the development of community agency. Such an emphasis also attempts to sidestep the history of anti-blackness. Many commentators raised this very issue when denouncing the comments made by Obama and Rawlings-Blake. Some drew parallels between the politicians' comments and the anti-Black rhetoric of white politicians in the mid-1990s who referenced "super predators" when describing criminals in predominately Black neighborhoods.[21] Others considered Obama wise for choosing not to publicly challenge police as he did in 2009 when he used the term "stupid" to describe the officer who arrested Henry Lewis Gates for

breaking into his own house.[22] Rather than berating the police, the Obama Administration signed off on a US Department of Justice report that would put the Baltimore Police Department's destructive culture and abuses on the record. However, that DOJ report, as author of the book *Baltimore After Freddie Gray* and journalist for the Baltimore AFRO Newspaper, Sean Yoes observed, was "evidence of everything we [Baltimore City residents] already knew."

We agree with critics of Obama and Rawlings-Blake who questioned the leaders' embrace of "Black respectability politics" to delegitimize Black angst, anger, and political radicalism.[23] Echoing the sentiments of other scholars, we assert that Black respectability politics inherently perpetuate anti-Black oppression and fail to reform the present oppressive system because such narratives shape and are shaped by public policy and the social discourse about "deserving publics".[24] Here then lies the first challenge to developing transformative Black community agency: elites and elected officials prioritizing electoral coalitions but neglecting the shortcomings of majority coalitions – the beneficiaries of respectability, particularly policy agendas benefitting racialized groups and the less affluent urban poor.

As is evidenced through respectability, the problem with selective coalitions that prioritize elected officers, we argue, is that these coalitions too often support working within the oppressive boundaries of the current (electoral) system. Radicalism, as an affirmative political commitment, is a choice made amidst ongoing oppression. And as is the case in most large metropolitan urban centers is true in Baltimore as well – that political radicalism is challenging Democratic Party domination in absence of a competitive alternative. This becomes particularly relevant when we connect selective coalitions to other facets of politics. For example, one-party dominance crowds out radical left politics often in favor of descriptive representation, which fails to deliver substantive benefits to the most vulnerable Black residents. The example of Chicago is worth noting here. Briefly put, while the city's machine politics of the post-Harold Washington Era have remained resoundingly Democratic, the city has a long history of conflict with the radical left. This has led to several destructive consequences, including the city's abhorrent investment in policing, its troubling divestment from Black communities, and its support of widely reputed policing practices.[25]

Take, as an example, the racial population dynamics of Chicago compared to Baltimore. In 2015, the population of Black Chicago was larger than the entire city of Baltimore and roughly a third of Chicago's entire population. Unlike Black Baltimoreans however, Black Chicagoans had not secured descriptive representation in the Mayor's Office after Harold Washington until 2019 when the city elected a Black woman, former federal prosecutor Lori Lightfoot to the office. Baltimore has had three Black women serve as mayors in fewer than fifteen years following the 2007 election of Sheila Dixon. And in November 2020, Councilman Brandon Scott, a Black man, was elected mayor. Black Baltimoreans have experienced many instances of descriptive representation. The chief of police at the time Freddie Gray was killed was Black man, the State's Attorney was a Black woman (Marilyn Mosby), and of the six officers initially charged with Gray's death, two were Black men and one was a Black woman.[26] But despite these visible signs of Black descriptive representation in Baltimore, by 2014, many Black Baltimoreans felt dissatisfied with city government services and felt disenfranchised. Summing up findings from qualitative interviews with 68 black Baltimore City residents – conducted in June 2015 only weeks after the death of Freddie Gray and the Uprising – about the utility of police body-worn cameras, Erin M. Kerrison, Jennifer Cobbina, and Kimberly Bender, write, "No one who spoke with us wanted to be reminded of their assumed inhumanity and the recklessness with which they believed the police would readily handle them."[27] These residents

understood that descriptive representation meant little against a ravenous carceral state and meant little to policymakers conflating blackness with criminality while ignoring criminality as white supremacy. This is precisely why we argue that selective coalitions rooted in respectability politics begin to explain the ways radical Democratic politics are oppressively undermined. Pushing further into such contentions, we consider the implications of ideological exclusion working in tandem with commitments to racial capitalism.

IDEOLOGICAL EXCLUSION

We situate the Baltimore Uprising at the intersection of the M4BL and descriptive representation in the city and across the country. This distinction reaches the core question of this chapter: given Baltimore's predominantly Black population, a Democratic party stronghold, and willingness to engage in mass political participation, why was the Baltimore Uprising not the culmination of mass anti-oppressive community agency?

In discussing selective coalitions as an expression of respectability politics, we show that that community agency is not inherent to blackness nor are acts of radicalism or partisanship.[28] We also find support for our understanding that community agency requires a supportive and anti-oppressive political relationship between the grassroots and elected officials en route to the eradication of oppressions. But the political issues do not stop at limiting relationships – these decisions have severe implications for people continually enduring ongoing legacies of oppression. Thus, while we address the prevalence of systemic oppressions and how they have troubled Baltimore earlier in the chapter, we must also consider how these oppressions have criminalized and impoverished Black Baltimoreans in ways that somehow extricate and exclude radical ideologies.

Contemporary oppressions embrace the amalgamation of competitive, hierarchical, and punitive worldviews. And when these perspectives position individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural interactions towards domination, then these are systemic oppressions. Systemic oppressions represent some of the harshest realities that the Baltimore's most vulnerable residents are forced to endure. While race and gender have long been points of emphasis, more recent M4BL activities push for abolition of ableism, homophobia, and other systemic oppressions. We posit the need for politics that seek accountability for these systemic oppressions in order to establish community agency through contemporary politics. In other words, anti-oppressive political transformation is necessary for sustainable community agency. But in spite of the good in the city, we must account for Baltimore's experiences with systemic oppressions and that is particularly evident at the intersections of neoliberalism and racial capitalism.

For M4BL activists, radical politics enables marginalized communities to engage in governing and in society in ways that do not rely on systemic oppression. Taking this as a foundational premise, we posit that communities need a politics which seeks accountability for these systemic oppressions. In other words, we proffer that sustainable community agency cannot exist outside that of a transformative anti-oppressive political agenda. The difficulty of establishing such an agenda, however, includes the pragmatic and effective sense of neutrality derived from the non-confrontational neoliberal approach. Nevertheless, we also recognize that neutrality in the face of oppression disproportionately burdens historically marginalized communities for whom systemic accountability would significantly increase their chances of survival.

The 2015 Uprising in Baltimore further revealed the danger of neutrality in the face of oppression and the degree to which neoliberal capitalism strengthened oppressive

structures in the city.[29] Take, as an example, the "jewel" of the inner harbor touted by Mayor Martin O'Malley (predecessor to Sheila Dixon who served for eight years) as an economic centerpiece of the city's revitalization efforts. O'Malley presented the inner harbor as a neutral cure for the city's economic woes. Yet, investment in the inner harbor could neither cure the dissatisfaction of Black Baltimoreans nor inculcate them from dangers they expressed on the city's own resident survey.[30]

Black communities also endured the brunt of the city's transition from stop-and-frisk policing practices to a neoliberal vision of policing embodied by O'Malley's "CitiStat" program, a post-9/11 era surveillance program which targeted high crime neighborhoods. The program entailed a beefed up Lojack which monitored city vehicles – garbage trucks, police cars, buses, etc. – and oversaw their performance of duties. And for crime in particular, O'Malley added the HotSpot program which posted officers in areas where criminal activity was most prevalent.[31] Embracing the paradigm of neoliberalism, where the performance of official duties is often privileged over the substantive impact of said duties on minoritized communities, O'Malley and his supporters branded these programs as best practices for US mayors and municipalities. However, these programs inherently reinforced the deprioritizing of Black community investment in favor of establishing new jewels of city incomes.[32]

We do not suggest here that O'Malley's programs did not correlate with reduced crime and increased efficiency with select city resources. Rather, we suggest that whether said institutional reform worked is secondary to whether they advanced systemic accountability. We assert that the reforms did not advance accountability and, by undermining community agency, is reinforcing systemic oppressions. And according to the 2016 DOJ report, the Baltimore City Police Department also evaded systemic accountability in 2014 while engaging in a "practice of conduct that violate[d] the First and Fourth Amendments of the Constitution as well as federal anti-discrimination laws". Other reports on the Baltimore police officers involved in the now infamous Gun Trace Task Force have also been cited as key conspirators in the looting of the burned down CVS during the Uprising and in robbing the pharmacy to perpetuate their city-wide drug and gun dealing exploits.[33]

By 2015, other issues were similarly dire: the city was regularly in the top-five of per capita murder rates (i.e. murders per 100,000 residents) with disproportionately Black victims; the education system was underfunded and segregated; the city remained gripped by a lead paint poisoning crisis; the city could not shake a persistent Black-white income gap; food deserts were endemic; and housing segregation continued unabated.[34] That Freddie Gray himself experienced the litany of these aforementioned problems speaks to the ubiquitous nature of oppression experienced by Black Baltimoreans. That residents of Baltimore experienced ideological exclusion amidst their calls for police abolition and investing in Black futures is also necessary to note.[35]

And although the persistence of systemic oppressions is often acknowledged, these systemic failures have been used to justify increases in funding to these same underlying institutions. This is particularly clear in policing, a core institution of a perpetually oppressive justice system. By further funding oppressive institutions, elected officials are shifting blame to vulnerable communities suffering harm under a banner of personal responsibility. Just as the CitiStat and HotSpot programs were unable to uproot the corrupt culture of policing in Baltimore evident in the DOJ report and the prosecution of the gun trace task force, so too are marketing and efficiency also not solutions to oppressive systemic politics.[36]

The challenge then for Black Baltimoreans, prior to and during the Uprising, was whether to embrace radical policy ideas. In that sense, the 2015 Baltimore Uprising

perfectly exemplifies why systemic oppression does not guarantee the actions of oppressed people. Indeed, elites and non- elites are each capable of endorsing capitalism and respectability politics. Systemic oppressions, their advocates, and their enablers shape the contexts within which oppressed people live. Nevertheless, because oppressed groups cannot be wholly stripped of their agency, scholars must evaluate the actions and political commitments just the same. And when facing neoliberalism, which is effectively shifting blame while funding its own ideological expansion, radicalism inevitably succumbs to ideological exclusion in the absence of community agency driving these politics forward.

We now turn our attention to answer the question of how an Uprising can represent resistance individually while simultaneously working against community agency.

INVALIDATING AGENDAS

While not always deterring mass resistance, the underlying politics of the masses are always susceptible to systemic oppressions.[37] Thus, we must move beyond frameworks that blame oppressed people for being oppressed and instead investigate how grassroots politics are interacting with systems of domination, extending beyond observable action and into core political agendas. For example, the Baltimore Uprising happens at the peak of Black descriptive representation and the beginnings of a revolutionary social movement in the M4BL. The Uprising also aligns with the final stages of the 50-year roll back of civil rights gains. When we consider gentrification in housing, failures of public education, and the decimation of voting rights – these losses are predicated on a neoliberal politics that obsess over moving forward while neglecting the systemic accountability necessary to maintain these gains.[38] This is why we must fully understand political contexts and the agendas influencing grassroots communities, so that we can more fully explicate which political agendas does mass engagement benefit.

With selective coalitions and ideological exclusion, we find grassroots communities primarily being acted upon by neoliberals and the oppressive systems they enable. Whether through capitalism or respectability politics, radical left political agendas are rejected even amidst an international movement for racial justice. With this in mind, we can now understand how the defeat of community agency is a symptom of systemic oppressions. This brings us specifically to the Baltimore Uprising and to answering the question of why radical engagement reaching a critical mass is not quite a culmination of the M4BL. The data reveal that radical political agendas were not championed but rather invalidated as the rebellion progressed – but not because of the grassroots turn to violence.

For example, the majority of April 2015 protests were in the form of relatively spontaneous non- violent civil disobedience. Several well-known civil rights organizations, including the NAACP and ACLU, joined in these marches and released public statements addressed to elected officials. Meanwhile, protesters were consistently harassed by onlookers when moving towards the inner harbor, whiter areas, and city-designated commerce areas. Amidst the racial epithets and some physical attacks, protesters chose not to retaliate until a week later – Monday April 25, 2015. Yet, on one level, the restraint exercised by protesters could be connected to the "soft approach" approach of Baltimore officials in comparison to the militarized approach used in 2014 by Ferguson (Missouri) officials. This approach reflects what Jennifer Cobbina and co-authors referred to as "negotiated management strategies coupled with strategic incapacitation" based upon their interviews with protesters in both cities.[39] That approach would not hold for long and questions would emerge about whether the protests could match the radical promise it suggested.

As Wes Moore and Erica L. Green chronicle in their book *Five Days: The Fiery Reckoning of an American City*, what happened over those five days raised any number of unanswered questions. Our primary focus in this chapter is to answer some of those unanswered questions by identifying the political agendas undergirding this mass action. We find that many of those political agendas invalidated radical politics. The most compelling evidence of this, we contend, is demonstrated by how those "five days" came to an end. For starters, while non-violent protest went on for a week, the transition to violence could not be disconnected from several external factors. Most obvious among these factors are anti-Black racial slurs and physical threats experienced by protesters around the city who felt they received insufficient protection. Another major external factor was the shutdown of a major public transportation hub near Mondawmin Mall. The still unexplained but deliberate shut down of buses that schoolchildren rely on after school coincided with the appearance of police in tactical gear positioned outside of Frederick Douglass High School. The irony could not have been clearer: school officials had dismissed students because they suspected organized violence from the students.[40]

While we are arguing that individualism ruled the day, there are plenty of good reasons why residents would not want their youth at the center of violent revolt, particularly when facing armored, militarized police. In addition, Governor Hogan played a significant role in ending the Baltimore Uprising by deploying the Maryland National Guard, reportedly going against the wishes of Mayor Rawlings-Blake. The deployment of the National Guard in the US intensified and reified the racial dimensions, a deployment which Moore and Greene note are almost exclusively relegated to managing racial conflicts.[41]

Another major factor in ending the violence was previously mentioned: Baltimore's mayor and President Obama describing the violence as the work of "thugs" to national media outlets. We hold aside whether and how the latter's comments will impact scholarly interpretation of his presidential legacy. Rather, here we underscore both significance of President Obama's comments to grassroots activists during the Baltimore Uprising and what said comments suggest about systemic accountability. As discussed above, many found the comments harmful, particularly given actions which leave lingering questions. For instance, how should Baltimore residents and scholars interpret the oft used tactic of deploying the National Guard and heavily militarized police forces to quell race-based revolts? What should scholars and residents make of the fact that conflicting accounts remain about who made the decision to strand hundreds of high schoolers without public transportation, which would then put them in direct line with armed police forces? And amidst these actions, how does Baltimore interpret the overarching narrative of "thugs"? Our answers center on the ways in which radical agendas were invalidated radical agendas.

Take, as an example, that many Black Baltimoreans rejected both the violent elements within the Uprising and the characterization of all protestors as violent, uninformed, or outsider agitators. This rejection occurred long before the CVS was set ablaze. So, while the combination of violent resistance, youth engagement, political chastising, police instigation, and the National Guard helped end the protests, the community also ended the protests. However, ending the protests may have undermined the promise of the protests: many Baltimoreans prioritized working with the same elected officials who seemed to legitimize or reinforce the language. While many applauded the steadfast commitment to non-violence, others saw this commitment as undermining the presentation and adoption of a more radical community-centered agendas.

For instance, advocates of non-violence widely encouraged the enforcement of a city-wide curfew. Most tellingly, these advocates included the city's most notorious gangs – the Bloods, Crips, and Black Guerilla Family. These gangs came together of their own accord to join with church leaders and city police to uphold their desires to be a part of communities with agency. These groups identified themselves as community defenders and did so by supporting both an intrusion on Black civil rights and a carceral state that survives by feeding off the oppression of racial minorities. Thus, in one of the most telling ironies associated with the Uprising, are the efforts of the city's gangs to help to "police" the streets of Baltimore and asking Black residents to set aside the history of Black people being criminalized and to align themselves with the same state which manages their collective oppression. In the end, many community residents rejected the interventions of gang members and were unwilling to embrace the gangs' version of reimagined community agency. Others welcomed the gangs' intervention, which was unsurprising given longstanding unfavorable perceptions of the police. Still other residents emailed officials or posted to social media in attempts to point out that the structures which created deprivation in Baltimore. Respectively speaking, these practices are what scholars Stephanie Dolamore and Mariglynn Edlins read as residents' requests for "empathy".[42]

The day after many sites in Baltimore were burned, there was a mass outpouring of good will in Black Baltimore neighborhoods. Residents showed up en masse to clean up the city, including the burned down CVS. Pictures of these events seemed to reinforce an image of Black people once popularized by the traditional Civil Rights Movement's embrace of Black respectability politics: a patient people plagued by the persecution, pillaging, plundering of state actors and uncomfortable with Black rage. (Investigations into corruption and malfeasance by city police would reveal that the burned down CVS was looted by rogue officers of the Baltimore City Police Department.)

In the end, multiple factors contributed to stymieing the kinetic energy of the Baltimore Uprising and to stunting the transformation of urban Black politics: the chastising of Black protestors by the Black president and the Black mayor; the white governor activating the national guard arguably over the mayor's objections; the local police department threatening young people with arrest and with death; the closure of public transportation; and also the Black Baltimoreans who, under perpetual duress, decided to work in concert with the same oppressive state that failed to support Black socio-economic gains.

Conclusion

Our arguments and analyses center on the idea that producing a sustainable community today requires both agency and anti-oppressive politics. Through our analyses of Black Baltimoreans, the Baltimore Uprising, and the local elected officials, we find encouraging support for our claims and reject the idea that all community-centered action – including mass resistance – is inherently anti-oppressive. In line with the M4BL's explicit commitments, Black Baltimoreans were challenging neoliberal politics that have failed them for decades – speaking most immediately to Freddie Gray Jr., but also to a police department cited by the DOJ as systemically violating civil rights and perpetually failing to diminish crime.

These residents, we argue, clearly understood two things: first, that protest alone could not guarantee a successful transformation of circumstances affecting the quality of life in Baltimore; and second that racial inequity could persist despite policies and

procedures designed to stimulate socioeconomic growth and protect the freedom of groups to exert their full rights as citizens. These radical residents were met by local, state, and national elites – including elected officials and their troops – who physically imposed their support for neoliberalism.

We contend that the failure of the 2015 Baltimore Uprising to transform urban Black politics was unsurprising given both the ideological heterogeneity in Black America and the grasp of neoliberal politics on the ideological imagination of urban elites. Our findings highlight several of these divides across Baltimore communities in general, and Black Baltimore communities in particular. Findings from the Baltimore Citizen Satisfaction Survey reveal racial, generational, and experiential cleavages in perceptions about quality of life in Baltimore. A majority of Baltimoreans were generally dissatisfied with service delivery and prospects for economic mobility. In addition, findings from a content analysis of news accounts about the Uprising and resident opinions reveal substantive clashes across communities about how to relieve and resolve persistent inequity. While a majority of Baltimoreans were expressly committed to non-violent political protest, there were many others whose politics were focused on more explicitly radical responses to systemic oppression.

In all, our analysis reveals three reasons why Black Baltimoreans broadly struggled to coalesce and community-build during the Uprising. First, the established black political leadership class failed to embrace an anti-oppressive political agenda which called into question the tenets of neoliberalism. Second, power-holding elites excluded radical leftist politics in favor of a neoliberal politics that did little to relieve local communities experiencing systemic inequality. Third, power-holding elites pre-empted the radical left from effectively mobilizing allies to recreate community norms, expectations, and goals. In short, by pre-empting a new power dynamic between the governed and the governing, the establishment class stunted the development of a post-Uprising socioeconomic infrastructure that centered the needs of poor Baltimoreans. Out of this failure Black and white Baltimoreans struggled outside of (and against) the "politics" of the establishment. As a result, residents did not create an inclusive, interpersonal, multiracial, cross-class, multigenerational coalition.

In sum, our multimethod study of the 2015 Baltimore Uprising and related scholarship about the Uprising underscores the necessity of politically transformative twenty-first century community building to thwart the persistence of structural inequalities. However, by all accounts Baltimoreans were quite dissatisfied with quality of life in the city three years after the election of President Obama and after successive elections of Black mayors. This dissatisfaction was predictable, but not inevitable; poor urban communities are not destined to be dissatisfied with government services. Officials can improve the quality of life for its most vulnerable residents. Moreover, community building can be politically transformative if communities seek to develop inclusive interpersonal networks and norms. We contend that post-unrest positive change can only occur if Black communities build coalitions that substantively incorporate non-conformist and radical politics. Without this incorporation, achieving political equity will remain elusive if communities have that shared goal. Incorporation however is itself risky: connecting non-conformist politics and radical politics often makes it costly to maintain descriptive representation.

Notes

1 For a discussion on why nomenclature matters, see Evan Serpick, "Why we should call recent Baltimore events an 'uprising'." *BaltimoreSun.com*. September 24, 2015, and Lief Frederickson, "The Riot Environment: Sanitation, Recreation, and Pacification in the Wake of

Baltimore's 1968 Uprising." In *Baltimore revisited: Stories of inequality and resistance in a US City,* edited by P. Nicole King, Kate Drabinski, and Joshua Clark Davis, pages 87–102. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2019. Also see discussions on the Haitian Revolution, the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and specific revolts (e.g. the L. A. Rebellions, the Nat Turner Revolt, John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry): Tarrow, Sidney G. 2011. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge University Press; Scott, James C. Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts. Yale University Press, 1990; Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the past: Power and the production of history*. Beacon Press, 1995; Getachew, Adom. "Universalism after the post-colonial turn: Interpreting the Haitian revolution." *Political Theory* 44, no. 6 (2016): 821–45; Kelley, Robin. *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class*. Simon and Schuster, 1996; Umoja, Akinyele Omowale. *We Will Shoot Back: Armed Resistance in the Mississippi Freedom Movement*. NYU Press, 2013.

2 King-Meadows, Tyson D. "Harbingers of unrest in Baltimore: racial and spatial cleavages in satisfaction with quality of life before the 2015 Uprising." *Politics, Groups, and Identities* (2019): 1–22.

3 Kevin Rector, "The 45-minute mystery of Freddie Gray's Death", *Baltimore Sun,* April 25, 2015.

4 The M4BL's decentralized leadership structure and overt centering of intersectionality were an anathema to individuals seemingly satisfied with traditional Black civil rights organization like the National Council of Negro Women, the National Urban League, and the NAACP. "About Black Lives Matter." 2019. https://Blacklivesmatter.com/about/; And on Trayvon Martin, the defense would successfully argue that the 17-year-old Martin weaponized an immovable sidewalk. For more, see: Lee, Marcus. "Originating Stand Your Ground." *Du Bois Review* 16, no. 1 (2019): 107–29.

5 Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. *From# BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Haymarket Books, 2016; Taylor, Keeanga- Yamahtta, ed. *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective*. Haymarket Books, 2017; Ransby, Barbara. *Making All Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the Twenty-First Century*. Univ of California Press, 2018; Bailey, Julius, and David J. Leonard. 2015. "Black Lives Matter: Post-Nihilistic Freedom Dreams." *Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric 5*;Hope, Elan C., Micere Keels, and Myles I. Durkee. 2016. "Participation in Black Lives Matter and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals: Modern Activism among Black and Latino College Students." *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* 9 (3): 203; Lebron, Chris. 2017. *The Making of Black Lives Matter: The History of an Idea*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (January 1, 2020); Nunnally, Shayla C. 2018. "(Re)Defining the Black Body in the Era of Black Lives Matter: The Politics of Blackness, Old and New." *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 6: 138–52; Rickford, Russell. 2016. "Black Lives Matter: Toward a Modern Practice of Mass Struggle." *New Labor Forum* 25(1): 34–42; Tillery, Alvin B. 2019. "What Kind of Movement is Black Lives Matter? The View from Twitter." *Journal of Race, Ethnicity and Politics*. 4(2): 297–323.

6 For more detailed information on the Baltimore Citizen Survey, see King-Meadows (2019).

7 This figure skyrockets to 81 percent if you exclude the "Don't Know" and "Refused" responses. While our calculations exclude the latter, we include the former in Figure 8.2 to illustrate a more conservative estimate of the dissatisfaction and to highlight that a far greater percentage of respondents were sure of their economic prospects by 2014.

8 Lawrence T. Brown, *The Black Butterfly: The Harmful Politics of Race and Space in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2021), p. 9, 111. See also, Lawrence Brown, "Two Baltimores: The White L Vs. the Black Butterfly", *Baltimore Sun*, June 28, 2016.

9 Robinson, Cedric J. *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. Univ.of North Carolina Press, 2000; Melamed, Jodi. "Racial capitalism." *Critical Ethnic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2015): 76–85; Marx, Karl. *The Marx-Engels reader*. Vol. 4. New York: Norton, 1972; Dawson, Michael C., and Megan Ming Francis. "Black Politics and the Neoliberal Racial Order." *Public Culture* 28, no. 1 (78) (2016): 23–62; Dawson, Michael C. "Hidden in Plain Sight: A Note on Legitimation Crises and the Racial Order." *Critical Historical Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016): 143–61; Fraser, Nancy. "Behind Marx's 'Hidden Abode': Toward an Expanded Conception of Capitalism." *Inaugural Manchester Lecture in Global Political Economy, Political Economy Institute, Manchester University, 13th February* (2014); Fraser, Nancy. *Fortunes of Feminism: From State-managed capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis*. Verso Books, 2013; Fraser, Nancy. "Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History." (2012); Spence, Lester K. *Knocking the Hustle: Against the Neoliberal turn in Black Politics*. Punctum Books,

2015. On the norm of equality, see: Mendelberg, Tali. *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality*. Princeton University Press, 2017.

10 Cobbina, Jennifer E., Soma Chaudhuri, Victor M. Rios, and Michael Conteh. 2019. "'I Will Be Out There Every Day Strong!' Protest Policing and Future Activism Among Ferguson and Baltimore Protesters." *Sociological Forum*, 34(2): 409–33. Yoes, Sean. 2018. *Baltimore After Freddie Gray: Real Stories from One of America's Great Imperiled Cities*. Baltimore, MD: Sean Yoes/AFRO American Newspaper.

11 Scott, James C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden transcripts*. Yale University Press, 1990.

12 hooks, bell. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. Pluto Press, 2000; Scott 1990; Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Beacon Press, 1995; Getachew, Adom. "Universalism after the Post-colonial Turn: Interpreting the Haitian Revolution." *Political Theory* 44, no. 6 (2016): 821–45.

13 Small, Mario Luis. *Villa Victoria: The Transformation of Social Capital in a Boston barrio*. University of Chicago Press, 2004.; Sampson, Robert J., Stephen W. Raudenbush, and Felton Earls. "Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy." *science* 277, no. 5328 (1997): 918–24; Morenoff, Jeffrey D., Robert J. Sampson, and Stephen W. Raudenbush. "Neighborhood inequality, collective efficacy, and the spatial dynamics of urban violence." *Criminology* 39, no. 3 (2001): 517–58; Sampson, Robert J. "Collective efficacy theory: Lessons learned and directions for future inquiry." *Taking stock: The status of criminological theory* 15 (2006): 149–67.

14 These challenges to neoliberal logics include Wendy Brown, Lester Spence, Michael Dawson, Megan Ming-Francis, Joy James, and Alfonso Gonzales. Their work highlights the slipperiness of neoliberalism, the ways reform obscures the avoidance of justice, how focusing on future gains disregards the need to restore order from past harms, and the myriad ways that capitalism and colonialism oppress egalitarian-faced politics. See also Beltrán, Cristina. *The Trouble with Unity: Latino Politics and the Creation of Identity*. Oxford University Press, 2010.

15 Abolition is instructive in the discussion of invalidating oppressive worldviews. Abolitionists reject coalition building with perceived oppressive institutions, e.g. abolition of US enslavement and more recent efforts to abolish police. Anti-apartheid efforts are also relevant. As for transformative politics, see Cohen, Cathy J. "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Real Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 3 (2005).

16 Gillespie, Andra, ed. *Whose Black Politics? Cases in Post-Racial Black Leadership*. Routledge, 2010; Harris, Fredrick. *The Price of the Ticket: Barack Obama and Rise and Decline of Black Politics*. OUP, 2012; Bobo, Lawrence D., and Michael C. Dawson. "A Change Has Come: Race, Politics, and the Path to the Obama Presidency." *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* (2009); Pinder, Sherrow O. *Colorblindness, Post-Raciality, and Whiteness in the United States*. Springer, 2015.

17 See: Nunnally 2018; Spence 2015; Price 2009.

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19 See Board, Marcus (forthcoming) *Invisible Weapons of Domination: Infiltrating Resistance and Defeating Movements in a Neoliberal Era.* On Obama supporting blue lives matter and all lives matter counter-revolutionary protests in wake of the murder of Philando Castile in Minneapolis, see https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2016/07/07/minn-cop- fatally-shoots-man-during-traffic-stop-aftermath-broadcast-on-facebook/

20 See Michael D. Shear and Liam Stack, "Obama Says Movements Like Black Lives Matter 'Can't Just Keep on Yelling'" *New York Times*, April 23, 2016. https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/24/us/obama-says-movements-like-Black-lives- matter-cant-just-keep-on-yelling.html; Also see: Obama, Barack H. 2019. "Barack Obama takes on 'woke' call-out culture: 'That's not activism'" (Video). October 30. https://www.theguardian.com/us- news/video/2019/oct/30/barack-obama-calls-out-politically-woke-social-media-generation-video

21 For why such comments hearkened back to Hillary Clinton's commentary on "super predators", see Anne Gearan and Abby Phillip. "Clinton regrets 1996 remark on 'super-predators' after encounter with activist." *Washington Post*, February 25, 2016.
22 Moore and Green 2020 provide good discussion on pages 196–7.
23 See: *The Anger Gap,* Phoenix 2019
24 Gadinger, Frank, Ochoa, Christopher Smith, and Yildiz, Taylan. 2019. "Resistance or Thuggery?: Political Narratives of Urban Riots." *Narrative Culture* 6(1): 88–111. On "welfare queen" mythology, see: Hancock 2004. Also see Martin Gilens, *Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Antipoverty Policy* (University of Chicago Press, 2009). On racially coded campaign messaging, see: Tali Mendelberg, *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality* (Princeton University Press, 2017) and Andar Gillespie, *The New Black politician: Cory Booker, Newark, and Post-Racial America* (New York University Press, 2012).
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