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“SAVE ONE FOR YOURSELF”: A RECONSIDERATION OF THE HOUSTON REBELLION OF 1917

by

MALCOLM KHALIL THOMPSON

A master’s thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

2019

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

____________________	____________________
Date	Karen Miller Thesis Advisor
____________________	____________________
Date	Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis Executive Officer

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

ABSTRACT

"SAVE ONE FOR YOURSELF": A RECONSIDERATION OF THE HOUSTON REBELLION OF 1917

by

MALCOLM KHALIL THOMPSON

The rebellion in Houston was an important incident of Black radical activity in the early twentieth century. Research has examined the events in Houston in detail and built a narrative of an exceptional event. This study aims to reconsider the narrative of the Houston Rebellion on more localized levels, as well as in its broader historical context. Building on existing research on the rebellion this study introduces new elements such as the position of the Black community in Houston, and the consciousness and experience of the Black soldiers involved in the rebellion. Additionally this study contextualizes the rebellion more broadly as an act of Black radicalism, considering with greater depth the significance of the rebellion. This analysis of the rebellion reveals the Houston Rebellion was a moment produced from the complex past of Black people in Houston as well as a distinct experienced positionality of Black soldiers. Furthermore this study shows the rebellion was not an isolated event of Black radicalism. Rather it was a particularly explosive moment resulting from circumstances that accentuated the conflict between the reality of Black life and the insufficiency of Black political ideologies of its time.

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Special shout out to the music of: Otis Redding, Lupe Fiasco, Talib Kweli, John Coltrane, Wes Montgomery, Queen Latifah, Wu-Tang Clan, Thelonius Monk, Alice Coltrane, Jill Scott, Yasiin Bey, Kanye West, Future, Aretha Franklin, Minnie Riperton, Lauryn Hill, Kid Cudi, Aaliyah, EarthGang, Miles Davis, Sara Vaughn, J. Dilla, Del the Funky Homposapien, Erykah Badu, A Tribe Called Quest, Sade, Charles Mingus, Stevie Wonder, Tupac, Hazel Scott, Frank Ocean, Bad Brains, Earl Sweatshirt, Brandy, Bilal, Pusha T, D'Angelo, Gil-Scott Heron, Sampha, Outkast, Kaytranada, Bessie Smith, and others.

Soundtracks are important.

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If We Must Die

If we must die, let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
Making their mock at our accursed lot.
If we must die, O let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be shed
In vain; then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!
O kinsmen! we must meet the common foe!
Though far outnumbered let us show us brave,
And for their thousand blows deal one death-blow!
What though before us lies the open grave?
Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

- Claude McKay

Introduction

Multiple scholars, most notably Robert Haynes in his 1976 work *A Night of Violence*, have detailed the Houston affair at length. These scholars, and Haynes in particular lay out a detailed analysis of the events in Houston. Their contributions and the information about Houston they provide are useful and important, however the narrative they present paints a picture of a tragic riot by angry Black soldiers in response to racist abuse. This narrative of the events in Houston it is one which ignores the depth of its setting, the fullness and complexity of its subjects, the echoing reverberations of the cries and gunshots, and the fundamental relationship to political questions surrounding Black humanity which are at the core of the Houston Rebellion.

The the events in Houston have been know widely as the Houston Riot, however in this work they are referred to throughout as the Houston Rebellion. Riots are commonly understood as isolated episodes by groups acting outside of the western understanding of rationality. Here, to more accurately capture the inherent political significance of the uprising and its participants, the events in Houston are identified as a rebellion. Historically, going back to slave rebellions, the coverage and promulgation of information surrounding Black rebellions has been intentionally suppressed, therefore it is important not continue such erasure by reducing Black rebellions into riots in our collective memories. The rebellion in Houston must be properly seen as the largest act of transgressive violence by Black people against whites—in terms of whites killed—since the Civil War, additionally the Houston Rebellion represents the first documented Black Rebellion since Nat Turner's 1831 rebellion where more whites were killed than Blacks.

Whereas a riot maybe conceived of as a senseless violent act a rebellion is an *inherently* political act and when considering Houston it is important to remember that distinction.

My work begins by addressing the smaller scale aspects of the Houston Rebellion, emphasizing the consideration of the politics of Black existence in Houston at the time. This section details the history of the Black community in Houston, in order to reexamine the rebellion's political nature on a localized level. Through examining the complexity of the Black community in Houston as both a site of Black autonomy as well as the recipient of white repression, this section explores how the presence of the soldiers played into this existing dynamic. Additionally this section explores the ways which the Black community in Houston impacted the soldiers

The next section considers more deeply the subjectivity of the soldiers of the rebelling Twenty-Fourth Infantry, illustrating that well before the spark that ignited the rebellion there were signs of a strong group consciousness amongst the soldiers of the all-Black Twenty-Fourth Infantry. This chapter attempts to analyze that group consciousness through examining, both the Twenty-Fourth's history as a regiment as well as the soldiers lived experiences and actions leading up to the rebellion. This chapter displays how the soldiers' reality in Houston conflicted with their ideals as Black soldiers producing radical understandings of their group consciousness.

The latter chapters of this work shift to broader considerations of the Houston Rebellion and its implications as an act of Black radicalism. The third section examines the wartime climate and discusses other incidents of WWI Black radicalism and their relationship to the events in Houston. First, this section considers the radical anti-war writings of the "New Negro" socialist based in New York. Second, it considers Calvin

White's study of the anti-war resistance by the Church of God in Christ based in Mississippi. Finally this section examines the occurrence of mass Black draft dodging and resisting, through the examination of both secondary studies of the occurrence as well as military data on induction and desertion. Here the work connects the concern with Black material reality to the emergence of various forms of Black radical resistance, as is the case in Houston.

The final section connects the radical nature of the Houston Rebellion and its relationship with the form conventional Black thought that was prominent during the wartime period. This section specifically argues that the Houston Rebellion, emerged from the contradiction between conventional ideas of Black politics with Black oppressive realities. This section provides evidence for this claim by analyzing how the rebellion resonated with Black people through examining newspaper articles in the Black press. Additional evidence is provided through examining how the rebellion resonated and produced anxiety amongst Black elites. This work concludes by looking at how the sentiment that led to the rebellion resonated with Black people in the years following the rebellion through continued forms of Black radicalism rooted in Black material reality.

Part 1: Reconsideration of a Rebellion in Houston

Blacks in Houston

Houston was far more than just a generic southern site where this rebellion occurred. Rather, Houston's history as it relates to Black people, is vastly important in understanding the rebellion. Historian Tyina Steptoe writes "The black migrants who poured into Houston over the years worked to build an alternate geography over this landscape of violent white supremacy. Black Houstonians strove to create autonomous neighborhoods in order to forge a spatial—and psychological—distance between themselves and the white power structure."[1] This dispels the notion that Houston existed only as a stagnant setting for events; rather the Black community in Houston was a creation by Black people, with deep implications for any complete understanding of the rebellion. Therefore this section explores how the soldiers' presence and the Black community in Houston both impacted and derived meaning from each other, in ways important to the rebellion.

Interestingly enough the Black origins of creating community in Houston run deep in the most literal sense. Houston founders Augustus and John Allen used enslaved Blacks in addition to imprisoned Mexicans to clear the bayou land on which they founded Houston. Houston was an important location, which connected the highly profitable plantations with the port of Galveston Island. In this sense Houston can be understood as a city founded on slave labor in multiple ways, not only by the labor of enslaved Blacks who physically cleared the land, but also by achieving its economic stability from the commerce made possible by labor of enslaved Blacks working the surrounding plantations. Furthermore Houston became the sight of a thriving slave market, where

many enslaved Blacks were sold to plantations in the surrounding area known as the "Sugar Bowl".[2]

The creation of Houston was a product of the westward expansion of the plantation slavery that had thrived in the southeast region of the United States. The implementation of slave society in eastern-Texas resulted in a reproduction of southeastern plantation-style racial hierarchies. Enslaved Blacks from the southeast were forced to migrate westward into eastern-Texas with their owners. Consequently this resulted in enslaved Black people from the southeast, reproducing forms of community in their new surroundings. Steptoe notes, "African Americans forced west strove to recreate the cultural practices that had sustained slave communities for centuries. Ripped from family and the land they had once called home, slaves brought cultural practices cultivated in the Southeast to the counties of eastern Texas."[3] These practices by slaves in the Sugar Bowl and east-Texas areas surrounding Houston are particularly relevant as enslaved Blacks from these areas would be the first to migrate to Houston following the end of the Civil War, before additional enslaved Blacks migrated from other former slave holding states. These former enslaved peoples came to Houston and once again began to create community, this time in a quasi-urban center. By 1870 Houston was just under 40 percent Black. Formerly enslaved men and women created a Black neighborhood dubbed Freedman's Town. Significantly, it was this place (although renamed San Felipe in the early 20th century) that would be the primary site for the rebellion in 1917. The naming of Freedman's Town explicitly displays how the Black understanding of Houston, situated the freedom of former enslave Blacks as crucial to their presence in Houston. Even as Black Houston became decentralized from just Freedman's Town this

understanding continues through the practice of naming parks and spaces with references to emancipation.

Of course the Black community in Houston did not exist in isolation, and the freedom and mobility, which were innate to the creation of this community, made it a ready target of white supremacy. In the wake of emancipation, the state of Texas, as well as many other former Confederate states, took measures to disfranchise free Black peoples. Steptoe writes, "White lawmakers completed the Jim Crow–ing of Houston in the first two decades of the twentieth century through a series of city ordinances. The Democrat-ruled local government prohibited integration in every space where black and white people made contact."[4] Despite the suppression of freedoms Black Houston continued to construct and reinforce its presence, when Black Houstonians were banned from celebrations such as the 4th of July festivities they instead held annual Juneteenth celebrations at Emancipation Park. Additionally they established Black schools, libraries and even a Black baseball team as alternatives to white institutions, which excluded Blacks. These spaces operated not only as alternatives but they also represented an expression of Black mobility and agency, which had become a feature of the Black community in Houston.

Soldiers in Black Houston

The soldiers' arrival in Houston marked their entrance into an intricately constructed place with a delicate tension, between its existence as a site for Black mobility and creation of community, and the white repression of that mobility and community. That idea Houston existed, as a space of Black autonomy and also white

repression was crucial to the experience of the soldiers. The members of the Twenty-Fourth, as soldiers, maintained a certain level of freedom and respect, which they were able to wield due their status as soldiers. This kind of prestige that their position held was particularly important to them. They saw it as a product of Black freedom. Haynes describes some of the encounters between soldiers and local Black Houstonians

> "Black Houstonians of all ages flocked to the camp to witness first hand the life of a soldier…. Civic organizations arranged special entertainment for the men; ladies auxiliaries and sororities kept them well supplied with reading material and food; ministers held worship services in the evenings and on the weekends; young ladies came to visit acquaintances and to make new ones; and peddlers of every variety went there in search of new clients."[5]

The interaction between Black Houston—both its people and its institutions—with the Black soldiers who in many respects represented an outside form of Black freedom and autonomy is clear here. Hazel Hainsworth-Young, who was a 12 year-old child when soldiers arrived, provided some insight into the perception of soldiers in Black Houston. When interviewed for a 2006 documentary, said, "And when the soldiers came, they came to Antioch. All the young ladies and little ones to were admiring those soldiers from Chicago, who came to our church. I was twelve years old looking up at soldiers who looked better than anybody I had ever seen. I was trying to be seen too… Those were our heroes."[6] Her youthful remembrance shows the admiration that the soldiers received in Black Houston, as Antioch refers to a Black Baptist church. The fact that even as a child Hainsworth-Young was able to have such clear positive image of the Black soldiers gives an idea of how the soldiers were perceived by Black Houston. Thelma Scott-Bryant age 100 who was also a child when the soldier arrives, adds in her interview that, "We did not know any soldiers personally except the ladies were all trying to marry a solider or have a soldier boyfriend."[7] Dominant gender norms of the day

encouraged the perception of soldiers as desirably masculine, but on a much deeper level the soldiers represented a level of respectability and citizenship, which was widely desirable to Blacks regardless of gender.

Additionally this battalion of the Twenty-Fourth had in their two years of service prior, been stationed in places such as San Francisco, Wyoming, and New Mexico, where discrimination was in all at a much lesser degree than what was customary in Houston. They were, by all accounts, accustomed to interacting with whites frequently on terms that would be impermissible anywhere in the South at the time much less Houston.[8] As the Black community in Houston had an strong sense of autonomy and freedom, its very existence contested white supremacy and racist oppression. The Black soldiers sought to exercise a level of autonomy themselves and contested white domination almost immediately upon their arrival. On the very first evening the soldiers arrived July 28th 1917, Black soldiers "ripped the 'colored' signs from the streetcars and either tossed them out the window or kept them as souvenirs."[9] In other conflicts with the white supremacy Black soldiers in streetcars sat in seats reserved for whites and refused to give up Hazel Hainsworth-Young recalled the atmosphere at the time, "Well to send soldiers from the North to a deeply southern ingrained town was just like waving a red flag, they resented those soldiers who looked better and had more, evidently more, than the white people did; it was a situation that was tense."[10] Hainsworth-Young's account highlights how the soldiers' status played into the racial tension of Houston. This tension that stemmed from Houston's history, of Black freedom and autonomy that developed following emancipation and was subsequently belied by the racist, white power apparatus which emerged during the fall of Reconstruction and rise of formal Jim Crow. The

soldiers' status in fact meshed very well with the history of Black communities in Houston, in a way the soldiers' presence in Houston was a symbolic personification of the positive aspects of Black life in Houston. However if the soldiers embodied the positives of Black community in Houston then it was up to the white racist order of Houston to try to negate the soldiers' status.

The soldiers' presence as Blacks in Houston necessitated a form of repression from the white Houston establishment similar to that which the Black community in Houston endured. There was an attempt to control soldiers in the codified sense similar to the way Jim Crow laws controlled Black Houston. Colonel Newman, the white officer in command of the Third Battalion, coordinated with the leading figures of the white Houston, Chief of Police Clarence L. Brock, Mayor Dan Moody and city secretary Guy McLaughlin, in order to come up with terms through which to control the Black soldiers. Newman's policies which included the disarming of his military police, curfew, and limits to the number soldiers who could congregate, not only displayed his lack of faith in his men but it also left his soldiers humiliated and exposed to police harassment.[11] Police harassment and intimidation represented the physical form of the white supremacist order controlling Black Houston. It is evident in the events leading up to the rebellion that this also became the method of attempting to control the Black soldiers in Houston. Black soldiers outside status and representation as free and mobile clashed both with the limits and constrictions white society imposed on Black Houston.

Rebellion & Black Houston

It should not be forgotten that the rebellion, for all the other factors that led to it, was actually sparked by an incident between the white police and a Black woman. The incident began when officer Lee Sparks, who was notorious among residents in the Black community of Houston for his brutality, questioned, a local Black woman and mother of five, Sara Travers, about a fleeing suspect. Sparks became infuriated by her responses and reportedly said "You all God damn nigger bitches, since these damn soldiers came here you are trying to take the town." As she protested the officers' unwarranted presence in her home Sparks responded "Don't you ask an officer what he want in your house… I'm from Fort Bend and we don't allow niggers to talk back to us. We generally whip them down there." Sparks partner Lee Daniels who can come to back up his partner suggested giving her "her ninety days on the Pea Farm cause she's one of the biggity nigger women." Both officers proceeded to slap and brutalize Travers. Then Travers—who, by her own account was indecently dressed—was forcibly, dragged her out of her house by the officers.[12] This relates back to the origins of Black Houston, as the officer's verbal and physical abuse of Travers operates as a method of white control that works in a specific anti-Black misogynistic way. In this context the violation of a Black woman was not just a consequence of racism but also a misogynistic form of instituting white supremacy, that supported the racist power structure in Houston. Moreover it is important to highlight that Travers was not solely a passive victim but was actively resistant to the brutalization by Sparks, both resisting physically and audibly. This very process, of manifestations of Black autonomy being constrained by forces of white Houston but also resisting such constraint, is very much at the core of the rebellion. This

connection with Black Houston is even more evident through the way that Officer Sparks connects to the presence of Black soldiers in town to his perception of the Black woman in town. He clearly felt it necessary to undo any feeling of protection the soldiers might have afforded Black woman or any aspirations to display more bold action of freedom and mobility as a result of the soldiers' presence.

Sparks' remarks have further significance because he asserts that he was from Fort Bend which, was one of the surrounding counties of Houston which, during the antebellum years, was rich in plantation slavery and from which many slaves fled to Houston after emancipation. Therefore in a haunting sense his reaction to Travers acted a method of policing Blacks in Houston, which harkened back to the plantation systems of control which many Black Houstonians had fled from in the recent past. This is followed by the last threat by Daniels of sending Travers to jail (Pea Farm), which was the literal absence of freedom as a means of controlling the threat of the free and protected Black woman in Houston. As Thelma Scott-Bryan recalled of her memories as a child in Houston at the time, "The white man expected you to stay in your place and we knew how to stay in our place rather than cause a lot of trouble. That was just the way it had to be at that time. You got out your place well then they put you back in it."[13] To Daniels and Sparks, Sara Travers clearly represented a Black woman who had gotten out of "her place" and they physically attempted to put her back in it.

After dragging Travers from her home the officers proceeded to take her to a callbox and a crowd of about twenty Black people gathered, hearing Travers screams of protest. Private Alonso Edwards who was amongst the crowd attempted to intervene offering to pay the fine of whatever had occurred. Sparks went over to the soldier and hit

him in the head with his gun five or six times. Sparks would later remark "I wasn't going to wrestle with a big nigger like that, I hit him until he got his heart right."[14] Significantly all of this occurred in the San Felipe district, which had been renamed from Freedman's Town a few years earlier. Here both the place of Black Houston and the circumstance of the Black soldier collided in a dramatic encounter. Around a crowd of Black Houstonians, in a place that had been developed by emancipated slaves, the act of beating a Black soldier who attempts to intervene on behalf of a Black Houstonian woman takes on a heightened significance. Not only did this act reinforce constraints onto Black Houston and the limitedness of it as a place but is also reduces outside image of Black freedom into bloody rubble. Additionally such actions served as a spectacle, which sought to crush any imaginations of freedom for Black Houstonians, as well as any hope by Black soldiers to inspire such imaginations. As mentioned earlier the prevailing image of the Black soldier was that of a proud and heroic figure; by reinforcing the reality that he could not, on the most basic level protect one of the most exploited members of the community—the Black Houstonian woman—from white supremacist abuse, the white order in Houston directly attacked the positive image of the Black soldier. It was replaced by the haunting image of a bloodied Private Edwards and bruised Sara Travers being placed in the same patty wagon and sent to the city jail, in front of a crowd of Black Houstonians, on the site of what was historically Freedman's Town. It is this image that most concretely connects the local circumstances of Houston to the inception of the rebellion.

The next series of events involving Corporal Charles Baltimore arguably more directly led to the rebellion, which occurred that night. Corporal Baltimore was serving

as a senior member of the provost guard, the group that had been disarmed by Colonel Newman's policies. Having been given an account of the earlier incident by a fellow soldier, Corporal Baltimore sought out Daniels and Sparks for more information, to which Sparks answered "I don't report to no niggers" and proceeded to beat Corporal Baltimore with the barrel of his gun. He then shot at Baltimore who fled and upon apprehending him proceeded to beat him further.[15] Although the assault of Corporal Baltimore and his eventual return to camp later that night are often seen as the events which most directly resulted in the rebellion, the events leading up to this occurrence should not be overshadowed. The soldiers experience was deeply ingrained in and affected by the place of Houston, a place that provided fertile ground for the spark of rebellion. The acknowledgment of Black Houston seems to be evidently mutual by the fact that there were no records of soldiers committing any property damage against community during the rebellion or encouraging any Black Houstonian civilians to participate in the rebellion. Instead the soldiers were clearly focused on targeting police, Haynes writes:

> The formulators of the march were interested in wreaking vengeance against the police who had been tormenting the soldiers since their arrival in Houston. Their special targets were the mounted police who patrolled the San Felipe district, and more particularly Lee Sparks and Rufus Daniels, the two policemen who had beaten Private Edwards and Corporal Baltimore earlier that same day.[16]

While Haynes reduces the soldiers to merely pursing vengeance, the fact that the soldiers were in fact targeting the police—a physical manifestation of white oppression—in the San Felipe district, a space that had historical roots as Freedman's Town shows how the rebellion directly attacked the lines of Houston's racial order. Furthermore the rebellion by the soldiers can be understood as their attempt to reconcile their own position in the

Black community in Houston, as figures meant to be representative of Black autonomy and pride being viciously repressed by white supremacy.

During the night following the rebellion four companies of national guardsmen had been dispatched to surround the San Felipe district, not allowing any one to enter or leave the district. Then in the early dark of the morning they began searching each house in the Black neighborhoods, arresting any Black person in a military uniform as well as any Black civilian in possession of weapons or suspected of harboring anyone involved in the rebellion.[17] The white response to the rebellion displays the how the Black community in Houston was given physical boundaries as well as how the threat of the soldiers forcibly rooted out of that community. This response highlights well how the rebellion had an immense impact on the Black presence in Houston. Furthermore, in the aftermath of the rebellion there were notable incidents of violence inflicted on members of the Black community in Houston, additionally there was a dramatic increase in the rate of migration from the Black community in the wake of the rebellion.[18] The rebellion's impact on Houston and vice versa are not merely footnotes of the rebellion rather they are central to any comprehensive understanding of the Houston Rebellion. Moreover understanding the localized aspects of the rebellion is crucial to developing analysis which can connect the rebellion to wider developments in Black communities at the time.

Part 2: Radical Black Soldiers

Background of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry

When understanding the events in Houston and the Black soldiers specifically it is important to understand and historicize the Twenty-Fourth Infantry. In 1866, following the Civil War, the Army was reorganized; six regiments were set-aside for black enlisted men. These included four infantry regiments, numbered 38th through 41st. The Twenty-Fourth Infantry was officially organized in 1869 by merging the 38th and 41st regiments. Interestingly enough the Twenty-Fourth initially served in Texas from the time the regiment was established until 1880. The regiment then spent the years leading up the Spanish-American War serving in mostly non-combat support of the Indian Wars. Additionally they spent time dispersing civil disturbances, including anti-Chinese riots and workers strikes by coal miners in western territories such as Idaho and Wyoming. During the Spanish-American War the regiment fought in Cuba, losing eleven men at San Juan Hill in 1898. Between 1899 and 1915 the Twenty-Fourth Infantry had multiple stints of service in the Philippines losing 12 more men in combat against Filipino guerillas. Finally in 1916 the Twenty-Fourth was stationed along the U.S. Mexican border and operated on both sides of the border to protect the U.S. Border.[19]

This history of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry warrants consideration in the context of the rebellion in Houston because of the specific context in which the regiment was used. The Twenty-Fourth Infantry was, from its inception, almost constantly operating in ways that directly enabled and supported American expansionism and imperialism. This reading of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry's history is one that goes almost unnoticed in most

understandings of the rebellion, however it is extremely important when considering the radical political implications of the rebellion. Moreover serious consideration must be given to the position of the Black soldiers as themselves an oppressed group who were aiding in the oppression of other groups, under the flag of their own oppressor no less. In accounting for subjectivity of the soldiers of the Twenty-Fourth there must be critical discussion of the political understandings that were developed and passed down amongst the ranks.

While the exact content of these conversations may never be known what is known of the discussions being had deserves carful attention. When looking at the Twenty-Fourth Infantry's time in the Philippines particularly, there is evidence of critical political understandings regarding both race roles and radical action. One example of this is David Fagen, a member of the Twenty-Fourth infantry who infamously, defected from the army and joined the Filipino *insurrectos*. Michael C. Robinson and Frank N. Schubert write of Fagen's defection:

> "Defection by black troopers in general and Fagen's desertion in particular reveal the intensity of black hostility toward American imperialism. In an important sense, however, the case of David Fagen transcends the issue of expansion into the Pacific. His career illustrates the willingness of Afro-Americans to pursue alternatives outside the caste system when such options become available."[20]

Fagen represents a drastic response to a the degrading treatment which some Black soldiers experienced in the Philippines, additionally Fagen's actions can be read as an attempt at racial solidarity with natives Filipinos who were often abused by white soldiers with American racialized slurs such as "nigger" and "Black devil" typically reserved for insulting Blacks. David Fagen, although a seemingly extreme example, cannot be dismissed as an exception as there were other examples of soldiers in both the Twenty-

Fourth Infantry and in other Black regiments writing letters challenging American imperialism.[21] Additionally organizations and clubs existed in Black regiments where these kinds of critical discussions surely occurred. In the Twenty-Fourth Infantry specifically they had an organization called the Fredrick Douglass Memorial Literary Society.[22] The name of the organization highlights the literate race-consciousness that existed among the men of the Twenty-Fourth. Therefore it is not surprising that there were other members of the Twenty-Fourth, despite not being as radical as Fagen, questioning their service and American imperialism. In 1899, while serving in the Philippines, Patrick Mason of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry wrote, "I have not had any fighting to do since I have been here and don't care to do any. I feel sorry for these people and all that have come under the control of the United States. I don't believe they will be justly dealt by."[23] Mason not only articulates his reluctance to fight but his skepticism and misgivings about U.S. imperialism. While their were certainly those Black soldiers, who served the United States dutifully, in attempts to prove their manhood and capability as equal to that of the whites, their were also those who thought more critically about their service and more importantly came up with self formed critiques of American militarism and imperialism based on their own experiences as Black men.

The notion that those who were coming up with radical critiques were doing so in relation to their specific experiences as Black servicemen, is important as it relates to the Houston Rebellion. The critique and thoughtful analysis of their condition that is clearly going on indicates a form of group consciousness amongst the soldiers themselves involving both their race as we as their position as servicemen. This group

consciousness natural lent itself to developing critique, whether on the more radical side as we see with Fagen or the more conservative side with soldiers who hoped to move up through the ranks. Often these critiques operated in complex ways with overlapping and contradicting way while still emerging from the same group consciousness. However it can be safely surmised that this form of group consciousness was one that soldiers were acculturated into in some form or another, and that became passed down amongst the ranks. This form of group consciousness had serious implications for the events leading up to Houston.

Significance of the East St. Louis Riots

The history of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry reveals that there were at varying points in the regiments history, conversations that at the very least questioned racism, and white supremacy as well as reflected on the soldiers own occupation within the military. A closer look at the rebellion reveals some of the same critiques and conversations going on, albeit in a different context. Importantly a few weeks before the soldiers' of the Twenty-Fourth arrived in Houston one of the largest events of racialized violence in American history occurred. The East St. Louis Riots occurred from July 1st to July 3rd of 1917, sending at least 7,000 Black refugees fleeing into St. Louis. White assailants wounded hundreds of Black people, and while 39 Blacks were officially reported killed some witnesses observed that as many as 500 black people were massacred in the pogrom.[24]

The horrific scene in East St. Louis was discussed so widely in the Black press it can safely be surmised that the men of the Twenty-Fourth were having conversations

about the riots.   Additionally, the riot provoked responses from many Black Americans throughout the country and the men of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry were no exception. The men of the Twenty-Fourth, then still stationed in Columbus, New Mexico, organized a relief committee to aid refugees in East St. Louis. In a letter written on July 15th to the NAACP by the committee they wrote,

> ”THE CRISIS is held in very high esteem by the men of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry and we are always glad when it comes. This committee voices the sentiment of the entire enlisted command when it prays for you unlimited success in your noble fight for manhood rights for our people. You are remembered by us for your incessant and untiring fight for the TRAINING CAMP at Des Moines.”[25]

This letter demonstrates a race-based group consciousness amongst the soldiers' of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry.   Not only do they state how The Crisis, the NAACP's official publication is read by the men of the regiment but also they articulate a set of politics which supported the uplifting of the race, making reference to a training camp for Black soldiers' that had been famously championed by NAACP founder W.E.B. Du Bois. These set of politics might not seem conducive to the radical uprising that would occur in Houston only a few weeks later, however there is a strong awareness of the events in East St. Louis therefore indicative of the fact that the event was on their minds when they arrived in Houston only a few weeks later.

Connecting the awareness of East St. Louis to the rebellion is the fact that two of the men on the relief committee, listed as signatories to the initial letter to the NAACP, would factor into the rebellion in very different capacities that highlight the different ways that the group consciousness was represented. The first, Private George A. Singleton, was a key figure in the relief committee. He served as the acting chaplain for the Twenty-Fourth, and was by all accounts a well liked and respected by his comrades.[26]

Individually, Singleton sent another letter containing a donation by the relief committee of the Twenty-Fourth, to the NAACP on July 30. This letter was sent after the Third Battalion of the Twenty-Fourth had arrived in Houston, the contents of the letter affirm an understanding of strong racial consciousness between the Black community in Houston and Black soldiers. Singleton writes

> "The Third Battalion of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry has been stationed here for nearly a month, performing the duty of guarding the cantonment which is in process of construction. The battalion has made good and all doubts as to the conduct of the Negro soldier have been dissipated. The people of color of Houston are proud of their brother soldiers and have opened wide their homes and churches, and have welcomed us with a generous hospitality which portrays the high respect which our people have for our government."[27]

Whether Singleton was unaware or unwilling to include the details of the racial turbulence experience by some soldiers' cannot be determined for sure, however his account of the soldiers' experience with Black Houstonians is significant and affirms the accounts mentioned previously of a strong respect between the Black soldiers and the Black locals of Houston. In the same letter Singleton writes, "We are affiliating with the people and are striving to add another page to the glorious record of our regiment. We are ready and stand waiting for the summons for us to board the train for BERLIN."[28] Here again Singleton, expresses a race consciousness that for him is tied to the performance of the regiment due to its status as an all Black regiment. Additionally we see Singleton express an expectation and excitement at being sent to join the warfront in Europe. Singleton clearly links achievements in military service with the group consciousness of the Twenty-Fourth, for him dutiful service both aids the race and fulfills his occupation as a soldier.

While Singleton's letters give us an interesting insight into the soldiers' perspective in Houston, also important is that these letters occur under the banner of race solidarity. Singleton signs multiple letters "Yours for the race" and all letters sent to the NAACP are in regards to the committee efforts to raise funds for the relief of the East St. Louis riots. In Singleton's last letter to the NAACP dated on August 21st, two days before the rebellion occurred he details the amount of money he has raised, $147 dollars total. The same letter speaks of the difficulties in raising money due to increased cost of living for the soldiers, however he insist on his perseverance to continue in his efforts to raise money.[29] The efforts by Singleton to raise a relative large amount of money as well as the contents of the letter indicated a heightened group consciousness, however it is clear by Singleton's optimistic tone as well failure to mention any incidents of turbulence in Houston that for him group consciousness wasn't rooted in the radical nature that would characterize the rebellion its self. Singleton ultimately never participated in the rebellion, and in statements following the rebellion Singleton remained an ardent defender of the upstanding conduct of his comrades.[30] While this was how Singleton perceived of the group consciousness of the Twenty-Fourth it gives insight into how other members may have also experienced this group consciousness.

Vida Henry, was also a member of the relief committee and a fellow signatory on the initial letter sent to the NAACP by the relief committee. When looking at Henry's role in the events in Houston there is a drastically different display of how some soldiers perceived of group consciousness. Henry similarly to Singleton was a seemingly dedicated, well-respected career soldier. Henry was an older member of the regiment at age 35, having served for thirteen years all in the Twenty-Fourth Infantry.[31] Major

Kneeland Snow, who replaced Major William Newman as the white commanding officer of the Twenty Fourth, only a few days before the rebellion, testified that he considered Sergeant Henry "one of the most loyal noncommissioned officers" ever to serve him. Snow further testified of Henry that "the men of the company seemed to respect and to obey without question", and added that Henry although he lacked the ability to write was effective at disciplining his fellow soldiers which explains why Snow named him first sergeant.[32] This seeming explains Henry's decision on to the very night of rebellion August 23rd to warn Snow, telling him, "Major, I think we are going to have trouble tonight." Henry's warning in led to Snow's discovery of men stealing ammunition for the rebellion and Snow's belief that he had quelled the potential rebellion. From Henry's actions up to the this point it seems that he has a similar perception of the group consciousness to that of Singleton however it is here where there is a radical departure by Henry.

After warning Snow, as the rebellion was still in its nascent stages, Vida Henry actually took a role as the leader of the rebellion, and by all reports he was a drastic one at that. In the midst of the commotion that was brewing Henry went from issuing a warning to the commanding officers to taking charge of rebelling soldiers. According to testimony Henry ordered soldiers to "Fall in", furthermore he commanded soldiers to "Get plenty of ammunition and save one for yourself".[33] Henry's call to "save one for yourself" meant to be prepared to kill oneself. This foreshadowed just how extreme of a rebellion Henry was prepared to engage and further more it illustrates by Henry and his fellow soldiers a complex understanding their action. It shows a concrete understanding that death was the likely outcome of their rebellion. In the moment, the solider to some

degree acknowledged and accepted this. Further testimony indicates that as Henry assembled the men for their march some of his old comrades tried to dissuade him from his course of action. Sergeant William Fox testified that told Henry "You are going up against the United States Government to go away from here like that." To which Henry only direct Fox to fall in line with the other men.[34] This exchange indicates that Henry's awareness that the rebellion not only represented a violation of racial order but also of against the supremacy of the American government. Although in much different context Henry's understanding of his actions clearly connects to that of Fagen and other members of the Twenty-Fourth who years earlier in the Philippines developed a similar radical critique of American power.

Despite Henry's previous actions of warning Major Snow, Henry clearly emerged as a staunch radical leader of the rebellion. While the reasons for this change are not fully clear, Henry was most likely hedging to ascertain how committed his fellow soldiers were to rebellion. What is known is that once Henry took on his role as a leader of the rebellion not only is he extremely committed to the rebellion but also he shows knowledge of the consequences of his action. This is most visible in the waning moments of the rebellion during which Henry advocated continuing the rebellion despite suffering multiple gunshot wounds and the fact almost all of the soldiers wanting to give up and return to camp.[35] Henry tried to remind soldiers of their reason for fighting in the first place pointing at Corporal Baltimore, who was a fellow rebel and still wore the evidence of his beating from earlier that day at the hands of the police. Henry said, "Look at the boy, look at how he's beat up".[36] This shows Henry attempting to remind his comrades of the direct link their rebellion had to brutality suffered at the hands of the

white racist order in Houston. Henry after failing to convince his comrades to continue their rebellion, reportedly told them "You all can go in, I ain't going, I ain't going to camp no more." He asked his comrades to kill him so that he wouldn't have to commit suicide himself, all of his comrades refused and pleaded with him not to commit suicide. However Henry was steadfast and true to his command earlier to "save one for yourself" he was prepared to pay the ultimate cost. Corporal Baltimore recalled Sergeant Henry's last moments to a local Houstonian woman,

> "Sergeant Henry was shot and was asking some man to kill him, but none of them would kill him.... he was shaking hands with them, and he said he was a solider-his father was a soldier and he was a soldier, and he didn't leave camp with the intention of coming back, he said he was going down and carry some one with him."[37]

Henry indicates an understanding of intergenerational military service, which might have heightened his sense of group consciousness even more than the typical solider and shaped his intense radical demeanor. Here Henry again displays a clear understanding that his actions meant certain death, and he clearly intended to take his fate in his own hands as final radical act. His comrades asked Henry not shoot himself until they had gone away, a final request, which Henry honored.[38] The soldiers' reporter hearing the single shot of Henry's rifle in the distance as they retreated from their rebellion.[39] The circumstances of Vida Henry's role in the rebellion and eventual suicide highlight the extreme extent to which a radical consciousness developed amongst the soldiers.

Henry highlights the form of radicalized group consciousness amongst the soldiers that had participated in the rebellion in Houston. Henry and Singleton at first appear very similar. Both were seemingly loyal, disciplined, respected veteran soldiers. Both exhibited a group consciousness rooted in race and their status as servicemen as

indicated by their membership in the Twenty-Fourth's relief committee in East St. Louis. However it becomes clear how the same group consciousness manifested in continued loyal service for Singleton ultimately culminates in the most extreme form of radical protest by Henry. Both of these forms of group consciousness indicate a political understanding of the soldiers positionality, however it is still in the soldiers lived experience—of racist harassment and brutality in Houston—that caused this positionality to be questioned along more radical lines. The juxtaposition between Henry and Singleton highlights an important aspect of the Houston Rebellion. While Singleton's more conventional perspective ignored the racial turbulence and harassment experienced by the soldiers, clearly Henry's radical actions are a result of the direct material conditions experienced in Houston. Henry's final statements indicate a deep understanding of his service and additionally his father's service but—as Henry indicates by point to Corporal Baltimore's wounds—these commitments were tossed into conflict by experiences in Houston that, for Henry and those who rebelled, necessitated a radical response.

Harassment In Houston

The men of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry Third Battalion arrived in Houston on July 28th 1917 and almost immediately there were incidents that displayed their more radical understanding of group consciousness rooted in race. The very first day that the soldiers arrived they began to challenge the Jim Crow order of the South, on their first day in Houston soldiers had gone out to explore the city and find the best places to be entertained; when a few soldiers decided to take a streetcar they encountered explicit Jim Crow style segregation. As Haynes details

> "On at least two occasions that first evening, Negro soldiers ripped the 'colored' signs from the streetcars and either tossed them out the window or kept them as souvenirs. Even more explosive were those situations where black soldiers overflowed the seating capacity of the Jim Crow section and, rather than stand in the aisle, sat in vacant seats which by law were reserved for white passengers."[40]

This shows that early on in the soldiers' time in Houston they are already challenging the ridged system of racial oppression in Houston. Their understanding and heightened race consciousness is almost immediately put under stress by the racial order in Houston. Almost immediately the response by some soldiers is to resist and actively violate racial boundaries, by both protesting and removing the symbols of that racial order by ripping down the "Colored only" signs.

Additionally local white civilians harassed the soldiers, who most frequently endured harassment by those whites working on the construction of Camp Logan, the camp that the Third Battalion was were officially charged with protecting while under construction. This harassment consisted being called racial epithets and slurs as well a few altercations between some soldiers and white civilians.[41] However the most vicious clashes were clearly between local Houston police force and the Black soldiers. The fact that the most explosive encounters occurred with the police is evidence of the key role, which the police played in maintaining the racial order, as well as the perceived threat the Black soldiers posed to that racial order. One way this played out was in the Houston Chief of the Police, Clarence Brock recommending that sidearms be withheld from Black soldiers who were military police; normally military police always carried sidearms while on duty. This recommendation by Brock was implemented by white commanding officer of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry Colonel William Newman.[42] This measure displays the threat, which armed Black men posed to the racial power structure in Houston. By

removing sidearms from the military police it was insured that the Black soldiers were defenseless against the Houston police when in the public, and helped to better enforce the racial order in Houston, which the Black soldiers were perceived as disrupting.

Private John G. Reed a Black soldier who served as a provost guard assigned to the San Felipe district of Houston which was frequented by black soldiers recalled how the white policemen would break up the public congregating and discussions between Black civilians and Black soldiers. Private Reed stated in testimony, "The police would think we were trying to put devilment into their head, or they were putting it in ours."[43] Private Reed's account illustrates that the racial power structure required the Black soldiers to be policed, furthermore his account also harkens back to slave era regulations that prohibited the congregating of groups of Blacks. Additionally as the soldiers' time progressed in Houston there were more violent clashes with the police. On August 18th two soldiers, Privates Douglas Lumpkins and Earnest E. Adams saw a local Black youth being arrested by the police and reportedly yelled "Are you all going to let them white sons of bitches take that Negro to jail; if we were out there we would kill them." The police responded by cornering and beating the two soldiers with their pistols before arresting them.[44]

Additionally on August 19th, only four days before the rebellion there was another militant reaction by one of the soldiers against the Jim Crow law. Private Richard Griggs, sat in the white section of a streetcar upon noticing the colored section was full. When a white man attempted to grab Private Griggs he pulled out a knife and readied to defend himself. Eventually a nearby deputy sheriff came on the scene and pointed a gun at Private Griggs informing him that he had broke the law, to which Griggs

reported responded “I don’t give a god damn about no law or anything else.” The deputy sheriff beat and arrested Griggs and who was charged the next day with violating Jim Crow law.[45] These incidents so close to the proximity of the riot is significant because it demonstrates a continued militant posture toward the white supremacist laws which were vital racial order constructed in Houston but also the defiant tone that the soldiers displayed, exhibit a more militant attitude toward law enforcement officers who represented a physical and often violent manifestation of the racial order in Houston.

The experiences that the Black soldiers had in Houston were vital in shaping the more radical positions, which led to the rebellion. A Black Houstonian, Grant McCowan, recalled a conversation with a solider on August 16th, a week before the rebellion, during which the soldier asked McCowan, “How do these white folk use you for down here — mules or what?” McCowan replied “No they don’t use us for mules, or anything like that. We get along all right.” To this the soldier replied “Well, it don’t seem so to me and we are going to straighten it out before we leave here.”[46] This conversation highlights the idea that some soldiers were inclined to take some action to bring change to the abuse not only that they received but also that they witnessed local Black Houstonians experience. Moreover this conversation indicates a deep level of reflection on the conditions in Houston by the unnamed soldiers. Additionaly it shows the anonymous soldiers desire to produce an actionable response thus revealing a development of a more radical position based on the factors experienced and witnessed in Houston.

Part 3: Radical Black America

Climate of WWI Era Black America

Before discussing the depths of Black radicalism in the World War I era, it is important to have an understanding of the Black context of the war. Understanding this context functions on two important levels, first this helps to understand the magnitude of consequence for those who took oppositional stances against the war. Second, it explains Black patriotic participation and support for the war effort as a position induced by the precarious nature of Black existence in the United States. Understanding both levels illuminates the conditions shaping unconventional forms of Black radical activity and thought in this era. Black radicalism, in this moment was boldly unconcerned with both white suspicion as well as conventional Black anxieties. Instead Black radicalism in this moment was defined by its prioritization of declaring Black humanity in the material world.

World War I historian Chad Williams notes, "The Wilson administration did not view its goal of '100% Americanism' as a natural process but, instead, one that demanded coercive measures."[47] This was a coercion that involved not only the repression of freedom of speech, censorship of the press, and propaganda campaigns but also the specific targeting of radical and progressive organizations deemed subversive. The federal government had a particular anxiety about the antiwar sentiment amongst Black people, rooted in the notion that Black people might have grievance for the ills experienced under white supremacy. However this anxiety was also in racist paternal attitudes of government officials. These officials held the belief that, what they perceived of as dull and docile Blacks would be easy targets of German spies and could be easily

influenced to operate as internal agitators on behalf of the Germans. Historian Theodore Kornweibel Jr. highlights the climate of paranoia writing, "Given the alarmed state of many whites, who feared that Germans were lurking in nearly every dark alley, many innocuous statements were labeled subversive. But the volume of allegations indicates how widespread were whites' fears that blacks were less than patriotic."[48] In this climate of heightened white American paranoia any challenge of the racial status quo by Blacks became viewed as pro-German and by result an act of treasonous disloyalty. One member of the American Protective League, an organization of private citizens that worked in conjunction with federal agencies gather intelligence and oppose pro-German sentiment, stated "Knowing the negro race as I do, I do not think there is a more fertile ground for German propaganda than playing upon the ignorance of the negro race and arousing them to enmity against our allies."[49] The government mobilized to act on the wartime paranoia and coercive nationalism. The main players being the Justice Department's Bureau of Investigation—precursor to the FBI—the State Department, as well as the Post Office department, additional the APL functioned as the citizens wing of governmental apparatus and citizen participation was encouraged by the government.[50] These forces worked to suppress Black suspected subversive activity by prosecution under federal laws such as the Espionage and Sedition Acts. Additionally these agencies utilized contact with state and local authorities as well as extralegal efforts to intimidate individuals into compliance. These tactics included "warning" suspected subversive or outspoken Blacks of punishment in the absence of having any legal authority to charge them, often the "consequence" alluded to was extra-legal lynching.

The pro-German paranoia that surrounded the Black community posed a great threat to Black elite and middle class political projects of respectability. Participation in the military was viewed as a means to alleviate white paranoia through an outward display of Black patriotism, additionally it advanced many political goals of Black respectability. Military service still held great resonance in the imagination of many Blacks, due to the direct role Blacks in the Union Army played in liberating enslaved Blacks during the Civil War. Given this history and already positive imagery amongst the Black masses, military service was one of the ideal realms for Black people to live up to the kind of respectability politics widely espoused as well as to dispel white suspicion. As Dubois wrote of the role of Blacks in the war effort in his infamous "Close Ranks" in the 1918 *Crisis:*

> We of the colored race have no ordinary interest in the outcome. That which the German power represents today spells death to the aspirations of Negroes and all darker races for equality, freedom and democracy. Let us not hesitate. Let us, while this war lasts, forget our special grievances and close our ranks shoulder to shoulder with our own white fellow citizens and the allied nations that are fighting for democracy. We make no ordinary sacrifice, but we make it gladly and willingly with our eyes lifted to the hills.[51]

This embodies the spirit of many Black pro-war arguments of this time, which were invested in procuring full citizenship rights and viewed full patriotic support for the war as a viable means of achieving their goals. As it relates to specifically to Houston we see that Du Bois echoes the belief by soldiers such as Private Singleton who believed in dutiful service in order to advance the race. The context of the both white suspicious for Black society as well as the popular arguments by Blacks, which supported the war, are important for framing our consideration of Black anti-war radicalism. Black radicalism in this moment turned away from catering to white paranoia, or investing in conventional

Black political projects, in favor of asserting Black existence in spite of the physical realities which sought to dehumanize Black peoples.

New Negro War Resistance

In this climate A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen were at the forefront of Black intellectual opposition to participation in the war. In their magazine the *Messenger* that began publication in November of 1917, Randolph and Owen not only espouse their openly socialist views but also take a strong stance against the war. The wrote in their magazine "Lynching, Jim Crow, segregation, discrimination in the armed forces and out, disfranchisement of millions of black souls in the South—all these things make your cry of making the world safe for democracy a sham, a mockery, a rape on decency and a travesty on common justice."[52] This indictment against the war came in the form calling out the hypocrisy of President's own rhetoric. Critiquing the idea that democracy could be spread abroad while being denied at home became a key point emphasized by Owen and Randolph. In many ways they identify and critique the systemic issues, which were experienced on a ground level in Houston.

Another tactic used to critique the war came in the way of criticizing the more conventional Black leadership, who encouraged participation and support of the war. As Kornweibel points out "It was easy to be ignorant of black apathy or cynicism about the war, for the newspapers spoke infrequently of dissent and instead printed story after story of enthusiastic responses to liberty loan drives, loyalty day parades, and participation in food conservation and Red Cross work….The Wilson administration's propaganda machine coopted much of the rest of the Talented Tenth."[53] This alludes to the influence

of Blacks with elite and upper-middle class background who possessed means to outwardly display patriotism in institutions such as Black schools and colleges, Black publications, and Black clubs and organizations. This was a group that became a target of New Negro radicals such as Randolph and Owen for their support of the war and unwillingness to take stances more critical of the United States government.

Particularly once Du Bois issued his call to "close ranks" around the war effort Harlem radicals were left in the awkward position of being at odds with the man many looked to as a great influence. Long time radical Hubert Harrison, who was of great influence to Randolph and Owen, published an editorial titled "The Descent of Du Bois" in his magazine the *Voice*. Harrison wrote "It is felt by all his critics that Du Bois, of all Negroes, knows best that our "special grievances" which the War Department Bulletin describes as justifiable consist of lynching, segregation and disfranchisement and that the Negroes of America cannot preserve either their lives, their manhood or their vote (which is their political lives and liberties) with these things in existence."[54] Harrison goes on to lament Du Bois' stance as marking his entrance into a more conservative class of Black leaders. Here, important to Houston, is the connection, which Harrison draws to the material realities of Black life in his radical position toward the war. Harrison critiques Du Bois for his dismissive stance toward the realities of lynching, segregation and disenfranchisement an as "special grievances". During the rebellion, soldiers drew from the realities they experienced as Blacks in Houston—which were similar to the "grievances" Harrison enumerates—in order to inform their radical posture. While Harrison has the positionality of a leftist intellectual he clearly draws his radical anti-war stance from similar sources as the rebels in Houston.

Echoing Harrrison's critique Owen's piece for *The Messenger* entitled "The Failure of Negro Leaders" issued an even more scathing critique of Black leaders who supported the war. Owen writes,

> "Again, we hear Prof. Wm. Pickens, Du Bois and Kelly Miller talking in superlative sureness of how the Negroes' participation in this war will remove race prejudice. Since when has the subject race come out of a war with its rights and privileges accorded for such participation? Leaving out the question of color entirely where is the history to support this spurious promise? Did not the Negro fight in the Revolutionary War with Crispus Attucks dying first (which is not important nor material) and come out to be a miserable chattel slave in this country for nearly one hundred years after? Did not the Negro only *incidentally* secure freedom from physical slavery in the Civil War only to have peonage fastened upon him almost immediately thereafter becoming the victim of Ku Klux Klanism oppression and unspeakable cruelty which were directly perpetuated by the South and condoned by the North. Did not the Negro take part in the Spanish-American War only to be discharged without honors and without a hearing by the president who rose into political prestige and power upon their valor in that war?"[55]

Owen criticizes the Black elite position on the war and also connects his critique to the history of Black participation in the U.S. military and lack of inclusion that accompanied that followed. It is clear that in their work Owen and Randolph did not merely view anti-war resistance as a self-righteous indulgence, rather they viewed it as a terrain of Black ideological battle. Additionally Owen, informs his position by pointing directly to material historical events, rather than placing faith in the benevolence of white America. As "New Negroes" they represented something more radical that older Black conservatives. While their anti-war message became an area to emphasize this difference, their ideological radicalism also stems from the fact that their position was informed by the material facts of Black life.

The *Messenger* also directly challenged the allegations of pro-Germanism by the government. Writing in response to a Department of Intelligence official who claimed

that Black troops who complained of racial prejudice were influenced by German propaganda, "The only legitimate connection between this unrest and Germanism is the extensive government advertisement that we are fighting '*to make the world safe for democracy,' to carry democracy to Germany*; that we are conscripting the Negro into the military and industrial establishments to achieve this end for white democracy four thousand miles away, while the Negro at home though bearing the burden in every way is denied economic, political, education and civil democracy. And this despite his loyalty and patriotism in the land of the free and home of the brave."[56] In this issue of *The Messenger* they would write "No intelligent Negro is willing to lay down his life for the United States as it now exists. Intelligent Negroes have now reached the point where their support of the country is conditional."[57] Statements such as these indicate well the level of militancy of Owen and Randolph as two of the leading Black radicals at the time. They rejected pro-German suspicion but did not reject Black disloyalty rather they argued that Black disloyalty to America represented a logical path of reasoning for Black people. This relates back to Houston because at the heart of the New Negro militancy was the idea that one merely needs to experience Black life in America in order to reach an anti-war position. This plays out in Houston as soldiers reach there position of rebellion through experiencing life in Black Houston, rather than having to become persuaded or convinced by external factors

Owen and Randolph intellectually articulate ideas, which the soldiers in Houston were engaging with on a concrete level. While Owen and Randolph were operating in a much different sphere, as civilian intellectuals in a northern urban city, they came to similar conclusions as the radically minded solders in Houston. In many ways the events

of Houston embodies what Randolph and Owen were theorizing in New York on practical level. The fact that soldiers who were ready and willing to go to Europe, fulfilling what they perceived as their patriotic duty, were pushed to the point of violent rebellion after being stationed in the South and enduring racist repression for less than a month, highlighted Randolph and Owen's intellectual critiques well.

Church of God In Christ Resistance

New Negro resistance to the war represented only one facet of resistance to participation in World War I by Black people in America. The southeastern Black Belt still represented the large majority of the Black population as the first wave of the Great Migration was still in its early stages at the beginning of the war. The South was an even more overtly repressive environment than that experience by radicals in the North, as Black Southerners experienced the wartime repression of dissent on top of Jim Crow oppression. Moreover unlike the soldiers in Houston southern civilians were born and bred in the south, and lived daily with that which the soldiers only experienced for a few weeks. Beyond the legally codified means of both forms of repression, there was also the climate, which was already historically suspicious of Black presence that was magnified due to the rumors of German subversion amongst Blacks. Despite this some southern Blacks civilians still found ways to be outspoken in their resistance.

Calvin White's study of the Church of God in Christ explores one of the largest sites of organized southern Black resistance. The church had its base in Lexington, Mississippi and was led by Bishop C. H. Mason. After a black resident of Lexington refused induction into the military, Mason and COGIC began to draw suspicion from the

Bureau of Investigation as well as the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department. White highlights how the government had been highly skeptical of religious conscientious objectors to the war since the first months of the war. However White also points out that in addition to this general scrutiny the fact that many draft boards in the Delta region had been missing their conscription targets also increased the level of interest by the government in Mason. Additionally military officials noted the unusually large numbers of Black men seeking conscientious objector status for religious reasons.

White's research notes that federal agents arrived in Lexington and immediately began to investigate the claims of resistance. When one deacon in Mason's congregation was question by an agent of the Bureau of Investigation he presented the agent with the following statement:

> We believe that the governments are God given institutions for the benefit of mankind. He admonished and exhorts our members to honor magistrates and powers that be. To respect, obey, and love the law. We hereby and herewith declare our loyalty to the President and to the Constitution of the United States, and pledge fidelity to the flag which the republic stands. But as a God fearing peace loving, and law abiding people, we only claim or [not a legible word] as American citizens, namely to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience. We believe the shedding of human blood or taking of human life to be contrary to the teaching of our Lord and Savior, and as a body we are averse to war in all its various forms. We herewith offer ourselves to the President for any service that will not conflict with our conscientious scruples in this report, with love to all, with malice toward none and with due respect to all who differ from us in our interpretation of the scriptures.[58]

The statement takes a tone, which affirms loyalty and support for America despite firmly rooting itself in religious opposition to participation in the war. The loyalty and pledge of fidelity to American are similar to how many soldiers of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry understood their commitment to military service. Additionally in a similar to way to how the patriotic loyalty of the soldiers conflicted with their lived experience in Houston, the

patriotic loyalty of COGIC conflicted with a combination of religious beliefs as well as the lived reality experience by southern Black's in the congregation.

Despite the patriotic nature of Mason's statement there were many accounts, which contradicted the sentiment in the statement, indicating that true extent of the anti-war sentiment of COGIC was in fact, deep rooted. In one of these accounts, White highlights, a Black Lexington resident, George Brooks, who alleged to have heard Mason telling Black congregation members 'if they joined his church they would not have to go to war." Brooks also alleged overhearing Mason say in a sermon "the Negroes did not have to go to war, and they were fools if they wanted to go, because from 1861 to 1866 the Germans came over here and fought to help free blacks."[59] White also points that out a local Black man, William Thurman, alleged that the while initially Mason and the COGIC had not held a formal position regarding the war, after August of 1917 he believe Mason created a new doctrinal statement with the hope of gaining new members looking to avoid the war. Importantly, August of 1917 was the period during which the Houston Rebellion occurred, and while there is no direct evidence to link Masons shift in position to war with the events in Houston, the rebellion was widely publicized especially in the Black press, it is therefore likely that Mason was at least aware of the rebellion. Regardless the militant tone and approach by Mason display well how radicalism was not limited to the Black military experience and emerged in various arenas of Black life where the rupture between patriotism and Black experience became clear.

After August, Thurman said that he himself knew of two black sharecroppers form the surrounding county that joined Mason's congregation looking to avoid the war. These statements suggest that Mason was attempting to use the COGIC as an entity to

enable Black members to avoid participation in the war through use of contentious objector status, while outwardly affirms loyalty for the war effort. Mason sought to subvert the war effort in a way that the government clearly found threatening. White notes that the Bureau, after concluding that Mason was attempting to influence Blacks in his county to avoid the war, ordered a formal investigation of Mason and the COGIC. As news of investigation leaked to the press and the public sensational stories that tapped into the climate of paranoia surrounding Black people at the time as multiple southern newspapers ran stories of Mason's alleged pro-German sentiment. White specifically details an incident in which a pastor of the COGIC based in Blytheville, Arkansas was nearly lynched after remarking to a crowd, "the Kaiser did not require his people to buy bonds, which made him a better man than President Wilson." The pastor narrowly escaped a mob but the incident highlights just how great the stakes were for pastors who spoke out.[60]

Further investigation into Mason's activity by the Bureau yielded some very telling results. Following reports by local whites that Blacks from other counties were travelling to hear Mason, the Bureau placed an informant in a crowd at one of Masons sermons. The informant reported on Mason's charismatic and emotional style but also reported that Mason told the crowd "if you want to stay out of this war you must get right with God and join my church." Mason also allegedly stated that "there is no reason for the Negroes to go to war", he also prophesized that Germany would defeat the U.S. for its terrible treatment of Blacks, and closed the sermon by criticizing President Wilson for advocating for a rich man's war that did not concern Blacks.[61] Upon learning of this information the Department of Justice in Jackson, Mississippi issued a warrant for

Mason's arrest charging him with obstructing the draft. At the same time, upon learning of the charges, a white mob formed threatening to lynch Mason before he was arrested however the local sheriff apprehended Mason before the mob could get to him. Again here is a militant critique of America rooted in the conflict between American patriotism and a combination of religious and black experience. Interestingly enough the conclusion by Mason that "there is no reason for the Negroes to go to war" is a similar one reached by the soldiers who engaged in rebellion in Houston, as well as the New Negro radicals in the north.

Whites study goes on to detail how a short while after, Mason was out of jail on bond and awaiting trial, he traveled to different COGIC congregations throughout the South in hopes of procuring donations to cover his legal fees. Meanwhile the Bureau was accumulating more damaging evidence against Mason. James Ellis, another COGIC church member and preacher confessed that he had not registered with his local draft board because of the influence and teachings of leaders of the church. Ellis stated "Our pastor instructed us not to buy bonds or help the Red Cross because the organization bore the emblem of the beast."[62] This indicates an even deeper antiwar position not just opposing the direct combat but also opposing all institutions, such as Liberty Bonds and the Red Cross, which worked to advance the American war effort. This is also of note because making comments against the Red Cross was particularly risky as such comments violated the Espionage and Sedition Acts. Luckily by the time Mason and two other pastors who had been arrested and charged the war was in its concluding phase and the grand jury decided not to indict any of the suspects.

The antiwar resistance of Mason and the COGIC should not be undervalued and the hostility of the environment they operated in should not be understated.. Not only was speaking out against Black participation in the war bold but Mason and members of the COGIC were taking it a step further by seeking to pull members of the Black Mississippi community into the COGIC as a means to offer them protection from being drafted. At its core it this action contests the mobilization of Black bodies and labor by a white power establishment for the purposes of global war; it is no wonder then that Mason was so aggressively prosecuted by authorities. If the soldiers radical action emerged as a result of a conflict of their ideals of service with their experience of racist brutality in Houston, then COGIC's radical activity can be located in the conflict between imposed service—through the draft and in terms of supporting institutions such as Liberty Bonds and the Red Cross—and its religious ideology combined with the reality of southern Black life. Furthermore the soldiers held a position, which lent it self to serious critique of the American military and enabled them to physically rebel. Despite Black civilians not holding such a position, they still strategically wielded the weapons at their disposal, in this case religion, to boldly challenge the American government. While not seemingly as directly militant as a Vida Henry and the other soldiers that rebelled, Mason and COGIC actually evoked a similar challenge to the government.

Draft Resistance by Black Masses

While individual leaders such as Mason, Randolph and Owen, were undoubtedly stalwarts of Black anti-war resistance, and their organization such as the Church of God In Christ and the radical magazine *The Messenger* are certainly some of the recognizable

examples of different forms of resistance, nothing could compare to the scale of resistance to participation in the war by the Black masses. Although this informal area of resistance is often overlooked or dismissed as unimportant, here it is crucial to understanding Black radical activity of this era. Black draft resister and dodgers cannot merely be dismissed as lazy, cowardice or disinterested, rather their resistance reflects a deep understanding of their circumstances. Additionally it reflects, on a mass scale, a prioritization of daily material realities over service to a coercive government war apparatus. Furthermore draft resistance by Blacks acted as a form of resistance against racist conscription policies and practices by draft boards. As everyday Black civilians the draft resisters and dodgers possibly seem to have a opposite positionality to the Black soldiers of the Twenty-Fourth yet there were similarities in their resistance.

The question of conscription of Black men into the military was fiercely debated along racial lines. As the overwhelming majority of Blacks were still residing in the South the question of Black conscription inevitably became a largely southern question. Jeanette Keith writes,

> On the question of drafting blacks, Wilson administration officials told southern leaders what they wanted to hear, ultimately producing a mixed and confusing message: Some senators believed that African Americans would not be drafted at all but would be exempted as essential agricultural labor; others received assurances that the ratio of blacks and whites in the South would not be disturbed, which seemed to indicate that blacks and whites would be drafted according to their proportion in the region's population.[63]

However ultimately Blacks were conscripted at disproportionately higher rates than whites. One-third of Black registrants were conscripted, as opposed to only one-quarter of whites. This outcome can be attributed to both explicit and systemic racist. Although Florida, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi and South Carolina all drafted more Blacks

than whites, even if Selective Service regulation were applied equally Black men still would have been drafted in disproportionate numbers, as Blacks were disproportionality the poorest people in the poorest regions of the country.[64]

Explicit discrimination was certainly another major factor however as Black were less likely than whites to receive deferments for dependency. On Montgomery County Alabama draft board stated the following

> "The majority of registrants within the jurisdiction of this Board are africans and their average wages are around $30 per month. Where a registrant had only a wife, it was considered that the husband in the army could send the wife more than he had heretofore contributed, and further, that negro women are always in demand as cooks. The matter of loneliness during the absence of the husband was not taken into consideration."[65]

In Monroe County, also in Alabama the draft board stated, "Not that we intend to discriminate between the races, but because it is a matter of common knowledge that it requires more for a white man and his wife to live than it does a negro man and his wife, due to their respective station in life."[66] These comments are examples of some of the localized racist practices that operated not only using prejudiced assumptions, that Black woman could always find work as domestics for white families and that Black families generally requited less resources than white families. Additionally that fact that Blacks were found physically fit for service more frequently than whites serves as another example of racial discrimination. Table 1 below displays how drastically discrimination and systemic economic oppression confounded resulting in significantly higher rates of induction across the South.

T1. Induction Rates during World War I, by Race[67]

	% of white inductions	*% of black inductions*
Alabama	27.27	31.57
Arkansas	27.13	34.28
Florida	21.62	33.08
Georgia	32.04	30.47
Kentucky	24.66	43.79
Louisiana	26.51	37.67
Maryland	22.40	34.85
Mississippi	25.40	29.51
Missouri	26.79	40.44
North Carolina	24.73	27.38
South Carolina	25.94	34.74
Tennessee	24.81	40.64
Texas	22.82	37.65
Virginia	24.55	36.57

In this way discrimination in induction operates as a form of overt racism institutionalized through draft boards. Although different in form from the overt racism experienced in by soldiers in Houston these forms of oppression must be recognized as closely related when understanding how their forms of resistance were connected.

It is tempting to treat the Black masses feelings about World War I as somewhat apathetic or indifferent, and as a result consider Black desertion and draft dodging along these same lines. While these feelings certainly may have been the case in many instances, what speaks volumes is the resistant action that resulted from those feelings. Large swaths of poor Black southerners operating as the most politically impotent group in the country did not have effective formal avenues to agitate for change to the systems, which oppressed them, despite this they still managed to forge effective weapons to resist domination. Their resistance had caught the attention of high ranking war officials and by the spring of 1918 Provost Marshall General Crowder, his office having collected

statistics on the high rates of desertion amongst Blacks, was sending telegrams to governors of southern states questioning why Black desertion rates were so high. Southern governors offered up responses that were characteristically rooted in racist paternalism, arguing that Black men were not unpatriotic, instead it was there ignorant, shiftless, illiterate tendencies that explained their desertion rate. Unsurprisingly Crowder was thoroughly convinced by this explanation, however as Table 2 indicates Black desertion rates were more than tripled those of whites in some Southern states. It is hard to believe that supposed Black racial deficiencies as alleged by the Southern governors could make up such a drastic difference.

T2. Desertion Rates during World War I, by Race[68]

	% of white desertions	*% of black desertions*
Alabama	2.96	13.22
Arkansas	2.11	9.32
Florida	3.28	21.32
Georgia	3.05	7.97
Kentucky	1.23	5.90
Louisiana	2.17	7.82
Maryland	3.48	9.12
Mississippi	2.25	9.95
Missouri	3.38	7.86
North Carolina	0.76	6.73
South Carolina	1.57	6.18
Tennessee	2.58	8.17
Texas	5.10	6.44
Virginia	2.18	7.67

Additionally, in examining the prosecution of deserters and other resisters, it becomes clear that the government viewed Black desertion and failure to comply with draft regulations as a great threat. As Theodore Kornweibel Jr. identifies:

> As for conscription, federal authorities worried on two accounts: black failed to comply with selective service regulations more than twice as often as whites; and

> the influence and example of conscientious objectors and political opponents of the war might erode black participation even more seriously. The Bureau of Investigation could afford no complacency in tracking down black slackers, delinquents, and deserters.[69]

The defensive and extreme reaction by white authorities, to Black draft resistance indicates that far from racist tropes of the "docile Negro", Black mass uprising was viewed as a legitimate threat. Blacks that failed to comply with Selective Service regulations often had to endure long and frequently unjustified jail terms. Other times the threat of such imprisonment was used to coerce Blacks into choosing to immediate induction into the military. The Bureau of Investigation, despite having limited resources—it was primarily focused on tracking down suspected subversive persons and potential enemy activity—still allocated some resources to tracking down suspected draft dodgers. Often these investigations involved disputes over the age of Black suspects however often Blacks were jailed while these claims were being investigated. Provost Marshal General Enoch Crowder feeling as though the resources of the Bureau were not enough issued orders in November 1917 to make every police officer "part of the army building machine" by giving them the authority to arrest delinquents.[70] This had obvious impacts for Blacks were already viewed with great suspicion, especially in the south. By the middle of 1918, in most southern cities, Blacks who did not have classification cards could expect to be picked up and jailed with military induction potentially following their stay in jail. The relates to Houston again as the punishment for draft dodgers is connected to the punishment of many of the soldiers who were also imprisoned for their alleged participation in the Houston Rebellion. It is clear—through the similar methods of punishment used by the government—that they perceived of the threat of the Black rebel soldiers and Black draft dodgers in a similar manner.

Imprisonment without sentencing during this time is seen as both a means of policing Black mobility and the potential threat of resistance to the war and as a means of coercion to get Blacks into military service. Kornweiblel writes of Blacks reasons for dodging the draft;

> Many Black men who did not comply with the intricacies of the draft were simply taking advantage of the booing economy and pursuing their own self-interest. They failed to register, return questionnaires, or inform draft boards of new addresses when they found a job or more desirable lodging in a crowded ghetto. Others reacted to the draft out of fatalism born of generations of subjection. If one could maintain invisibility and stay clear of the white man—his police, his government, his demands—well and good.[71]

Kornweibel captures some of the range of draft dodging by Black men at the time, as it surely was very much a lived experience. Kornweibel correctly points out that by dodging the draft some Black men may have been just try to survive best as they can, however this does not make the act of draft dodging any less radical. In fact similar to Houston where the lived experience of the soldiers, compelled a decision to engage in radical action, a similar process takes hold amongst the mass of Black draft dodgers. While the soldiers in Houston experienced a reality that clashed with their ideal or underlying beliefs in service, for the mass of Black draft dodgers the reality of the draft fundamentally clashed with their existence and the product is similar radical rejection of military service.

Interestingly enough Black draft dodgers and resisters played into the very racist stereotypes, which Black military service sought to dispel, however both engaged in radical challenge to American military authority. There is a striking contrast between the passive resistance of Black draft resisters and the violent uprising, which occurred in Houston. While the members of the Twenty-Fourth were voluntarily serving in the

military, and Black draft dodgers were actively trying to avoid such fate, in both cases an informal radical challenge to the American government emerged. What is interesting here is that the soldiers unlike the masses resisting had access albeit limited to guns and military training both of which they utilized during their rebellion. The circumstances of most Black resister allowed them little to no resources through which they could engage in aggressive forms of resistance, this shows how circumstantial the avenues of informal resistance can be. Still the soldiers cries of "To hell with France, get to work right here" as they prepared the rebellion echoed the of inspired Black draft resisters in the South to a great degree.[72] Both groups were more concerned with their material circumstances as Black people than with American global war, yet their resistance still became a direct challenge to the emergence of American global order.

The soldiers' status as service members and, the Twenty-Fourth's history specifically, as agents of American global power, meant that there rebellion contained an inherent challenge to American hegemony. Their revolt in Houston directly implicated white supremacy domestically with American advances for hegemony globally. While such a challenge may seem to stake itself on the unique positionality of the Black soldier, the concurrent Black radical formations show that this was not the case. While circumstances of the rebellion may seem exceptional at first glance, they are in fact clearly rooted in a wider Black experience that generates similar radical critiques at those that emerged from the soldiers' actions in Houston. However the Houston Rebellion clearly had a deeper resonance in the consciousness and discourse of Black Americans at the time, and it is this resonance, which must be examined further.

Historians, both those who privilege or diminish the narratives and lives of working class Black folks, often fail to attribute political understandings to them. There is not a careful consideration of the fullness or their lives that considers all the contradictions and entanglements that are lived out. When considering both the draft dodgers and rebels in Houston there is confrontation of material reality. Dodgers with a complex set of understandings, take up a radical position in order to deal with their material reality, to survive. There is a conscious understanding that their survival is not prioritized in the white supremacist order and they actively seek to challenge that. Similarly with both the New York Black radicals and the Church of God in Christ, there is an attempt to declare Black humanity by challenging material oppressions. Likewise in Houston soldiers who serve with purpose and group consciousness to uplift the race make a similar radical calculus when they see how little protection is afforded them in Houston. The common thread in this era is a form of Black radicality shaped by asserting Black humanity in the face of material oppression. In Houston the humanity of the soldiers was asserted through extreme violent means, and the rebellion held a heightened resonance in the Black collective imagination.

Part 4: Black Thought and a Radical Resonance

Contradiction in Black Thought

While Black radicality in this moment was shaped by boldly asserting Black humanity in a world that denied it, the prevailing form of post-Reconstruction uplift ideology was reliant on maintaining the respectability of the Black race and prioritized the constant reinforcing of a positive Black identity. The historical roots and development of this ideology were established primarily in the fall of Reconstruction following the Civil War. As historian Kevin Gaines explains:

> "The loss of black political power and the economic and political repression of the Jim Crow order, including peonage, the convict lease system, lynching, and the surge in violence and racist utterances accompanying U.S. imperialism were the harsh conditions shaping black political thought"[73]

The vicious treatment of Black people post-Reconstruction not only widened the scope of economic and social deprivation of Black people; it also created the urgent need to reinforce a strong positive Black identity. The sheer magnitude of systemic deprivation created complicated factions, which resulted in different forms of Post Reconstruction uplift ideology, which should not be listlessly glossed over. However, they can be generally characterized by, as Gaines puts it, "stressing the opposition between self-help and civil rights agitation, as embodied by Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois…"[74] Although different in approach both of these factions—albeit in different manners—were concerned more broadly with promoting their own distinct form of Black respectability. Rooted primarily in patriarchal white bourgeois culture, both of these forms of Black responsibility were promulgated by Black thought leaders both within Black communities and externally to white audiences to reinforce a positive Black identity. These faction of political thought can be seen as a defensive counter to the

systemic oppression that kept Blacks from fulfilling the dominant society's norms centered on the white patriarchal middle class values of the era. Embracing respectability in many ways meant rejecting nonconformity to the dominant societal norms, however persistent problems and paradoxes emerged from these well-intentioned forms of Black thought. In attempting to subscribe to dominant cultural mores Black post-Reconstruction uplift ideologies in many ways internalized and reproduced destructive racist, elitist, and patriarchal tendencies.[75] Additionally these ideologies failed to account for the realties faced by the majority of Black people, in favor of more middle class aspirational goals.

Within post-Reconstruction Black uplift ideologies the Black solider held a distinctive symbolic nature. The Black solider was very much still an idolatrous figure in the imagination of the Black masses, because of his direct role in liberating enslaved Blacks during the Civil War, through fighting in the Union Army. Given this history and already positive imagery amongst the Black masses, Black military service was one of the ideal realms for Black people to live up to the kind of respectability politics espoused by Black political elites. As Chad Williams puts it, Black soldiers "symbolized freedom, manhood, and martial heroism. Most significantly, they demonstrated the potential for citizenship and how military service in the war could expand its boundaries to fully include African Americans."[76] In this historical moment military service was the one of the limited settings for Black men to display that they could live up to dominate societal norms of manhood and patriotism, by displaying both valor and love for their country. Military service existed as a space for Black men to dispel stereotypes, through loyal

service, and to display their patriotism as well as assert a kind of manhood inline with the norms of the dominant culture.

Given this context the Houston Rebellion clearly emerged in the rupture between Black political ideologies dependent on dominant cultural mores of patriotism and manhood, and the lived realities of Black people. The rebellion was an early 20th century instance where conflicting nature between Black ideology and reality was highlighted. While conventional ideologies were rooted in convincing whites of Black humanity through achieving respectability, the Houston Rebellion was an explosively violent declaration of Black humanity. This had predictable consequences as historian Chad Williams notes, "The Houston violence produced a seismic shift in national debate on the potential place of African American solider in the U.S. military. White supremacist now had irrefutable proof that black troops lacked discipline, threatened southern racial tranquility, an could not be trusted."[77] The soldiers' action displayed a bold disregard for maintaining the lines of respectability, which had been so intricately drawn and reinforced by Black political elites. Furthermore, the Houston Rebellion, through its violent rejection of white supremacy, exposed the shortcomings of conceptions of citizenship dependent on Black adherence to white cultural mores; and at this time no tenet of white American culture was more important for conventional Blacks to adhere to than patriotism.

Black Patriotism and Global America

The politics of the Black respectability at this moment were based on the want for Black inclusion and incorporation into American society but more specifically American democracy. Historically American democracy has very much been an ongoing and expansive project, repurposing itself in new configurations dependent on certain historical moments. One of the main underlying tenets of all American democratic projects has consistently been white supremacy. The Houston Rebellion clearly displays the contradiction of American democracy and Black existence in this sense however, this contradiction operated in a manner that was attune to the way in which the project of American democracy was transforming as it began a new global era embodied by the entry into World War I.

At this specific moment in time the project American democracy was characterized by both the ongoing war abroad and also an imposition of nationalism domestically often in a repressive manner. As mentioned before President Wilson's goal of "100% Americanism" was rooted in the repression of freedom of speech, censorship of the press, and propaganda campaigns but also the specific targeting of radical and progressive organizations deemed subversive. Additionally the federal government had a particular anxiety about the antiwar sentiment amongst Black people and therefore held an understandably guarded skepticism of Black patriotism. Black peoples status living under the perpetual threat of not only extralegal violence but also government-imposed repression gave the government every reason to feel insecure about Black loyalty. However prominent Black political elites and members of the Black press spiritedly

pronounced the patriotism of Black people and loyalty of the Black masses to the war efforts.

The proclamation of fidelity to America was not just reactive as Williams also notes, "Black spokespersons tapped into a post-Civil War political tradition that links patriotism with nationhood and civic belonging. In doing so, they hoped to reconcile the paradoxical nature of American nationalism with a racially inclusive vision of democracy."[78] The Black political leaders who espoused a post-Reconstruction uplift ideology sought an inclusion into American democracy, upon which they viewed patriotism as contingent. Black patriotism, at this moment, represented a complicated link between the Black politics of post-Reconstruction uplift and the project of American democracy at the critical moment of global war. Both projects, albeit with different interest in mind, were dependent on Black patriotism; for the project of American democracy it signaled submission and compliance, while for Black bourgeois political project it signaled investment in America with the hope for inclusion.

The Houston Rebellion, laid bare the contradiction of the reality Black life with American democracy. A status that was magnified by the fact that the United States involvement in World War I was billed explicitly as a war for global democracy. As President Wilson stated in his, April 1917, speech that asked Congress for a declaration of war, "The world must be made safe for democracy."[79] Additionally Houston rebels' status as soldiers is not merely coincidental, as figures embodying Black patriotism, they occupied a position representing the Black political hope for inclusion into a broader white American society, yet they also represented a repressed incorporation into the American project of democracy. Moreover due to their position as soldier they were

figures symbolic of the contradiction of Black patriotism. Therefore, the rebellion was an attempt to resolve this conflict by violently asserting their existence in terms not centered on a highly illusory inclusion into American democracy.

While the decision for the soldiers to assert their humanity through radical violence represented a rejection of achieving humanity through loyalty and respectability, it was an action that was not without consequence. President Wilson warned in his request for declaration of war, "If there should be disloyalty, it will be dealt with with a firm hand of stern repression…".[80] Here President Wilson makes clear the consequences for any group that was disobedient to the evolving order of American dominance. For the rebels' their resolution to conflict between the expanding American project dependent on global white supremacy and Black humanity required the ultimate form of disobedience. This was the context that resulted in the largest court-marital ever held within the continental limits of the United States. The first court martial consisted of sixty-three defendants, fifty-four of whom were found guilty of all charges; they were never allowed any form of appeal. Thirteen were sentenced to death by hanging. Initial executions were carried out on December 11th 1917; meanwhile the other forty-one men were sentenced to life in prison at Ft. Leavenworth.[81] Two more subsequent court martials resulting in the hanging of six more soldiers, as well as the life imprisonment of twelve more soldiers, and shorter term imprisonment of twenty-eight other solider with sentences ranging between two and fifteen years. The Houston Rebellion stands alone in this moment as violent radical attempt at resolving the conflict of American democracy and Black humanity and it was an attempt that cost many Black lives. The resonance of this was not lost on the wider Black community and through an examination of the

aftermath and reaction the Rebellion it becomes clear that the reverberations of the Rebellion were highly visibly and widespread.

A Radical Resonance

Prior to the rebellion the underlying currents of mass Black radical sentiment were already swirling. The Great Migration had already begun in its earliest stages, demonstrating an active desire for a change in condition amongst the large segments of the Black masses. This desire was the kind that not only encouraged mass movement, but also which begged for political alternatives in the face of oppression and the Houston Rebellion, was a highly visible form of such an alternative. It was clear from the discourse in the Black public that Houston Rebellion held great resonance, as well as produced great anxiety, due to its attempt to resolve the issue of Black humanity through radical violent means.

From the Black newspaper, the Philadelphia Tribune, in an editorially published only a week after the rebellion, which we hear, praise for the rebels and their radical action. The author lauds the solider (Private Edwards) for defending the Black woman (Mrs. Travers) who was being brutalized by the police. He writes "The colored man of the 24th that protested against unnecessary brutality toward a woman of our race showed a new spirit that is spreading over the country. We have, at last reached that point where we refuse to stand quietly by and see our women slapped in the face…."[82] Here, in his championing of the actions of the solider, there is a critique of conventional Black politics through his praise of an alternative conception of Black manhood not necessarily reliant on the white conceptions of manhood espoused by Black uplift politicians.

Brutality against Black woman has a deep rooted history in white supremacy, and has been employed not only as a vicious physical tactic on Black women but also as a psychic tactic to reinforce feeling of powerlessness in Black men. The author sees the soldiers' actions as defending this woman and casting off this sense of powerlessness in a radical manner. Also it is important that the author locates the rebellion as a critical moment of refusal and describes such spirit as growing, which signals to his understanding of an emerging radicalism amongst Black masses. The editorial continues with a proclamation to colored men

> "Protect your women, colored men, stand by your womanhood and if need be, let rivers of blood flow down the streets of this land, but die fighting for the mother who bore you, the wife who cherished and comforted you, the daughter who proudly bears your name."[83]

The author of this editorial, using vivid radical language, connects the acts of the rebellion to a new form of Black manhood centered on the defense of Black woman. This editorial shows rejection from a more passive reaction toward the brutality against Black woman to a more overt violent call to reject this brutality. A call for such violent action, even in self-defense, was uncharacteristic of mainstream Black politics of the time and the Houston Rebellion was lauded for this violent rejection.

The persecution of the soldiers involved in the rebellion was also an important aspect of the rebellion that held resonance for many Black people. The execution and imprisonment of the soldiers importantly displayed how the expression of Black humanity, was viewed unjustly as a threat to be destroyed by the American government. In the Baltimore Afro American there was the provocative headline "Brooklyn Pastor Calls Houston Hanging 'Military Lynching'". In the article the Black pastor criticizes the military as "guilty of military lynching" and also criticizes the lack of appeal and due

process for the soldiers.[84] This pastor's critique shows not only solidarity with the soldiers but also echoes ideas about the illegitimacy of American democracy through its attack on the institution of the military. The article also highlights the fact that the pastor was warned he might be jailed for espousing his views via sermon but the pastor replied that he did not fear arrest. The article also points out that the pastor referred to the executed soldiers as "thirteen martyrs". However it is the pastor's quote at the end of the article which is most telling, "These thirteen were sacrificed on the infamous alter of Southern prejudice. Yet we are still expected to glorify patriotism. That deed is not calculated to enhance the patriotism of American Negroes but to destroy it."[85] The pastor in the article is a fiery example of the simultaneous rejection of the lines of Black respectability politics dedicated to upholding Black patriotism and embrace of the militant challenge to legitimacy of American democracy displayed by the Houston Rebellion. The pastors disavowal of respectability is evident from, not only his characterization of the executed soldiers as martyrs, but even more so in his flagrant disregard for the potential to be thrown in jail for his outspoken support for the soldiers and critique of American government; a kind of confrontational position uncommon to Black political elite at the time. The article also shows how the pastor critiques the legitimacy of American democracy through his challenging of patriotism. He not only directly attacks the justice system as an institution by critiquing the handling of trial but also in his stating so plainly of how the Houston event destroys American patriotism. He names Black patriotism as "expected" however never acknowledges Black fulfillment of that expectation rather speaks of the decay of this patriotism due to the persecution of the rebels.

One significant supporter of the rebels was Ida B. Wells-Barnett, while based Chicago at the time attempted to organize a memorial service for the executed soldiers. However the pastors of largest Black churches in Chicago refused to hold such service under fear of being viewed as unpatriotic. Wells-Barnett forever undeterred launched an individual form of protest distributing buttons that read, "In Memoriam Martyred Negro Soldiers, Dec. 11, 1917." For actions she was investigated by government officials and threatened with arrest if she did not stop distributing the buttons, Wells-Barnett obviously refused the officials request.[86] Well-Barnett's militant support of the soldiers in the face of rejection from the conservative Black community and threat of repression from the government mirrors the militant spirit of the soldiers of Houston. It also provides a window into how radically inclined Blacks such as Wells-Barnett viewed the rebellion, with a sense of militant pride, despite the threats of repression from government and exclusion from more conservatives Black communities.

Wells-Barnett's support of the rebels helps highlight how important to understanding the impact of the rebellion is a consideration of the language that surrounded the rebels and urgency seen in organizing to free the imprisoned soldiers. As alluded to earlier the soldiers—both those that had been executed and those sentenced to prison—were widely deemed martyrs in Black publications of the time. Although this should be understood as an attempt to give more agency to the soldiers, martyrdom also has an inherently radical connotation, moreover locating the solider as martyrs lends legitimacy to the claim that their actions were widely perceived as righteous. More generally there were many positive descriptors attributed to the Houston rebels in Black publications of the time, which characterized them in a heroic light. There was even a

Martyrs Day organized, by the National Equal Rights League, in remembrance of the soldiers, held on the anniversary of the execution of the initial thirteen soldiers. A letter by NERL Publicity Director, Monroe Mason, published in a Black newspaper, in 1923 on the anniversary of this Martyrs' Day, described the thirteen soldiers as facing their death with "the bravest of hearts and warrior bold" and goes on to claim "Each life as it went forth into the great beyond was a personification of the rarest bravery…."[87] There is a very apparent glorification of the soldiers who were engaged in armed rebellion against the white supremacist order. This kind of language was representative of an affirmation of the radical political action of the rebels and signals an endorsement of Black radicalism, rooted in a blunt declaration of Black humanity.

As glorification of the Houston rebel soldiers represents an increased embrace of Black radicalism, this increase in radical sentiment constituted a real threat to an American democracy order, characterized by, devout patriotism and nationalism, which Black radicalism inherently rejected. Challenging the patriotism that was inherent in Black uplift thought, was also a challenge to the global expanse of American democracy. This transgression was amplified in a climate of global war with a heightened sense of nationalism and required patriotism. The rebellion itself was dealt with using all the repression and force expected in such an environment, and that President Wilson had warned disloyalty would warrant. However the rushed handling of the court martial, the clandestine nature of the executions, and lack of appeal process only flamed radical sentiment. Kelly Miller, a prominent Black intellect, NAACP affiliate, and Howard University Professor, wrote a letter to Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, in which he warned Secretary Baker of the growing radical sentiment. He wrote

> "These men went singing to their doom as if conscious of righteous guilt. In the minds of many Negroes these men stand as martyrs who were crucified upon the cross of race passion. No patriotic purpose is served when an act of the government produces martyrs in the estimation of loyal and patriotic citizens."[88]

Miller's warning to the Secretary Baker, illustrates his perception of the Black masses high regard for the rebel soldiers. He frames the underlying radicalism of the masses, manifested in support of the Houston rebels, as a threat to patriotism. In a time when America's democratic project was contingent on submissive patriotism Miller attempts to articulate the spread of radical sentiment as a threat to patriotism in order to influence Secretary Baker to take government action against racism.

Miller was emblematic of the Black political elite of that era and in his letter there were clear undertones of the Black respectability politics, which aspire to confirm the patriotism of the Black race. Miller goes on in the letter to dismiss the rebellion as "a most deplorable occurrence and calculated to frustrate the desired good feeling between the races as well as to impair the Negro's chances as a military factor in the United States Army." Here the complex intersection of Black respectability politics and the global American project of democracy is on full display, as Miller's primary concern is Black inclusion in the military and he openly recognizes the rebellions ability to undermine that possibility. Miller implicitly acknowledges that Black respectability is contingent on patriotism, represented by successful Black military service. It is through these means that Miller hoped to achieve equality and full citizenship. However Black military service served the project of global American expansion in the literal sense but also in the sense that it reified Black submissive complacence, demanded by the nationalistic project. Miller willingness to warn Secretary Baker of the threat of Black radicalism in hopes that he would act in, what he perceived as, their combined interest shows the

intersection of Black respectability and American global dominance in this moment. The rebellion laid bare the contradiction between Black life and American democracy, and attempted to violently reconcile the two. Miller recognizes this attempt and see's it threat to his own more conventional means of reconciling the same contradiction.

While the rebellion undoubtedly held strong resonance for its radicalism in the minds of many, it also represented a threat not only to white order but also, in the minds of Black elites. Interestingly enough even as the NAACP campaigned to free the imprisoned members of the 24th Infantry their campaign explicitly centered on language of respectability. When the NAACP sent a delegation before President Wilson to advocate on behalf of the imprisoned soldiers their plea was still firmly rooted in the language of respectability. In a 1918 press release detailing the conversation with President Wilson they are documented as saying:

> "We feel that the history of this particular regiment and the splendid record for bravery and loyalty of our Negro soldiery in every crisis of the nation give us the right to make this request. And we make it not only in the name of their loyalty but also in the name of the unquestioned loyalty to the nation of twelve million Negroes – a loyalty which today paces them side by side with the original American stocks that landed at Plymouth and Jamestown."[89]

Here, the NAACP attempts to anxiously maintain the respectability of not only the Twenty-Fourth but also the entire Black race. The NAACP's immense fear of the entire race being judged by the insurrection of the Twenty-Fourth is evident by this ardent rehashing Black loyalty. Even more telling is how the NAACP delves deep into the roots of American origins evoking the founding European ancestors, and position the Black race beside the original American colonizers and slave owners in order emphasize their claim of Black loyalty. This again displays the commitment by more conservative Black elites of their method of resolving the conflict, which the Houston rebellion exposed,

through continuously advocating for Black incorporation into the American democratic project.

In the wake of the rebellion there is a disavowal of violence and aversion to radicalism by prominent mainstream organizations and prominent Black figures. While still in the midst of the campaign to free the imprisoned members of the 24th then NAACP Field Secretary James Weldon Johnson said in a speech:

> "We eliminate physical force in the case of the Negro for the reason that there is no possibility for its success. That is the only reason why we eliminate it: because physical force itself, as civilization is constructed today, is the justifiable means by which those peoples who are oppressed may obtain their rights. But it would not be justifiable in the case of the Negro because the chances of success are too small."[90]

Here we again see a disavowal of violence, which indicates a distancing from the growing radicalism in Black society. Although Johnson concedes that violence by Blacks is not inherently wrong calling it "justifiable" he dismisses it an unrealistic method to attain rights. The action of to resolve the conflict the contradictory nature of Black life in American democracy is dismissed by Johnson even as he advocates for the release of imprisoned soldiers. Johnson's failure to understand the Houston Rebellion is indicative of the key failings of Black political ideology from which the soldiers' radical action emerged. The Houston Rebellion was not rooted in bourgeoisie notions of long-term pragmatism, rather it was rooted in the immediate conditions experienced by the soldiers and the need to assert their humanity in response to those conditions.

Conclusion: Continued Radicalism

The continued general rise of Black radicalism in the wake of the rebellion is visible in the correspondence of an imprisoned soldier. Ben McDaniels, while imprisoned in Ft. Leavenworth for alleged involvement in the Houston Rebellion wrote a letter to Marcus Garvey, where, he adamantly expresses, support for him and his cause by both himself and by him and his fellow imprisoned soldiers for Garvey and his movement. McDaniels writes "...Sir, we praise you for the greatest movement that has every been made by any colored human being!"[91] In the letter he goes on to tell Garvey that he only had 10 dollars to his name but would invest 5 dollars in Garvey's Black Star Line. The letter directly connects the spark of radical action of the Houston Rebellion with the Garvey's radical political organizing. Interestingly enough the first American chapter of Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association was founded earlier the same summer of the Houston Rebellion, in Harlem. The fact that the rebellion in Houston and founding of UNIA—which would be the dominant Black radical movement for the next decade—were so close temporally is not merely coincidental. The content of McDaniels' letter, revealing he and his comrades' enthusiastic devotion to Garvey, is very telling of the political consciousness of some of the soldiers who took part in the rebellion. Garvey himself would go on to say, in 1919 speech, "We Negroes have fought and died enough for white people. The time has come to fight and die for ourselves."[92] Garvey, a divisive figure amongst the Black political elite, espoused a different kind of politics much less reliance on a form respectability based on white American culture. Furthermore Garveyism in particular derived its radical nature from not only boldly declaring Black humanity but also through its deep concern with Black material reality.

The Houston Rebellion, embodied both of these aspects and should rightly be seen as a flaring precursor to the explosion of membership and following Garvey would see in its the aftermath.

The Houston Rebellion was one of the earliest twentieth century acts of direct militant Black political action, the examination of its occurrence helps to better explain the development of subsequent Black uprisings. The rebellion occurred at a time when more radical understandings of Blackness were developing; be it in the mass migration of Black people out of the South to northern urban areas, in the in emergence of radical nationalist movements such as Garvey's UNIA, or even in the budding radical Black cultural movements of the Harlem Renaissance. The Rebellion also occurred at a time in which America was entering its first truly global War of the 20th Century involving a multitude of world powers. It was also the one of the first wars, which was fought explicitly under the guise of making the world safe for democracy while engaging in repression domestically. The rebellion gave an opportunity to those Blacks who had underlying radical sentiments to express that through the support for their martyrs. It presented a form of alternative for Blacks who cared neither for patriotism nor for a stunted existence based on white terms, rather it presented an *active* means to assert Black humanity in the midst of drastic realities. It was these Black people that enabled campaigns to amass over a 120,000 signatures in support of freeing the imprisoned Houston rebels.[93] Additionally it was these Black people that enabled delegations to have leverage in campaigning for the freedom of their martyrs under three separate presidents. The role radicalism, direct and indirect, of Black masses should not be understated when

considering this struggle, which would by 1930 see virtually all of the imprisoned rebels gain their freedom.[94]

The Houston Rebellion emerged from an extremely particular set of circumstances, a Black southern site with a history of Black autonomy and white repression, a regiment of Black soldiers with past that built a strong race-based group consciousness that provided fertile ground for radicalism, a moment where was America engaged in a "war for democracy" which exposed contradictions for Black people, and a moment when the most prominent Black thinkers and leaders still overwhelmingly believed in Black incorporation into democracy. All of these circumstances while extremely distinct are not *unique*. The Houston Rebellion in its story, its impact, and its poetry encapsulate core aspects of the conflictual nature of Black existence in America, which is reproduced in various historical and current moments.

This work is named for Vida Henry's command to his comrades as they armed themselves and prepared for their rebellion: "Save one for yourself." These words capture the notion that in a world that had so flagrantly denied Black existence and humanity, these men still *had* to assert their humanity even at the cost of death. The command subtly declares the complete inability of America to deal with Black humanity, even in death. Rather than die inhumanely at the hands of whites by "saving one for yourself" the soldiers could assert humanity, by taking their own life. The words represented a conclusion that was neither revolutionary nor tragic. Rather the words boldly accepted reality and responded with a thrust of humanity. Both of these aspects are at the core of the Houston Rebellion from the smallest spark in Houston to the deepest reverberations around the globe.

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[3] Steptoe, 26.
[4] Steptoe, 29.
[5] Robert V. Haynes, *A Night of Violence: The Houston Riot of 1917* (Louisiana State University Press, 1976), 74.
[6] John Smith, *Mutiny On the Bayou: The Camp Logan Story* (KHOU-TV, 2006).
[7] John Smith.
[8] Haynes, *A Night of Violence: The Houston Riot of 1917*, 14–16, 63.
[9] Haynes, 64.
[10] John Smith, *Mutiny On the Bayou: The Camp Logan Story*.
[11] Martha Gruening, "Houston: An NAACP Investigation," *The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races*, November 1917, 14.
[12] Martha Gruening, 13–19; Haynes, *A Night of Violence: The Houston Riot of 1917*, 94–97.
[13] John Smith, *Mutiny On the Bayou: The Camp Logan Story*.
[14] Haynes, *A Night of Violence: The Houston Riot of 1917*, 97.
[15] Martha Gruening, "Houston: An NAACP Investigation," 16.
[16] Haynes, *A Night of Violence: The Houston Riot of 1917*, 140.
[17] Haynes, 178.
[18] Haynes, 203; Martha Gruening, "Houston: An NAACP Investigation," 19.
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[21] William B. Gatewood, *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire : Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1971).
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[23] Theresa Runstedtler, "The New Negro's Brown Brother: Black American and Filipino Boxers and the 'Rising Tide of Color,'" in *Escape From New York: The New Negro Renaissance Beyond Harlem*, ed. Davarian Baldwin and Minkah Makalani (University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 110.
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[25] "Correspondence From the Twenty-Fourth Infantry," *The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races*, October 1917.
[26] Haynes, *A Night of Violence: The Houston Riot of 1917*, 45.
[27] "Correspondence From the Twenty-Fourth Infantry."
[28] "Correspondence From the Twenty-Fourth Infantry."
[29] "Correspondence From the Twenty-Fourth Infantry."
[30] Haynes, *A Night of Violence: The Houston Riot of 1917*, 240.

[31] Haynes, 115.
[32] Major Kneeland S. Snow, "United States vs. Corporal Robert Tillman, et Al., 24th Infantry," § United States. War Dept. Office of the Judge Advocate General. (1918), 79–80.
[33] Private Ernest Phifer, "United States vs. Corporal Robert Tillman, et Al., 24th Infantry," § United States. War Dept. Office of the Judge Advocate General. (1918), 1296.
[34] Sergeant William Fox, "United States vs. Corporal Robert Tillman, et Al., 24th Infantry," § United States. War Dept. Office of the Judge Advocate General. (2018), 2238.
[35] Private Elmer Bandy, "United States vs. Sergeant William C. Nesbit et Al., 24th Infantry," § United States. War Dept. Office of the Judge Advocate General. (1917), 1189–91; Private Cleda Love, "United States vs. Corporal Robert Tillman, et Al., 24th Infantry," § United States. War Dept. Office of the Judge Advocate General. (n.d.), 1550.
[36] Private Elmer Bandy, United States vs. Sergeant William C. Nesbit et al., 24th Infantry, 1190.
[37] Eugenia Draper, "United States vs. Corporal Robert Tillman, et Al., 24th Infantry," § United States. War Dept. Office of the Judge Advocate General. (1918), 1183.
[38] Private Ernest Phifer, United States vs. Corporal Robert Tillman, et al., 24th Infantry, 1322–23.
[39] Haynes, *A Night of Violence: The Houston Riot of 1917*, 166.
[40] Haynes, 64.
[41] Haynes, 72.
[42] Haynes, 70–71.
[43] Haynes, 85.
[44] Haynes, 86–87.
[45] Haynes, 87.
[46] Haynes, 88.
[47] Chad L. Williams, *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 25.
[48] Theodore Kornweibel, *"Investigate Everything": Federal Efforts to Compel Black Loyalty During World War I* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), 47.
[49] Kornweibel, 52.
[50] Kornweibel, 14.
[51] W.E.B. Du Bois, "Close Ranks," *The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races*, 1918.
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[53] Theodore Kornweibel, *No Crystal Stair: Black Life and the Messenger 1917-1928* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975), 17.
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[63] Jeanette Keith, "The Politics of Southern Draft Resistance, 1917-1918: Class, Race, and Conscription in TheRural South," *The Journal of American History* 87, no. 4 (2001): 1342.
[64] Keith, 1349–50.
[65] Keith, 1350.
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[67] "Second Report of the Provost Marshal General to the Secretary of War on the Operations of the Selective Service System to December 20, 1918" (Washington, 1919), 459.
[68] "Second Report of the Provost Marshal General to the Secretary of War on the Operations of the Selective Service System to December 20, 1918," 461.
[69] Kornweibel, *"Investigate Everything": Federal Efforts to Compel Black Loyalty During World War I*, 85.
[70] Kornweibel, 93.
[71] Kornweibel, 116.
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