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ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on the work of the Third World Women's Alliance (TWWA), a women-of-color-led activist organization that maintained active chapters in New York City and the Bay Area between 1971-80. Drawing on archival research and qualitative interviews, I reconstruct how the group invoked, constructed, and circulated intersecting Third World histories and geopolitical analyses through political education, publications, and cultural events. In addition to this historical study, I seek to understand the ongoing presence of the TWWA in educational spaces through interviews with archivists and professors across disciplines. This project makes three contributions to the field of Rhetoric and Composition: 1) offering a genealogy of the rhetoric and writing from the era that Cynthia Young refers to as the U.S. Third World Left; 2) demonstrating how the TWWA's work--and U.S. Third World rhetoric and writing more broadly--blurs scales that are often treated as discrete in Rhetoric and Composition (embodied, local, and transnational); and 3) situating the study of archival research and writing assignments across disciplines as a method of tracing the ongoing impact of social activist histories.

The Introduction, "U.S. Third World Histories of Rhetoric and Writing," demonstrates the significance of the TWWA's "U.S. Third World" framework for scholarship in rhetorical historiography, geopolitics, and multimodal/multigenre composition. In order to put past and present into concrete conversation, the Introduction establishes the research questions that guide this larger project: *How did the TWWA invoke and circulate histories and geopolitical analyses in order to build a "U.S. Third World" alliance? What methods, modes, and genres did they use to do so? How and why is the TWWA's history--via its archives--invoked and circulated today by teachers scholars, and archivists? How does the TWWA—and rhetorical genealogies of the U.S.*

Third World Left more broadly—reshape/extend disciplinary theories and methodologies of history, geopolitics, form, and writing across contexts/disciplines?

Chapter 1, “‘In the Belly of the Monster’: Setting a U.S. Third World Scene,” historicizes the TWWA’s formation in relation to the civil rights/Black power movements, women’s liberation movements, and global Third World anti-colonial struggles. Drawing on the TWWA archives, as well as theoretical work in Third World, U.S. Third World, and transnational feminisms, I contextualize the TWWA’s multiple methods of teaching histories and geopolitical analyses within U.S. Third World cultural, political, and intellectual genealogies.

Chapter 2, “Building Lifelong Activists: Political Education and Publications” draws on the TWWA archives, including the group’s internal education curriculum and newspaper *Triple Jeopardy: Racism Imperialism Sexism*, in order to demonstrate how the group taught the interlinked histories of women of color, and put struggles for women’s liberation within and outside the U.S. into conversation. Read together, the group’s political education and publications demonstrate the rhetorical construction of what Rhetoric and Composition might refer to as a “U.S. Third World scene” both within and outside the organization.

Chapter 3, “Theorizing Culture: The TWWA’s Cultural Committee” turns to the group’s “cultural work,” which TWWA members defined as “arts, methods, techniques, and expressions.” Drawing on the archived meeting minutes of the TWWA Cultural Committee, this chapter surfaces the behind-the-scenes organizational labor of developing a theory of culture, with particular attention to the intellectual, political, and artistic genealogies of three organizations that the Cultural Committee interviewed as part of its work. This chapter demonstrates the role of multiple modes and genres—including theatre, songs, and visual

displays--in communicating intersecting histories and geopolitical analyses in a "U.S. Third World" context.

Chapter 4, "'Freedom We Know is Possible': The TWWA's Cultural Events," looks at how the TWWA's theory of culture was put into practice through events commemorating International Women's Day. Drawing on qualitative interviews, as well as archived event programs, scripts, songs, and committee evaluations, this chapter focuses on the TWWA's use of multiple modes and genres in spaces of cultural performance. I argue that multimodal/multigenre performances have particular affordances for linking multiple histories and geopolitical locations into a U.S. Third World political identification.

Turning from the TWWA's time to the present day, Chapter 5, "Curating, Remediating, and Teaching U.S. Third World Histories: The TWWA Archives," traces the ongoing influence of the organization via a study of the construction and use of the group's archives. Drawing on qualitative interviews with archivists and professors across disciplines, I trace the curation, institutionalization, and pedagogical use of the TWWA archives to teach history, women's and gender studies, and archival studies through critical research and writing assignments. This chapter situates the study of archival pedagogy as a method for tracing the ongoing impact of social activist histories across academic disciplines.

The Conclusion summarizes the central contributions of this dissertation to Rhetoric and Composition, and opens up directions for future work.

THE THIRD WORLD WOMEN'S ALLIANCE: HISTORY, GEOPOLITICS, AND FORM

by

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Dissertation

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INTRODUCTION

U.S. Third World Histories of Rhetoric and Writing

Throughout my K-12 schooling years, history teachers would periodically pull me out into the hall to ask me what was wrong, and why I was receiving Cs, Ds, or Fs on the course exams. I had no answer for them--and I never shared with them that the courses were a fog of names, dates, and broad-brushstrokes without context or exigence. The gap between social history and master narrative could not have been more clear in the case of a high school U.S. history teacher who repeatedly proclaimed Andrew Jackson as her favorite president. Coming into my own sense of historical inquiry marked a deep shift. As an undergraduate, I took a course titled “Modern American Social Movements” that looked at U.S. history through the lens of the women’s liberation, civil rights, Black Power, New Left, Animal Rights, and Christian Right movements. In this class, for the first time, primary-source documents spoke to me as a window into methods of grassroots political organizing. This experience is often on my mind as I teach writing to undergraduate students: how can primary-source documents foster an embodied sense of historical inquiry, and engage students in critical research through material that resonates deeply with them?

For me, historical inquiry has been a deeply embodied experience. In the years of war, domestic “counter-terrorism,” and hate crimes that have followed 9/11, I began to research the history of how South Asians had been racialized in the U.S. into “model minorities,” in order to understand the axes of race, class, gender, caste, and religion that converged into the post-9/11 “ArabMuslimSouthAsian”¹ potential-terrorist figure. Learning about the way South Asians have

¹ Ahmad, “A Rage Shared by Law.”

been racialized in relation to whiteness, blackness, and brownness, and how the economic needs of U.S. empire-building shaped racialization in relation to labor, helped me understand my lived experiences in the context of U.S. history and its transnational contours.

Inspired in part by my background in music, I was particularly drawn to the way performative genres engaged and circulated marginalized histories, and when I moved to Colorado for my MA degree, I became involved in community theatre through the Romero Troupe, which performed little-known histories of Colorado activism, from Irish miners' strikes to Catholic anti-war resistance to desegregation efforts. The troupe connected these histories to contemporary struggles and amplified local efforts by featuring activists as performers. Such performative practices also helped deepen my own sense of embodied historical inquiry, its rhetorical power, and potential material consequences. In 2015, I attended a national gathering of Asian Americans under the banner of "Model Minority Mutiny," a one-day workshop that included collective historical work to examine and compare our different migration histories, situating them in the long history of U.S. race and immigration politics, towards the end of meaningful solidarity work with the Black Lives Matter movement. Engaging in such work requires a deep wrangling with ongoing legacies of enslavement, genocide, war, and migration in the U.S.²--as well as legacies of the liberation movements that have always contested these imperial processes. For example, we see Third World Liberation movement-era anti-colonial rhetoric, such as "model minority suicide" (Prashad *The Karma*) and "model minority mutiny" (Jung), invoked in contemporary anti-racist work.

Such historical engagement gave me the language to name the tension between my upbringing in a mixed diasporic family, and the homogenizing invocations of a U.S.-based "we"

² Smith, "Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy."

and distant “Third World” that I heard from people across the political spectrum. I began to read literature that developed a U.S.-Third World geopolitical analysis, and began to identify with lineages of U.S.-Third World feminism. Identifying with feminist commitments is a deeply geopolitical question for me--it is as much about land as it is about bodies, as much about gendered violence as it is about the histories and subjectivities that shape any traumatic encounter; as much about intimate spaces as it is about imperial wars of aggression and histories of colonization. In other words, it is a feminism that rejects the often-atomized scales of embodied/local/transnational. This shift--one that is old news to anyone who has been politicized around the U.S. as an imperial nation--drew me to anti-imperialist U.S. histories.

I first read about the Third World Women’s Alliance (TWWA) via Frances Beal’s essay “Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female” in Gwendolyn Pough’s Black Feminist Theories course in the fall of 2015. I immediately knew I wanted to learn more. A multiracial women’s organization that grew out of the civil rights and Black Power movements, the TWWA organized against racism, sexism, and imperialism in New York City and the Bay Area during the 1970s, before morphing into the Alliance Against Women’s Oppression (AAWO) and then the Women of Color Resource Center (WCRC), which operated in the Bay Area until 2011. I was taken by the TWWA’s synthesis of intersecting histories and geopolitical analyses into a U.S. Third World framework for women’s organizing, evident in their newspaper *Triple Jeopardy: Racism Imperialism Sexism*, their political education program, which engaged multiple U.S. women’s ethnic histories and contextualized them within dialectical and historical materialist theories, and their cultural work. In contrast to my own alienated experience from historical education, and sense of disconnection from dominant feminist theories, the TWWA’s work merged an embodied approach to history with internationalist principles. In contrast to multicultural rhetoric

of “speaking across difference” for the sake of doing so, or fetishizing alliance/coalition while flattening important differences and erasing the need for identity-specific organizations. The TWWA’s work seemed to point towards a framework for feminist alliances born out of deep necessity--one that took a direct lead from the struggles of Black women, rather than flattening the multiple histories and embodied subjectivities inherent in the “woman-of-color” political category. I knew I wanted to learn more about the exigencies that led to the group's formation, the type of work the group engaged in, its principles and work methods, and how these principles and methods were developed.

The TWWA’s history resonates not only with me. During the 2016-17 school year, a group of students calling themselves the “Frances Beal Society” staged a sit-in at Binghamton University to protest university money being spent on surveillance/policing in the city of Binghamton. One of the leaders said he was inspired by Beal’s writing, and named the group in her honor.³ Over the past few years, I have heard the TWWA invoked in multiple discussions to historicize intersectional women-of-color feminisms in anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist grassroots organizing, and to intervene in white/male-centered depictions of Leftist thought that erase the work of women-of-color groups. The 2017 National Women’s Association Conference, framed around the 40th anniversary of the Combahee River Collective’s Statement, included multiple shout-outs to the TWWA as a precursor to what we know today as intersectionality. More immediately relevant to this dissertation, during a trip to Smith College to visit the TWWA archives, I found myself in conversation with Kathleen Nutter, the accessioning archivist, who remarked how popular *Triple Jeopardy* was with professors across disciplines, and how useful the paper had been for her in unearthing historical political movements and alliances that

³ Personal correspondence.

researchers inquired about (for example, solidarity work between Palestinian activists and the Black Panther Party). The conversation with Dr. Nutter transformed this project from an archival study of the TWWA's modes, genres, and pedagogies for circulating histories and geopolitical analyses, into a study that aims to put past and present into concrete conversation, guided by the following questions:

- How did the TWWA invoke and circulate histories and geopolitical analyses in order to build a “U.S. Third World” alliance?
- What methods, modes, and genres did they use to do so?
- How and why is the TWWA's history--via its archives--invoked and circulated today by teachers scholars, and archivists?
- How does the TWWA—and “U.S. Third World” rhetoric and writing more broadly—reshape/extend disciplinary theories and methodologies for history, geopolitics, form, and writing across contexts/disciplines?

Existing scholarship situates the TWWA within the Black Power movement (Ward), Black feminism (Springer), tricontinental anti-imperialism⁴ (Hong), Chicana feminism (Blackwell), women-of-color feminism (Lee; Roth), Third World feminist internationalism (Spira), U.S.-grounded feminist internationalism (Roshanravan), and the U.S. Third World left (Young). Scholars have also documented *Triple Jeopardy* (Anderson-Bricker; Lee). Oral histories of TWWA leaders Frances Beal and Linda Burnham by activist and professor Loretta Ross trace the political influences on the TWWA, its evolution into AAWO and WCRC. In the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition (R/C), the U.S. Third World Left--the broader intellectual, cultural,

⁴ This refers to the influence of Asian, African, and Latin American anti-imperialist thought and struggle.

and political genealogy of which the TWWA was a part--has been engaged in scholarship including Pough's study of the Black Panther party, Wanzer Serrano's study of the Young Lords, Leon's study of the Comisión Femenil Mexicana Nacional, and Hoang's study of the Asian American movement.⁵ Here, I rely on Alexander and Mohanty's mobilization of the term *genealogy* in *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*, which focuses "comparative, relational, and historically based" lineages of feminism (p. xvi). Thinking in terms of comparative, relational histories helps me orient this study away from debates around origins and towards *lineages*--cultural, political, and intellectual ancestries that open up space in the discipline to take a lead from the linked internationalist movements that comprised Third Worldism. These studies situate the U.S. geopolitical landscape as a complex, layered site of multiple overlapping liberation struggles, and open up space for a R/C study focused specifically on women's Third World anti-imperialist organizing in the U.S.

The purpose of this dissertation is to highlight a thread of the intellectual, political, and cultural genealogy of the U.S. Third World left that has not been documented in secondary literature--a genealogy that continues to shape contemporary discourse, as well as the teaching of critical research and writing across disciplines. I aim to contribute to and extend both the historical record on the TWWA, and the documentation of the U.S. Third World Left in R/C. I engage with the TWWA's work through the intersecting lenses of history, geopolitics, and form, and trace the TWWA's ongoing influence by looking at how its archives are taken up, taught, and remediated. This chapter sets the stage for this focus through an overview of R/C theories of history, geopolitics, and form. I explain how this project brings together these three areas in an intersectional rhetorical frame, describe the methodologies and methods that guide this project,

⁵ See also Monberg; Mecnas. Monberg's scholarship has influenced Leon's.

and conclude with a chapter breakdown. In relation to the discipline of R/C, this dissertation argues that the TWWA's approach to engaging histories and geopolitical analyses via multiple rhetorical forms offers an on-the-ground, intersectional framework for thinking about rhetoric and writing. More broadly, I hope the historical work of this project works to highlight intersectional social movement organizing that preceded the term *intersectionality*, and offers insights that might inform political work (whether scholarship, teaching, or organizing) today.

Mediating Past and “Presentism” in Rhetorical Histories

The narrative I've offered above is one of multiple introductions I could have offered to this study. I chose to begin with my embodied orientation⁶ to the archives, and to the questions animating this project, because when I engage with historical scholarship, and when I ask students to do historical research, I am often preoccupied by these questions: *What is animating the writer in documenting this history? What are the stakes of this history? Why are they writing this history?* In R/C terms, I am preoccupied by the exigencies⁷ that shape invention. Ballif asks such questions in *Theorizing Histories of Rhetoric*, reflecting on the development of rhetorical

⁶ See Johnson et al., who interpret the work of Sara Ahmed on “orientations” in *Queer Phenomenology* to theorize an embodied approach to feminist rhetorical studies.

⁷ There are competing definitions of exigence in R/C; three commonly-cited definitions are those of Bitzer, Vatz, and Biesecker. According to Bitzer, rhetoric is a response to exigence: “Any *exigence* is an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be. . . . An exigence is rhetorical when it is capable of positive modification and when positive modification requires discourse or can be assisted by discourse” (p. 221). Vatz shifts agency from rhetor to situation, arguing that rather than rhetoric creating exigence, exigence creates rhetoric: “I would not say “rhetoric is situational,” but situations are rhetorical; not “exigence strongly invites utterance,” but utterance strongly invites exigence; not “the situation controls the rhetorical response,” but the rhetoric controls the situational response; not “rhetorical discourse . . . does obtain its character-as-rhetorical from the situation which generates it,” but situations obtain their character from the rhetoric which surrounds them or creates them” (p. 229). Biesecker draws on Derrida to argue that rhetoric and exigence, rhetor and audience, are mutually constituted.

historiography, and calling for a reinvigoration of theorizing the writing of history ("Introduction p. 2). My engagement with the TWWA is in part driven by a desire to understand how *they* theorized history. Why was historical education deemed so important to fostering Third World alliance in the U.S.? How did they theorize the *doing* and *writing* of history?

A tension between academic and social movement-based methodologies for historical work (categories that are not mutually exclusive, given the work of scholar-activists, as I explore below) is the tension between the institutional pressure to brand ourselves to sell our intellectual, pedagogical, and administrative labor, and organizing work that prioritizes what Chandra Talpade Mohanty terms “communally wrought” knowledge.⁸ As Vijay Prashad puts it, capitalist writing “typically emerges from liberal, mainstream media and is intended to produce commodities,” versus movement-based writing that “is intended to produce a confident community of struggle”; the challenge in writing is thus understanding “*how* to create these communities” by foregrounding “the small voices of history” (“Writing”). Prashad argues that social movement writing situates activists as makers of history, and encourages others to join the struggle: “The reader must not think, ‘I wish I was there.’ The reader should think, ‘I was not there, but I’ll be there tomorrow’” (“Writing”). As a member of the San Francisco Mime Troupe put it in an interview with TWWA members (discussed in Chapter 3), the goal of the Troupe’s performances was to convince people that if they spent their entire lives struggling against injustices, it would be worth it. In contrast, Prashad writes that journalists without a socialist consciousness might document “the *event*--the meeting or the protest” without documenting “the *process* . . . the history of struggle.”; as a result, readers are called to action on behalf of others,

⁸ See *Feminism without Borders*.

rather than activists resonating with their struggle put into writing and being taken seriously as “drivers of human history.”

Forging such a connection between writer, history, and reader relies on the ephemeral resonances between the three--which is perhaps why Prashad’s writing workshops focus on style, deconstructing the notion that style is only a bourgeois concern and that social movement writers should prioritize content to the exclusion of form. On the level of style, I take a lead in this dissertation from the writing of former TWWA member Miriam Ching Yoon Louie, interviewed in this study. Louie’s *Sweatshop Warriors: Immigrant Women Workers Take On the Global Factory* foregrounds the perspectives and work of women labor activists, and stylistically, she bookends her paragraphs (which are primarily illustrations of such work) with terms that have been given to such work (such as “the global feminization of labor”). Throughout this dissertation, I do my best to bring in references to disciplinary theories only after highlighting the work of the TWWA, or to footnote them as “translations,” rather than give them center-stage in the narrative.

There is, of course, no neat academic/activist binary,⁹ nor is there only one form of legible “political” or “activist” scholarship. However, I invoke Prashad’s thoughts on socialist writing to make my political orientation to this work clear, and disclose that I do not think there is such a thing as “apolitical” writing. What Prashad describes as liberal journalistic reporting on one-off *events* (versus *histories* and *processes*) is often framed as “balanced” or “objective” writing. By situating this project in the principles of the U.S. Third World Left, I am naming my commitment to producing histories that resonate with those who seek to continue the intellectual,

⁹ See, for example, Sudbury and Okazawa-Rey’s *Activist Scholarship*; Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies*; and Sandoval’s *Methodology of the Oppressed*.

cultural, and political genealogy of U.S. Third Worldism (discussed in Chapter 1). This does not mean that we should refrain from critically engaging this genealogy and these theories; instead, I position U.S. Third Worldism as a particular set of intellectual, cultural, and political ancestors, an inheritance to work with, critically engage, deepen, and extend. In a presentation at the 2017 Conference on Community Writing Deep Think Tank on anti-racism, Eric Darnell Pritchard theorized “ancestor-accountable” scholarship--a framework that has helped me orient in this way to U.S. Third World histories.

My commitment to working in a U.S. Third World internationalist intellectual/political/cultural lineage, however, has an inherent contradiction: the material conditions of higher education, geared towards individualized production and scholarly branding, shape this knowledge production. I am making an argument to a field in order to enter that field as a teacher, scholar, and worker. There is no one, “pure” reason I am writing this dissertation, and the question of embodiment¹⁰ is with me strongly as I think about the capacity of institutionalized “insurgent knowledges”¹¹ to serve as “accountability shields”¹²--an anti-racist edifice without anti-racist actions. As Carmen Kynard writes, “intellectual activist-work” is distinct from professional and organizational work: “It is much safer for us to unfurl the specialized, disciplinary methodologies and vocabularies in which we have been trained rather than turn our analytical gaze onto our institutions and its actors that have maintained calculatingly repressive environments, policies, and climates” (“Teaching” p. 2). Such “unfurling” might include conducting historical work on a group like the TWWA without fighting to embody principles of anti-oppression on the micro level, day by day. Scholarship *on*

¹⁰ Dolmage; Banks; Johnson et al.; CRTL.

¹¹ See Chatterjee and Maira, *The Imperial University*.

¹² See Delgado (Audre Lorde and many others have also written on this phenomenon).

radical or revolutionary movements does not often translate into upholding these principles in spaces of life and work, and Kynard names this contradiction in terms of how it manifests with scholars of postcolonialism, decolonization, and intersectionality (“Teaching” p. 2). Theories-- and I would extend this to histories--thus have the potential to become “merely the stage for an academic performance, not a way of engaging the world and oppression in it” (Kynard “Teaching” p. 2). One of the contradictions of working within higher education that has most caught me off guard is the production of radical, anti-authoritarian histories within this space, and the question of who profits from these histories. To acknowledge these contradictions risks making what Tuck and Yang have referred to as a “settler move to innocence,” which metaphorizes decolonization as an attempt to reconcile the guilt and complicity of being written into the structure of settler colonialism.¹³ However, to *not* acknowledge these contradictions, in the context of a project that aims to continue a lineage of anti-oppression, would be disingenuous. For me, living in these contradictions requires active participation in community organizing work--participation that animated my conversations with the women interviewed for this dissertation (as I discuss in the methodology section later in this Introduction).

These political implications of historical work on radical social movements also impact how I might contextualize this study of the TWWA in relation to contemporary sociopolitical contexts. The period in which I am writing is variously characterized as “post-9/11” or “post-Trump.” However, racism, Islamophobia, and white supremacy more broadly are far from new, and the “post-” consolidation of these relatively short periods of time can inadvertently suggest that they are new. For example, writing about media coverage of the Ferguson uprising, Nopper

¹³ Tuck and Yang forward an ethic of *incommensurability* as a way towards concrete, material decolonization. I return to their insights about the limitations of Third World frameworks, which can elide settler colonial structures.

and Kaba intervene in “the odd historiography about the militarization of the US police as emerging from the (relatively new) war on terror.” Mainstream media coverage of the protests revealed armored vehicles, tear gas, rifles, and camouflage,¹⁴ peppered with phrases like “now [blacks in the United States] know how the Third World feels.” By reorienting readers to the longstanding assault by militarized police on Black people in the U.S., Nopper and Kaba resurface the history suppressed by media rhetoric that names militarized police a new, rather than an ongoing, problem: “For blacks, the “war on terror” hasn’t come home. It’s always been here.” This piece makes important interventions in questions of solidarity and coalition as well, arguing that Black people are too often “required to tether their suffering to non-blacks (and processes often erroneously treated as non-black, such as ‘militarization’ and ‘globalization’) in the hope of being seen and heard. . . . the push for coalition and the use of analogies suggests a difficulty to name precisely what black people experience in the United States.” The authors’ comments on “compulsory solidarity” leave me with a methodological caution not to invoke the TWWA’s history of multiracial alliance in a way that suggests there should *not* be bounded, identity-specific organizations of people struggling against state violence--particularly as chapters of Black Lives Matter make decisions about whether to include multiracial memberships or maintain a Black-only space.

The tensions I have opened up here regarding exigencies for historical work, and the relationship between past and present, have animated debates in rhetorical historiography¹⁵ for decades (Octalogs I, II, III; Villanueva; Sutherland; Olson; Dolmage). As I mention in the opening narrative, my pull towards the TWWA’s history is rooted in my experience being

¹⁴ Bouie, “The Militarization of the Police.”

¹⁵ In this study, I understand historiography as “the critical study of the assumptions, principles, and purposes that have informed a historical account,” (Walzer and Beard p. 13).

exposed to Third World anti-colonial liberation rhetoric in contexts where it was positioned as a historical lineage to adhere to and continue. In such social movement contexts, such histories are invoked towards a clear purpose: to build alliances of collective struggle. In R/C scholarship, however, there are conflicting understandings of such a purposeful linking of past to present. For example, L'Eplattenier and Mastrangelo write that "we are often told that our histories must *do* something--it is not enough for them to be interesting and to tell fascinating stories in and of themselves. They must connect somehow to current teaching practices or currents in the field" (p. 221). The authors trace this stance to Octalog I, in which all eight participants agreed that "regardless of their subject, histories were supposed to be 'doing' something--whether that was in terms of pedagogy and the contemporary class or in terms of shaping and changing the present or representing the past and thus impacting the future" (p. 221). However, as Gaillet notes, historical work done with the goal of better-understanding the present "has recently fallen out of favor in the wake of charges of 'presentism'" (p. 36). Mastrangelo and Gaillet define presentism as "application of contemporary perspectives in explaining past events rather than placing these events in their historical context" to discuss tensions around whether it is "enough" to write "interesting" histories ("Historical" p. 22). Responding in part to the use of history to legitimize the discipline of R/C, they argue against "forcing connections between the past and current practices," while acknowledging that "complex, thoughtful historical research cannot help but contribute to our understanding of the present, of ourselves, and of our discipline" ("Historical" pp. 22-23). Both L'Eplattenier and Mastrangelo "object strenuously" to the notion that historical work must be pragmatically connected to the present, and argue that "sometimes history has value in and of itself, and sometimes the archival material that we have cannot, for one reason or another, be connected to current practices, or even held against them" (p. 221).

Mediating the tension between past and “presentism” thus requires a balance of making one’s goals explicit, while guarding against an overdetermined reading of history that is entirely beholden to contemporary concerns and does not leave room for tensions and contradictions. For example, LuMing Mao urges rhetorical historians to consider “how the conditions of the present influence what we represent and how we represent” (p. 45), and theorizes “recontextualization” as a practice of putting contexts into conversation with each other (p. 46). As a methodological ethic, recontextualization deals with the tension between “using” history for “transformative agendas” while simultaneously resisting the silencing/invisibilization of marginalized histories (Mao p. 48). The exigencies named by these rhetorical historians include expanding disciplinary theories of historiography and archival research; diversifying the historical work in the field; and making space for cross-cultural, intercultural, and comparative rhetorical studies. In the TWWA’s work, in contrast, history was mobilized to meet both the immediate, embodied needs of social movement organizing (such as outreach, capacity-building, and coalition-building), and to support long-term organizational development via political education. Comparative rhetorical approaches also rely on categories of “otherness” or “difference,” which as the CRTL notes, reinscribes a Greco-Roman canon, rather than situate Greco-Roman rhetorics as a specific set of cultural rhetorical genealogies. This is not to dismiss methodological work in rhetorical history, but to name the important differences in exigency, and highlight the tensions animating different rhetorical methodologies for historical work.

Scholarly work in R/C has deliberately blurred the divide between academic and activist methodologies by naming exigencies located in anti-oppression work. For example, in *Vernacular Insurrections*, Kynard theorizes history-writing as a practice of creating a genealogy for herself as a teacher and scholar, while simultaneously surfacing the central role of student-of-

color movements in shaping the discipline via the Open Admissions movement. Dougherty's historical work on the Fenian Brotherhood aims to understand the process by which Irish in the U.S. became "willing participants in whiteness's wages," but also aims to make-visible other possibilities and orientations, such as multiracial anti-imperialist alliances ("Knowing (Y)Our Story"). In her study of the Comisión Femenil Mexicana Nacional, Leon emphasizes the importance of history-writing as "the fodder through which we invent, remember and organize our communities . . . interventions in history mediate present and future positionalities and their associative rhetorical actions" (p. 9). Scholars in feminist historiography have theorized methods and methodologies that critically engage the question of exigency in historical work, pushing beyond frameworks that are now commonplace in the discipline (Schell and Rawson; *Feminist Rhetorical Resilience*; Royster). For example, Enoch notes that the historiographic categories of recovery, rereading, and revision dominate feminist historical work and do not represent "historiographic 'outliers'" ("Releasing" p. 59), and encourages rhetorical historians to investigate the purposes to which memory/history has been put. In *Feminist Rhetorical Practices*, Royster and Kirsch put forth "critical imagination" and "strategic contemplation" as methods for engaging with historical subjects, asking "How did they frame (rather than we frame) the questions by which they navigated their lives?" and "How do we make what was going on in their context relevant or illuminating for the contemporary context?"; the authors also ask us to critically question our own embodied orientation towards historical study, grounded in "an ethos of humility, respect, and care" (p. 20-22). I refrain from explicitly marking this project a "feminist rhetorical historiography," even though the project is deeply influenced by feminist theories, because of what it means to overlay the term "feminist" onto the TWWA's work. Throughout the archives, we see the group's resistance to the term "feminist," because of

its association at the time with white middle-class feminism. As Alice Chai writes, “What ‘feminism’ means to women of color is different from what it means to white women. Because of our collective histories, we identify more closely with international Third World sisters than with white feminist women” (quoted in Sandoval *Methodology* p. 40).

Further blurring any neat divide between academic/activist historical methodologies, the work of feminists of color (see, for example, Jordan; Lorde; Anzaldúa and Moraga; Alexander; Gumbus) has long deconstructed linear notions of time. Royster has invoked “zamani time” as a way of conceiving of continuous past/present, and Cushman has invoked an anti-imperialist notion of “time immemorial” that “belies the imperial creation of tradition marked along Western timelines” (116).¹⁶ As Sunaina Maira noted in her Syracuse University talk “Inside/Outside: Decolonizing the Settler University,” there are still “resonances” between the era of Third Worldism and today. Maira offered two examples from the campus where she teaches, U.C. Davis, to illustrate this point: an installation exhibit of Third World Liberation Movement era newsletters, and a campus Indigenous People’s Day event that had been co-sponsored by Native American, Black, and Palestinian student groups. She connected both the remembrances in the exhibition and the multiracial alliance to a Third World internationalist genealogy. Tamara Lea Spira theorizes such “resonances” as archives of “insurgent feeling” that can animate and rejuvenate political work, and invokes the TWWA in relation to anti-imperialist struggles today.¹⁷

¹⁶ Cushman continues that in archival research, we can “relocat[e] meaning in the context of its unfolding that opposes the imperial archive’s penchant for collecting, classifying, and isolating . . . [and] through the co-construction of knowledge based on interactions between storytellers and listeners that counter the imperial archive’s insistence on expert codification of knowledge” (pp. 116-17).

¹⁷ “Resonance” is a term that is often invoked as a way of connecting disparate histories and geographies, and in the future I plan critically theorize it as a way to think about embodiment and

In order to put past and present concretely into conversation, this project critically engages the TWWA archives themselves as rhetorical, and as sites of rhetorical production. This offers a method of concretely grounding the TWWA's work in the contemporary context by studying archivists' and professors' remediation and recontextualization practices. This focus on archives follows scholars such as Rawson and Morris, who situate archives as an important site of historical production, "materially and ideologically constitutive and thus consequential" (p. 74). The authors echo Biesecker's "Of Historicity, Rhetoric: The Archive as Scene of Invention," in which she argues for the writing of "rhetorical histories of archives, which is to say, critical histories of the situated and strategic use to which archives have been put" (p. 130). By orienting to archival pedagogy, there is a risk of erasing the more ephemeral engagement with archives that are less easily quantified/traced (I discuss this further in Chapter 5), and a risk of cordoning off invention to the realm of remediation/recontextualization. Rather than situate the study of the TWWA's archives as an exhaustive engagement with the group's relevance in 2018, I situate the study of interdisciplinary archival pedagogy using the TWWA archives as *one* method for tracing the ongoing impact of marginalized social movement histories.

Contemporary struggles against state violence, the aftermath of 9/11, Donald Trump's presidency, and global neoliberal political economy are, of course, central touchstones for historical work done in 2017, but *how* we cite these exigencies matters. For the past fifty years, the women who built the TWWA have been fighting brutal, gendered state violence. This dissertation focuses on exigency in two ways: 1) the TWWA's exigencies for engaging in

relationships across time and space. See, for example, Lorde "The Uses of Anger"; Shohat; Maira; Hesford; Oza; see James for a critical interrogation of musical metaphor in philosophy. In *Spectacular Rhetorics*, we see the notion of resonance connected directly to rhetoric: "[w]ithin a transnational feminist analytic, to read rhetorically is to read intertextually for explicit connections and resonances" (p. 62).

historical and geopolitical analyses and their theorizations of why such work is necessary; and 2) the exigencies that lead contemporary teachers and archivists to engage the TWWA's history. The chapters that follow trace these exigencies, along with the modes, genres, pedagogies, and practices that facilitated the work of historical and geopolitical analysis. Altogether, the TWWA's work offers important insights into what it means to do intersectional rhetorical work that accounts for histories, geopolitics, and modes/genres. In the next two sections of this chapter, I focus on geopolitics and modes/genres to flesh out this framework.

Deconstructing Geopolitical Binaries

In *Unthinking Eurocentrism*, Shohat and Stam challenge neat geographical delineations such as east/west and north/south, writing that “the term ‘West’ comes overlaid, as Raymond Williams has pointed out in *Keywords*, with a long sedimented history of ambiguous usage. . . . For Williams, this history goes back to the West/East division of the Roman Empire, the East/West division of the Christian Church, the definition of the West as Judeo-Christian and the East as Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist, and finally the postwar division of Europe into the capitalist West and the communist East,” a politics that they argue “overdetermines cultural geography” (p. 13). In the TWWA, engagement with history is inextricable from such geopolitical binaries, and the group's engagement with history sought to rewrite the U.S. as a site of Third World anti-imperialist action. Historical work in R/C has long intervened in the east/west, first/third world binaries that have distinguished Greek and Roman rhetorical traditions from “other” rhetorics. A concern with geopolitics can be extrapolated from scholars' references to “scene,” “stance,” and moves to “broaden” the field, which attend to the physical contexts of rhetoric (including the local and national political/economic contexts that researchers

inhabit).¹⁸ Over the past twenty-five years, the field has made a shift towards multiple histories of rhetorics to redress racist, sexist, Eurocentric master narratives, and an understanding of historiography as an inherently rhetorical enterprise that is deeply shaped by researcher subjectivity and embodied exigencies.

The move away from a default geographic orientation towards Greece/Rome represents a significant shift in the discipline towards multiple geographic sites and understandings of the purposes, aims, exigencies, and contexts of rhetoric and writing. For example, in *Rhetorics of the Americas*, Baca and Villanueva ask the field to destabilize a consolidated “Occident” as an origin point for analysis; their edited collection demonstrates the ways in which any neat delineation between “west” and “nonwest” obscures the precolonial rhetorics and settler colonialism of what is now the U.S. nation-state. In “Down by the River,” Powell makes a similar intervention into consolidations of the “western hemisphere” that do not account for indigenous rhetorical practices. Scholarship in African American rhetorics and languages points to the ever-present influence of west Africa on U.S. language and rhetoric today as a legacy of the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved people (Royster, Smitherman, Banks). Olson and De los Santos propose an “Américan rhetoric” that “avoids separating the hemisphere into discretely bounded units that disaggregate the relational histories of north and south, metropolis and colony, first and third world” (p. 194). Other scholars advocate a postmodern/poststructural critical geographic critique of disciplinary epistemologies, in order to dislodge them from an often-unmarked Greek/Roman

¹⁸ See, for example, Lipson’s *Ancient Non-Greek Rhetoric*; Berlin and Vitanza (“Octalog I”); Ferreira-Buckley (“Octalog II”); Powell (“Octalog III”); Villanueva and Baca; Mao; Ezzaher; and the sources quoted on the pages that follow.

origin story (Binkley and Smith).¹⁹ Such scholarship enacts the calls of scholars who have called for a retheorization of both geopolitics and the discipline of R/C, such as Villanueva's call for the field to change its "intellectual geography" (p. 6) and Powell's call to critically theorize the disciplinary "we/us" ("Down by the River" p. 41). The CRTL's intervention "all rhetorics are cultural" marks canonical works that are considered culturally neutral rather than Greek/Roman, drawing attention to the multiplicity of cultural histories and rhetorical practices, and rewriting the U.S. as a site of multiple, overlapping intellectual and rhetorical genealogies. Legacies of enslavement, genocide, and war in the U.S. are explicitly dealt with in African American rhetorics (Banks *Digital*; Smitherman; Pough; Richardson; Royster; Kynard), Asian American rhetorics (Mao & Young; Young; Monberg; Hoang; Shimabukuro), Latinx/Chicanx rhetorics (Ruiz and Sanchez; Villanueva; Medina; Baca; Leon), and Indigenous rhetorics (Lyons; Powell; Riley Mukavetz; Baca and Villanueva; King, Guebel and Anderson).

Scholars have also pushed the field's intellectual geography through multiple frameworks that trace genealogies back to the decolonizing era. These include transnationalism and transnational feminism (Hesford & Schell; Hesford; Dingo *Networking*; Wingard; Berry et al.; Horner Lu & Matsuda; Leonard, Viera and Young; Pandey; Canagarajah), global rhetoric/writing (Hesford; Dingo *Networking*; Royster and Kirsch; Canagarajah) postcolonialism (Lunsford and Ouzgane; Worsham and Olson), decolonialism (Ruiz and Sanchez; CRTL, Powell; Riley Mukavetz; Johnson et al.; King, Guebel and Anderson; Dougherty), and imperialism (Spurr; Pratt). Each of these theorists advances a particular understanding of the geopolitics of rhetoric and writing. For example, Hesford has cautioned against an uncritical

¹⁹ See also Shell's *Islandology: Geography, Rhetoric, Politics*, the *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* special issue on Regional Rhetorics, and the RSA workshop "Placemaking: Rhetorical Studies and Critical Geography."

“imagined global geography” in rhetorical studies (“Global Turns and Cautions” 788) and has advocated critical transnational feminist analyses (as opposed to uncritical cosmopolitanism) (“Cosmopolitanism”). Schell uses the “one-third/two-thirds” imagined global geography in order to demonstrate a “global north”/“global south” analysis, drawing attention to the fact that the majority of the world is composed of “developing” nations. The CRTL argues against cordoned-off global rhetorical frameworks by arguing that “all rhetoric is global.” This scholarship represents an ongoing tension in the discipline between broadening and situating, globalizing and localizing, hybridizing and fighting for sovereignty--a tension that is evident in the work of scholars including Lyons and Richardson, who make a case for defending indigenous and African American linguistic and rhetorical practices from the globalizing push towards hybridization. These studies demonstrate that disciplinary understandings of rhetoric, writing, and language are geographically/geopolitically mediated, and that the field of R/C is shaped by layered historical understandings of the geopolitics of the U.S. nation-state, the sovereign nations within it, and the global reach of U.S. imperialism. They suggest that there can be no easy western “we” in the U.S., or in rhetorical studies, particularly in transnational frameworks that seek to move beyond the borders of the U.S. nation state. They also point to the importance of shifting to the multilayered social histories and hierarchies that are consolidated within national borders, particularly in imperial/colonial nation-states.

The TWWA, and its U.S. Third World framing, both challenge and extend this scholarship. In “Historiography as Hauntology,” Ballif suggests that rhetorical historiography “might begin by investigating the foundations of already written histories of rhetoric--or, more to the point, by investigating what has been repressed, textually, by already written histories of rhetoric” (p. 140). I am interested in this repression in a geopolitical sense--what is erased in the

theoretical consolidation of “the U.S.” in transnational frameworks that might be surfaced through the history of the U.S. Third World Left and its Third World internationalism? This project takes a lead from one of the interventions that Roshanravan links to U.S. women-of-color genealogies, and the TWWA’s work in particular: epistemically reorienting to the U.S. as a site of transnational analysis, surfacing often-repressed/invisibilized women-of-color intellectual and political genealogies, and reading/inhabiting the contradictions produced by multiple, overlapping oppressions (racism, sexism, and imperialism) (p. 12). This requires centering the analyses, exigencies, and practices of what R/C might term “U.S. Third World rhetoric.”

However, perhaps because “Third World” is often invoked in pejorative terms to refer to “backwardness” and economic underdevelopment in popular media and popular culture, R/C scholars have distanced themselves from it, through references to the “so-called Third World”²⁰ or reserving Third World identification for specific scholars and their material conditions of work.²¹ During the Q&A of a 2016 Conference on College Composition and Communication discussion of transnational feminism, rhetoric, and writing, a participant asked a question that I’ve thought of often while doing research for this dissertation: “Is there anything that we in the U.S. can learn from women in the Third World?” There is much to learn from the contours of this question—its geopolitics (the U.S. versus “the rest of the world”), bodies (“we” versus “women in the Third world”), and the action that connects them (learning). The question began with “is there?,” implying that the answer might be *no*. While the ensuing discussion surfaced individual women activists, there was no discussion of the longstanding internationalist women’s

²⁰ Dingo, *This Rhetorical Life*. Such interventions are meant to destabilize monolithic rhetorical constructions of “the Third World.”

²¹ Canagarajah *Geopolitics*. This book is concerned the relationships among migration, language-hybridization, colonialism, and imperial knowledge production.

activism both within and outside the U.S. This indicates to me that there is much work to be done in R/C to redress at least two things: 1) consolidations of the U.S. that erase its transnational character; 2) erasure of longstanding, internationalist genealogies of activism, arts, education, publication, and pedagogy by groups like the TWWA.

For the TWWA, and other groups that were part of what Young terms the “U.S. Third World Left,” Third Worldism represented a coalitional, revolutionary, internationalist project: “[t]he appellation *Third World* served as a shorthand for leftists of color in the United States, signifying their opposition to a particular economic and racial world order” (Young p. 3). For that reason, I refer to TWWA members and theorists of Third World feminisms as “self-identified Third World women,” in order to distinguish Third Worldism from Orientalist consolidations of “third world” geographies and people. The TWWA’s anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-imperialist framework also makes-possible a re-reading of scholarship that invokes Third World, women-of-color, intersectional, and transnational feminist thought but situates it as “identity politics” or as an analytic framework of “race + gender,” versus a socialist, anti-imperialist critique. For example, in her writing on intersectional rhetorical history, Woods draws on the scholarship of theorists including Crenshaw, Collins, Anzaldúa, and Mohanty to argue that intersectional interventions rely too much on the spatial language of mapping, which she argues suggest “fixed points”; she argues that intersectional methodologies for rhetorical history should instead be concerned with “shifting webs of relationships” (pp. 78-79). In Ratcliffe’s *Rhetorical Listening*, which relies on the scholarship of self-identified Third World feminist theorists (e.g., Audre Lorde) to set the stage for a discussion of gender, race, and identification in the writing classroom, Lorde’s writing is interpreted into an analytic for discussing the intersection of race and gender, without attending to the queer, socialist, anti-

imperialist politics that animated Lorde's theorizations of feminism. Neither text makes reference to the anti-imperialist politic that animates the work of many of these theorists, and which--as we see in the TWWA's work--was one of the key features of the intellectual, political, and cultural activism that developed what we know today as intersectionality. In Woods' chapter, this seems to be because geography is treated as a methodological metaphor, rather than an embodied experience and concrete condition of possibility for intersectional analysis. In Ratcliffe's case, this seems to be because the classroom is figured as a space to discuss identity, racism, and cultural logics, but less so imperialism. To center a critique of empire in intersectional analysis is to shed light on the way histories and ongoing legacies of gendered enslavement, colonization, war, and migration animate any discussion of identity and racism. An intersectional framework for rhetorical scholarship, in other words, must attend to anti-imperialism.

Intersectionality & Intersecting Rhetorical Forms

Because the TWWA is often cited as an early instantiation of intersectional feminism, intersectionality is a useful theoretical framework to bring into this study. Widely/deeply theorized in WGS, the concept of intersectionality and intersecting oppressions circulates in the field of R/C through the work of Black feminist scholars (Pough; Richardson; Kynard; Carey) as well as scholars working in women-of-color feminisms (Licona and Chávez), critical rhetoric (Kearl), whiteness (Ratcliffe), feminist methodologies (Schell and Rawson), and rhetorical history (Woods). In addition, The Ohio State University Press recently unveiled a new book series in "Intersectional Rhetorics," edited by Karma Chávez. An intersectional understanding of the TWWA requires attention to the different "forms" (what we in R/C might refer to as modes

or genres) that the group used to invoke, construct, and circulate marginalized histories. Multimodality has been theorized in the discipline of R/C for its pedagogical affordances (Shipka; Palmeri; see also *The Journal of Multimodal Rhetorics*); its accessibility (Yergeau et al.); its affordances for alliance building (Licona and Chávez); and its universality by those who have asserted that “all rhetoric is multimodal” (Ball et al.). The sources I quote here specifically situate multimodality within social movement contexts.

In the case of Wanzer Serrano’s study of the Young Lords, “intersectional rhetoric” has been taken up as a study of protest genres and modes; he emphasizes the need to place “multiple rhetorical forms (in this case, speech, embodiment, and image) on relatively equal footing” rather than treating such forms singularly (p. 176); foregrounding the intersections among forms, he theorizes “intersectional rhetoric” as tied to an “anti-colonial sensibility for acting in the world” (p. 193). Wanzer Serrano explains that this was particularly important during the emergence of the New Left, which privileged charismatic leaders, and puts forth a critical heuristic for evaluating rhetorics of resistance that privileges the hybrid intersection of bodies, words, and images, and pushes against instrumentalist evaluations of movement rhetoric (p. 192). His work emphasizes the variety of intersecting forms that are occluded when studies focus only on the “public face” of movements and alphabetic public rhetoric such as speeches and newspapers, particularly when studying an era that is often characterized by individual male rhetors.

Deconstructing the separation/hierarchization of modes and genres is also a feature of indigenous rhetorical studies such as Baca’s work in “The Chicano Codex,” which analyzes Mesoamerican codex writing as part of “a pictorial system consisting of images structured to create visual messages”--a practice that inhabits multiple traditions and survived the colonization of the Americas (p. 569). Baca notes that the Nahuatl word for writing signifies both writing and

painting, in contrast to “the campaign of Christianization and alphabetic literacy” (p. 570-71). Such intersecting rhetorical forms, according to Baca, defy linear time, enacting “a complex visual dance, forward and back, sometimes circular, other times broken”--a process by which history is re-read and re-written, “fusing different temporalities” (p. 574). Intersectionality, in this formulation, is deeply tied to intertextuality and the interrelation between various modes of expression, “refus[ing] to recognize the singularity or boundedness of any solitary rhetorical form” (Wanzer Serrano p. 193) and historicizing the division of these various modes of expression to colonization, the imposition of alphabetic-centric understandings of literacy, and the attempt to erase indigenous histories by destroying codices and quipus (Baca and Villanueva).

In the context of the U.S. Third World Left, multiple modes/genres or “forms” need to be understood in terms of the need to create political identifications and build political formations/organizations; constitute emergent “political identities” (Mignolo); and compress transnational/diasporic time/space (Young) into a geopolitical “common context” of struggle (Mohanty). Wanzer Serrano writes that “rhetorical and organizational *form* may be constitutive and central to a movement's political and social objectives” (pp. 226-27). In *Soul Power*, Young connects this interrelation to the forms to emergent politics: “Forms . . . are always social in the richest sense of the term, full of meanings that cannot be known in advance” (p. 10). Young notes that this is a synthesis of the cultural historical scholarship of Raymond Williams, Warren Susman, Michael Denning, who write that there are unique insights to the “forms, patterns and symbols” that emerge from historical events; that “the politics of allegiances and affiliations” are connected to the “politics of form”; and that “cultural formations” are both “artistic forms and social locations” (p. 10). She clarifies that the U.S. Third World Left’s work across form was

deeply and inextricably tied to its emergent politic: “[the U.S. Third World Left] was simultaneously committed to transnational political resistance and cultural innovation. . . . This formation melded the civil rights movement’s focus on racial inequality, the Old Left’s focus on class struggle and anticolonialism, and the New Left’s focus on grassroots participatory democracy. Challenging Western liberalism’s tendency to view politically engaged art as simply propaganda, U.S. Third World Leftists developed new aesthetic techniques and vocabularies” (p. 4).

Understanding the politics of a broad-based, global invocation of Third World multiracial alliance in the context of the TWWA’s work requires attention to the multiplicity of women’s experiences, and the geopolitical histories that shaped them. Because historians have situated the TWWA in lineages of Black feminism, and because the organization was born out of the analyses of Black women working within the civil rights and Black Power movements, it is important to re-ground any discussion of intersectionality specifically in Black feminism, rather than theorize it as broadly referring to rhetoric or relationships. As Bilge writes, intersectional analysis should be grounded in the specific contexts that gave rise to it (which might differ in different locations); in the U.S. context, we must ground intersectional analysis in the TWWA’s genealogy as a Black women’s organization within SNCC--a genealogy that has rightly situated the TWWA in scholarship on Black Power and Black feminist organizing (Ward; Springer; Anderson-Bricker). Black feminist conceptions of intersectionality guard against collapsing all self-identified “Third World women’ or “women of color” into a category that erases or conflates the particularity of oppression faced by Black women. As I explore later in this dissertation (particularly in Chapter 5), the TWWA can be understood as an early development of intersectionality; the term would be codified later, through work including the Combahee River

Collective's discussion of "interlocking" oppressions; Barbara Smith's discussion of the "simultaneity" of oppressions; Kimberlé Crenshaw's critical race theory; and Patricia Hill Collins' sociological scholarship. Within intersectionality as an organizing framework, we can understand *identities* to be intersectional and requiring internal coalition (Price), and *identity categories* (e.g., "Third World women") as potential coalitions (i.e., drawing together people with disparate experiences who might identify as Third World women) (Carastathis).

Geographic organizing concepts like Third Worldism can thus be understood as coalitional across identities and geographies. Intersectional coalitions like the TWWA thus operate across multiple scales, with the Third World scale being the largest one, and the Third World woman figure representing the role of bodies in comprising this coalition. In the archives, we see that "Third World woman" was not a universally shared identity within the group, and there was internal debate over who was included in a "Third World" designation--including LGBTQ people and the Irish. In the end, the Irish were not included in the Third World designation because, although they were a colonized people, they did not share the specific experience of racialization/racism in the U.S. Sexuality also emerged as a concern and area of fracturing within the group. Through internal debate/discussion, it was decided that sexuality was a "lifestyle" and not the main focus of the TWWA's work--a major point of contention that lost the group many lesbian-identified members. As Miriam Ching Yoon Louie noted in our interview, this shifted when the TWWA became the AAWO and "clean[ed] up our act about lesbian struggles against oppression." Later Black feminist writing, such as the Combahee River Collective statement, would situate sexuality as an integral component of intersectional feminist analysis. Additionally, some TWWA members noted that they identified first as Black, not Third World. As a broad geographic and racial umbrella, Third Worldism most clearly signified an

anti-imperialist and anti-racist *politic*--a “common context” of struggle (Mohanty) that the TWWA deliberately theorized in relation to the oppression of women. Constructing and defining a Third World political identification required synthesizing multiple histories, and defining them based on shared (if not equivalent) experiences of racialization in the U.S. among different self-identified Third World women.

Given the TWWA’s principles of multiracial alliance, the group’s use of multiple intersecting rhetorical forms must be understood in the context of its alliance-building goals. In “Relational Literacies and their Coalitional Possibilities,” Licona and Chávez point to the compatibility between collaborative, multimodal compositions and women-of-color alliances. Drawing from Maria Lugones’ writing on women-of-color coalitions, and building on Londia Martin’s work on performance and multimodality (which coined the term “relational literacies”), Licona and Chávez interpret relational literacies as:

imply[ing] the labor of making meaning, of shared knowledges, or of producing and developing new knowledges together. . . . relational literacies are understandings and knowings in the world that are never produced singularly or in isolation but rather dependent on interaction . . . enabl[ing] the space for new kinds of understanding, interaction, and politics” (pp. 96-97).

The authors point to “coalitional possibilities” produced through the practice of relationality, connecting such possibilities to “often-marginalized rhetorical practices, histories, and events” (p. 97). Licona and Chávez’s work helpfully connects women-of-color alliance politics and multimodality, gesturing towards the utility of working across form as a way to open up possibilities for coalition.²²

²² See also Haas, Mecenaz, Powell, and CRTL for discussions of alliance and coalition in R/C.

Relational literacies are an important methodological touchstone for me in this dissertation, and also help to frame the argument I am making to the field about rhetorical genealogies of the U.S. Third World Left, and the interrelation of histories, geopolitics, and forms in these genealogies. Broadly, I am arguing that histories, geopolitics, and forms must be considered together, and in relation to each other, in work that strives to be intersectional. Intersectionality--as we learn from the TWWA's development of it in its organizing work-- is interpreted in this dissertation as encompassing histories, geopolitics, and rhetorical forms.

Archival Research and Qualitative Interviews

In this dissertation, the TWWA's archived organizational documents form the foundation for my investigation of how they developed intersectional rhetorical practices through on-the-ground organizing. My orientation to internal, organizational documents is inspired by Kendall Leon's work in Chicana rhetorics. In her archival study of a Chicana feminist organization, Leon notes that archived administrative documents offer insights into the mundane, everyday work of organizing, and identifies these documents as sites of important rhetorical activity. She also notes that studies of Chicana rhetoric often turn to literary works; studies of Third World and women-of-color feminisms similarly have relied on central literary works such as *This Bridge Called My Back* and *Charting the Journey*.²³ (Although the terms “Third World woman” and “woman of color” can be traced to different historical moments, they are often used interchangeably [Mohanty “Cartographies”], and because both terms describe geographically disparate and qualitatively different racialized/gendered experiences, they can be understood as deeply coalitional and relational.)

²³ See, for example, Franklin's work on multi-genre anthologies.

As professor Jennifer Guglielmo put it in our interview, organizers are consistently marginalized as developers of theory; in this project, I aim to situate organizers as developers of rhetorical theories by orienting to the exigencies TWWA organizers were responding to, and the principles/practices they developed as a result. I take a lead from Leon's methodological orientation towards organizational texts as a site to examine how theory is rhetorically developed and enacted out of lived exigencies. As a result, the body chapters are, for the most part, concerned with synthesizing and describing archival documents, rather than analyzing them through existing rhetorical frameworks. This is intentional; as Chela Sandoval writes in *Methodology of the Oppressed*, the oppositional work of women-of-color social movement organizers and theorists--which is often written-off as atheoretical because it is "descriptive"--directly informs critical theories that are then established as canonical. I describe/narrativize the TWWA's work because much of it has not been documented, so documentation is the first step. Scholars in cultural rhetorics methodologies (CRTL; Powell and Bratta; Leon; Riley Mukavetz; Johnson et al.) emphasize the importance of beginning with the terms, frameworks, and practices of the groups that scholars engage with in research; by discussing the TWWA's work in terms of history, geopolitics, and form (themes that emerged in coding/categorizing archival documents) I aim to work towards a shared vocabulary for understanding everyday social movement practices in relation to our work in R/C.

As I have learned in other projects, felt tension and embodied experience can be generative for theorizing rhetoric.²⁴ A central methodological tension I register in this project is the push to name the TWWA's work in a rhetorical framework--for example, by coining "U.S.

²⁴ See, for example, embodied rhetorical methodology scholarship (Banks; Johnson et al.; Ahmed *Queer*).

Third World Feminist Rhetoric" or "Third World Coalitional Rhetorics." Such naming would be a way to make their work immediately legible to the field of R/C. However--following scholars in embodied rhetorical methodologies (Johnson et al.; Banks)--I have a deep aversion to this push to make-legible the TWWA to the discipline of R/C. I am much more interested in developing a rhetorical methodology that learns from the TWWA's work and thinks about its implications for the work we do as teachers and writers in R/C. Following Kynard's pedagogical work, I want to center the literacies and practices of social movement organizers like the women in the TWWA as a way of reorienting to the concepts and practices in the field of R/C. This is a pedagogical orientation that also shapes my methodological orientation here.

Another tension at play in this project is the institutionalization of social movement documents in archives, which, as R/C scholars have argued, can be complicit in logics of cooptation, colonization, and imperialism.²⁵ More broadly, scholars have long pointed to the complicity of institutions of higher education in processes of empire building (Chatterjee and Maira; Giroux). By exploring the tension of housing an anti-imperialist organization's archives in a higher education institution, I hope to work "in/with" tension, and think critically about the academic uptake of activist work, as I attempt to build/document history out of activist archives (Mukavetz "On Working"; Ramos; Burnham and Tatnall; Rawson; Rawson and Morris; Villanueva; Powell). Morris writes that archives "[s]hould rightly be understood not as a passive receptacle for historical documents and their 'truths,' or a benign research space, but rather as a dynamic site of rhetorical power" (p. 115). Olson and Johnson note that as of 2017, it is "commonplace" to treat archives as rhetorical in and of themselves. In her study of the CFMN,

²⁵ See, for example, Powell and Villanueva's chapters in *Beyond the Archives*; Cushman; Rawson.

Leon explores the intentional, rhetorical choices made to create the organization's archive; and in Rawson's study on queer archives, he situates collection, organization, access, and use as central questions for rhetorical historiography. The portion of this study that draws from interviews with archivists and professors is concerned with knowledge-making practices about the TWWA across disciplines and contexts, in part as a reflexive enactment of my own positioning as a maker of knowledge about the TWWA.

Between 2015 and 2017, I made four trips to the TWWA archives, took thousands of photographs, printed them, and organized them using a broad coding schema built on Saldana's "values coding." Following the Cultural Rhetorics Theory Lab (CRTL) methodological ethic of building frameworks for understanding out of a specific group/culture/community's own frameworks, and Gaillet's step-by-step method for describing, categorizing, and contextualizing archival artifacts (pp. 35-6), I created an index of the archival materials using the TWWA's terms/titles. This led to several broad categorizations, including pedagogy/education, publications, and cultural work--categories that structure the chapters that follow. As a specific rhetorical method of critically reading the archival materials, I draw on/combine Roshanravan's description of the "methodological intervention" of the TWWA's Third World internationalist framework²⁶ with Licona and Chavez's notion of "relational literacies." Specifically, I am interested in the relational understandings that the TWWA built through its various practices of rhetoric/writing work across mode/genre. To engage with the archival materials, I coded specifically for moments where relational understandings were built across intersecting histories,

²⁶ Herr also deals with this intervention in "Why Transnational Feminism Need Third World Feminism."

geopolitical contexts, and rhetorical forms. Then, I worked to describe the rhetorical implications of these practices in relation to the TWWA's stated principles.

Over the course of 2017-18, I also conducted IRB-approved interviews with five women: Miriam Ching Yoon Louie, a former TWWA organizer and member of the TWWA's Cultural Committee; Carrie Baker, a women's studies professor who uses the TWWA's archives in her teaching; Kathleen Nutter, an archivist and professor of history who curated a pop-up exhibit that included an image from the TWWA archives; Sharon Davenport, a librarian/archivist/activist who processed the TWWA archives; and Jennifer Guglielmo, a professor of history who teaches with the TWWA archives and has used their images in community-partnership work. I have also reached out to other former TWWA organizers to set up interviews, and other professors who have either taught or conducted research with the TWWA archives. I plan to conduct these archives in the future as I continue to develop this project and continue to document the TWWA's history.

The qualitative method I rely on for these interviews is "semi-structured" interviewing, which facilitates a "flexible and fluid structure, unlike structured interviews, which contain a structured sequence of questions to be asked in the same way of all interviewees," and emphasizes "topics, themes, or areas to be covered" rather than a strict interview script (Mason). This method allowed me to enter each interview with a pre-written list of questions, but shift the conversation as needed in response to the direction that each interviewee wants to take it, touching base with the questions to focus the discussion but allowing the interviewee to largely dictate the terms of the interview. I chose this interview style because of the flexibility facilitated by it, and so that both my interests and the interviewees' could co-construct the interview. I sent

transcribed interviews to all interviewees before quoting from them in the chapters, and invited them to make edits/changes to their statements.

Earlier in this chapter I alluded to my ongoing involvement in community organizing as the concrete method of mediating the tension between the pull to individualized academic production and the necessity of communal knowledge-making in justice-oriented work. My positioning here animated my conversations with each of the women I interviewed, and in many ways served as a methodological touchstone for the interviews. We each exchanged stories of work we were involved in. In other words, my participation in organizing work was an important part of my ethos in this project. However, I don't want to suggest that engagement in community organizing should be towards the end of data collection; this reproduces an extractive relationship in which social movements are spaces to be mined for data, rather than sites to be allied with and to participate in (Ramos). These ongoing methodological considerations will continue to shape this project as I develop this project into a book, as a research practice of relationality (CRTL; Powell and Bratta; Mukavetz "Towards").²⁷ In other words, I want to write in a way that is useful to the interviewees in their work.²⁸

In my interview with Sharon Davenport, who processed the TWWA archives while working at the Women of Color Resource Center, I learned that she had attended TWWA

²⁷ Methodologically, this project does not focus on the points of contact between the TWWA and the discipline of R/C, although such points do exist; for example, Lee's study of the TWWA indicates that at least one member was involved in the SEEK program at Queens College. Mina Shaughnessy taught in this program, and it formed the foundation of her book *Errors and Expectations*. In her revisionary history of composition, Kynard revisits this period through the lens of the Open Admissions movement and the "protest literacies" developed by the students who engaged in it. In the future, I hope to elaborate on the larger impact of the U.S. Third World Left on the discipline of R/C.

²⁸ Several interviewees commented that reading their transcripts was a helpful reflection of their work, and generative to their current projects.

cultural events (specifically the International Women's Day celebrations) during the 1970s in the Bay Area. She expressed excitement that I had taken up the group's cultural work in this dissertation, and said she would like to read the project. Two other interviewees--Jennifer Guglielmo (a professor of history) and Kathleen Nutter (an archivist)--said they would like to read this project as well. Miriam Ching Yoon Louie also requested that I send her any materials including quotes from her interview before they go public. I sent a copy of this dissertation (or, in the case of two of the professors, the chapter that quotes from them) to the women I interviewed, so they had a chance to read it and offer suggestions/feedback before I submit the project. As a result, I have done my best to make this project accessible to readers who do not have a background in R/C, but who have an investment in the documentation of the TWWA's history.

Throughout the research and writing process, I have reshaped the methodological framework to account for interviewees' feedback. The relationships fostered throughout the interview process are meaningful to me, and I want to honor the interviewees' desires for how their words will be used, and how this project will be framed. For example, Davenport wanted to read this project, because as she put it: "I continue to be inspired by the TWWA, and every iteration after that, what they did, and how they did it, and the depth of their work." She also expressed gratitude that I was respectful of the TWWA's work and had admiration for it--as she said, "that means everything." The challenge of these types of meaningful relationships is that they can make it difficult to critically engage the more difficult parts of the group's history. However, as I explore in Chapter 5, Davenport also expressed admiration for the group's critical reflection practices and honesty about the difficulties and shortcomings of their work. I was similarly admiring of these critical reflection practices, and aim to critically engage the process

of writing history while maintaining respect for the TWWA and not unnecessarily critiquing their work. In my interview with Miriam Ching Yoon Louie, I asked whether there was anything in particular that she'd like to see in any documentation of the TWWA's work. She replied that:

What would be helpful for me is a reflection on your part, of work and methods you think might be helpful for activists in the current period. That would be interesting, because as I mentioned – you live through a certain history and then move on to other things and that old work lays dormant. Then someone comes in fresh with new eyes that see textures that alter memory and story.

Reflecting history back to people who lived through it, then, has become an important methodological touchstone for me in writing this dissertation. It also registers as a tremendous responsibility. Through my back-and-forth with the women I interviewed, I've come to understand research ethics as principles in ongoing development, never fixed or finished, relying on ongoing practices of accountability to research participants.

Chapter Breakdown

The Introduction, "U.S. Third World Histories of Rhetoric and Writing," demonstrates the significance of the TWWA's "U.S. Third World" framework for scholarship in rhetorical historiography, geopolitics, and multimodal/multigenre composition. In order to put past and present into concrete conversation, the Introduction establishes the research questions that guide this larger project: *How did the TWWA invoke and circulate histories and geopolitical analyses in order to build a "U.S. Third World" alliance? What methods, modes, and genres did they use to do so? How and why is the TWWA's history--via its archives--invoked and circulated today by teachers scholars, and archivists? How does the TWWA—and rhetorical genealogies of the U.S.*

Third World Left more broadly—reshape/extend disciplinary theories and methodologies of history, geopolitics, form, and writing across contexts/disciplines?

Chapter 1, “‘In the Belly of the Monster’: Setting a U.S. Third World Scene,” historicizes the TWWA’s formation in relation to the civil rights/Black power movements, women’s liberation movements, and global Third World anti-colonial struggles. Drawing on the TWWA archives, as well as theoretical work in Third World, U.S. Third World, and transnational feminisms, I contextualize the TWWA’s multiple methods of teaching histories and geopolitical analyses within U.S. Third World cultural, political, and intellectual genealogies.

Chapter 2, “Building Lifelong Activists: Political Education and Publications” draws on the TWWA archives, including the group’s internal education curriculum and newspaper *Triple Jeopardy: Racism Imperialism Sexism*, in order to demonstrate how the group taught the interlinked histories of women of color, and put struggles for women’s liberation within and outside the U.S. into conversation. Read together, the group’s political education and publications demonstrate the rhetorical construction of what Rhetoric and Composition might refer to as a “U.S. Third World scene” both within and outside the organization.

Chapter 3, “Theorizing Culture: The TWWA’s Cultural Committee” turns to the group’s “cultural work,” which TWWA members defined as “arts, methods, techniques, and expressions.” Drawing on the archived meeting minutes of the TWWA Cultural Committee, this chapter surfaces the behind-the-scenes organizational labor of developing a theory of culture, with particular attention to the intellectual, political, and artistic genealogies of three organizations that the Cultural Committee interviewed as part of its work. This chapter demonstrates the role of multiple modes and genres—including theatre, songs, and visual

displays--in communicating intersecting histories and geopolitical analyses in a "U.S. Third World" context.

Chapter 4, "'Freedom We Know is Possible': The TWWA's Cultural Events," looks at how the TWWA's theory of culture was put into practice through events commemorating International Women's Day. Drawing on qualitative interviews, as well as archived event programs, scripts, songs, and committee evaluations, this chapter focuses on the TWWA's use of multiple modes and genres in spaces of cultural performance. I argue that multimodal/multigenre performances have particular affordances for linking multiple histories and geopolitical locations into a U.S. Third World political identification.

Turning from the TWWA's time to the present day, Chapter 5, "Curating, Remediating, and Teaching U.S. Third World Histories: The TWWA Archives," traces the ongoing influence of the organization via a study of the construction and use of the group's archives. Drawing on qualitative interviews with archivists and professors across disciplines, I trace the curation, institutionalization, and pedagogical use of the TWWA archives to teach history, women's and gender studies, and archival studies through critical research and writing assignments. This chapter situates the study of archival pedagogy as a method for tracing the ongoing impact of social activist histories across academic disciplines.

The Conclusion summarizes the central contributions of this dissertation to Rhetoric and Composition, and opens up directions for future work.

Conclusion

This project makes three contributions to the field of R/C: 1) deepening and extending transnational frameworks in the field to account for "U.S. Third World" rhetoric and writing like

the TWWA's; 2) demonstrating how the TWWA's work--and U.S. Third World rhetoric and writing more broadly--blurs scales that are often treated as discrete in R/C (embodied, local, and transnational); and 3) situating the study of archival research and writing assignments across disciplines as a method of tracing the ongoing impact of social activist histories. The chapters that follow represent the process by which I have been able to build an intellectual and political genealogy into 20th-century rhetoric and writing.²⁹ I hope that what follows will support others in doing the same. I also hope that by contributing to the historical record of the TWWA's work, these chapters will distill actionable lessons for alliance-building through history across contexts--in both interdisciplinary classrooms and community organizing spaces. Finally, I hope that this dissertation offers a social-movement-based framework for understanding the historical, geopolitical, and textual contours that shape an intersectional methodology and pedagogy for intellectual, political, and cultural work.

²⁹ As the U.S. Third World Left was developing, the discipline of R/C was concerned with "the post-Sputnik concern in the early 1960s to encourage excellence in all areas of American education," reviving a focus on the five canons of rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery), and transitioning from current-traditional to process-oriented, expressivist approaches to pedagogy ("A Brief History of Rhetoric and Composition"). During the 1970s, as the TWWA was developing its political ideology, publishing its newspaper, engaging in coalition campaigns, holding political education sessions, and organizing cultural events, R/C shifted into a focus on basic writing and cognitive processes of composing ("A Brief History of Rhetoric and Composition"). It was during this period that NCTE passed "Students' Right to Their Own Language." On the West Coast, during this time, TWWA members were involved in the Third World Liberation Strike struggle for a Third World College at San Francisco State University.

CHAPTER 1

“In the Belly of the Monster”: Setting a U.S. Third World Scene

This chapter historicizes the TWWA’s formation in the context of the civil rights/Black power movements, the women’s liberation movement, and global Third World anti-colonial struggles. Drawing on the TWWA archives, as well as theoretical work in Third World, U.S. Third World, and transnational feminisms, I contextualize the TWWA’s multiple methods of teaching histories and geopolitical analyses in “U.S. Third World” cultural, political, and intellectual genealogies. The TWWA understood themselves as working “in the belly of the monster” of U.S. imperialism, and throughout this chapter, references to “scene”³⁰ and “the belly of the monster” should be understood as interchangeable. This chapter centers transnational solidarities characterized by material aid, local campaigns, and education, and demonstrates how the scales of the body, locality, and transnationality interact in a U.S. Third World scene. Broadly, this chapter contributes to an intersectional methodology for rhetorical history by centering intersecting geopolitics (specifically an anti-imperialist Third World framework), the impact of geopolitics on women of color, and the transnational literacies and rhetorical production of women-of-color activists.

Historicizing the Emergence of the TWWA

³⁰ In *A Grammar of Motives*, Kenneth Burke defines scene as “the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred” (p. xv). As Bridges notes in *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric and Composition*, “scene” can refer to multiple elements of context (p. 500). Cultural rhetorics scholarship has pushed for critical, decolonial understandings of place, drawing on theorists such as Walter D. Mignolo, who turned Cartesian dualism on its head with his phrase “I am where I think.”

The TWWA emerged out of the cultural, historical, and geopolitical context of the post-World War II “decolonizing era” of 1945-75 (Lazarus). This movement is characterized by armed struggles for independence among countries in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean that previously had “either been directly subjected to aggression and domination by imperialist powers interested in establishing themselves in the region, or indirectly manipulated into serving the interests of imperialism” (Jayawardena p. 1). The tricontinental anti-imperialism that emerged during this era was forged through anti-colonial victories in 30 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America during the 1960s alone, which transformed former colonies and metropolises alike (Young p. 7). As a political formation, Third Worldism is typically traced to international conferences, including the 1955 Bandung Conference³¹ in Indonesia and the anti-colonial solidarities that comprised the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War (Prashad), formally established at Belgrade in 1961 (Rist), the 1964 UN Conference on Trade and Development, and the 1966 Tricontinental Congress in Cuba.³² In *Global Rift: The Third World Comes of Age*, Stavrianos traces back to 15th-century Eastern Europe, defining the Third World as “those countries or regions that are economically dependent upon, and subordinate to, the developed First World.” However, the term is more often traced to French economist Alfred Sauvy, who in 1952 used it as a reference to the French revolutionary “Third Estate,” adapted to refer to the countries not formally attached to capitalism or socialism during the Cold War (Cobridge; see also Prashad *The Darker Nations* pp. 6-7).

Third World anti-imperialist political coalitions “coalesced around the enthusiasm generated by anticolonial struggles in Vietnam and Algeria” (Shohat and Stam p. 25), and led to

³¹ W.E.B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson were planning to attend Bandung from the U.S., but their passports were denied (Young p. 1).

³² “The 1966 Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America.”

“specific forms of regionalism” and “various forms of Pan-Asianism, Pan-Arabism, Pan-Africanism and Pan-Americanism”--cultural consolidations across various geopolitical scales that relied on strategically-invoked histories (Berger p. 9). Ideologically, Third Worldism can be understood as a “world-historical movement” that combined anti-colonial nationalism, interpretations of pre-colonial traditions/cultures, Marxism/socialism, and development (Berger p. 9). Third Worldism was made possible in part through changing migration patterns, whereby former residents of colonies moved to metropolises, and there was a large exodus of people from the global South to the global North as a result of colonial and post-colonial economic conditions (Young p. 9). Histories of Third Worldism take up the era through various lenses that include nation-building (Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People’s History of the Third World*); women’s central role in anti-colonial struggles (Jayawardena’s *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*), and women’s anti-imperialist solidarities that predated Bandung, displacing the conference as an origin story for Third Worldism.³³ The TWWA’s archival documents do not invoke one particular origin story of the term “third world” beyond the global context of the post-WWII standoff between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., but the group did rely on the geographic delineations drawn by the multiple-worlds framework. In this framework, the First World refers to the capitalist European nations as well as the U.S., Australia, and Japan; the Second World refers to socialist nations; and the Third World refers to non-aligned, colonized nations and territories (Shohat and Stam p. 25). The “Fourth World,” in this formulation, is “a conceptual convergence of indigenous and deterritorialized cultures” (Baca “The Chicano Codex” p. 568).

³³ For example, Armstrong traces back to the 1949 Conference of the Women of Asia; Nopper critiques Prashad’s invocation of Bandung.

In the U.S., the world-historical moment of Third Worldism synthesized with lineages of leftism, civil rights activism, Black Power, anti-war activism, and the cultural work emerging from each of these movements (Young; Mullen and Ho; Njoroge). In *Soul Power: Culture, Radicalism, and the Making of a U.S. Third World Left*, Young argues that Third Worldism was not an “import” to the U.S. from tricontinental liberation struggles, and that it had long been present in leftist-of-color political formations in the U.S. Like Third Worldism writ large, U.S. Third Worldism was deeply shaped by World War II, due to the contradiction between fighting a “war for democracy, against fascism, against racism” and ongoing oppression in the U.S.³⁴ This contradiction was picked up and mobilized by the Nazis, who dropped leaflets to Black American soldiers fighting in Europe, with messaging that included: “There have never been lynchings of colored men in Germany,” and “Uncle Sam’s colored soldiers are just cannon fodder!” (Luckert). At the same time, racist U.S. policies had inspired Nazi Germany’s anti-Jewish legislation in the 1935 Nuremberg Laws (Whitman). Following the war, media laid bare the contradiction between the U.S.’s claims to democracy, and the racist repression of the civil rights movement via police, dogs, and fire hoses. The U.S. Third World left emphasized the “parallels between urban communities of color and Third World colonies,” a process that involved “the production of an imagined terrain”; U.S. Third World leftists pointed to linked state violence, and the notion of the “internal colony” to expose “the gap between the rhetoric of U.S. democracy and its grim reality” (Young pp. 5-6).

In 1960, following the desegregation sit-ins in Greensboro, NC, Ella Baker organized the first gathering of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which would later be renamed the Student National Coordinating Committee (SNCC) (Cobb “Birth”). A long

³⁴ Beal, *Oral History* p. 53.

genealogy of Black freedom struggle in the U.S. predated and shaped SNCC, and within this struggle, certain organizations (including the NAACP) signed McCarthyist anti-communist loyalty oaths, while others (including SNCC) refused (Cobb “Winds”; Beal *Oral History* pp. 21-22). Within SNCC, there were consistent efforts to fight for gender justice, including a 1964 position paper on women in the movement, which argued that while men dominated decision-making, “women are the crucial factor that keeps the movement running on a day to day basis” (p. 2). The TWWA’s genealogy in SNCC begins with Frances Beal, who had been a campus activist in the U.S., and then studied in France, where she became exposed to pan-Africanism and internationalism through interactions with people from French colonies (particularly those active in the Algerian anti-colonial struggle) (Beal *Oral History* pp. 23-24). Beal was part of a group that brought Malcolm X to speak in Paris in 1965; her oral history details this as one of the concrete moments that shaped her anti-imperialist political analysis during this time. SNCC had long linked the civil rights struggle in the U.S. to Third World anti-colonial liberation struggles,³⁵ and when Beal moved back to the U.S. in 1966, she became a member of SNCC’s International Affairs Commission (Springer 47).³⁶ This wing of the organization was dedicated to deepening the organization’s work against the “triple threat” of racism, capitalism, and imperialism.³⁷

Of her time in SNCC, Beal notes in her oral history that “SNCC women were playing some leading roles” in the organization, but that there was a need to focus specifically on

³⁵ “Early Africa Connections.”

³⁶ In her oral history, Beal notes that during this time she was also working as a legal secretary, and got involved with Project Woman Power, a program through the National Council of Negro Women. She worked on publishing the group’s newsletter, *The Black Woman*, and worked with the organization for ten years, roughly 1966-76 (pp. 33-34).

³⁷ See “SNCC’s International Bureau.”

reproductive justice, specifically abortion and sterilization (pp. 35-36). During her time in SNCC, Beal “forecast[ed] the ideas of Third World unity and anti-imperialist internationalism that animated the [TWWA]” by linking the sterilization of Black women in the U.S. to the sterilization of women in Puerto Rico, demonstrating the racist, gendered logic animating both “colonial and domestic” oppression (Ward p. 126). Out of this context, Beal wrote her now-well-known essay “Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female,” and SNCC voted in 1968 to have a SNCC Black Women’s Liberation Committee (BWLC) “investigate some of the conditions under which black women function,” including issues like sterilization abuse and illegal abortions, which were also impacting Puerto Rican women (Beal *Oral History* p. 37). The BWLC engaged in a range of political activity, extending SNCC’s anti-imperialist, anti-war positions by proposing liberation schools and draft counseling for Black men, and holding consciousness-raising groups for women that involved sharing experiences, locating the larger social structures that shape these experiences, and “identify[ing] a basis of collective political action” (Ward p. 127).³⁸ In 1970, out of its consciousness-raising efforts, the BWLC decided to expand its membership, split from SNCC, and changed its name to the Black Women’s Alliance (BWA) (Ward; Carson & Hess). Ward notes that:

When it emerged in 1970, the BWA did not yet have a fully developed, cohesive ideology, but it was developing a decidedly anticapitalist and anti-imperialist framework. Thus, the BWA occupied a dual position among the larger ideological crosscurrents of the Black Power Movement: it was part of the network of black Left thinkers and

³⁸ During this period, the group also published *The Black Woman* and *The Black Woman’s Manifesto*.

activists; and at the same time the BWA represented one thread of intellectual and political activity within a wider fabric of black feminist politics. (p. 131)

The BWA's politics developed and transformed quickly; as Beal notes in her oral history, the BWLC transformed into the BWA and then the TWWA within a year, reflecting the group's consciousness shift from an analysis of "double jeopardy" to "triple jeopardy," which accounted for the devastating impact of capitalism and imperialism on women of color (pp. 39-40).

Between 1969-70, the BWA "realized the desire for third world solidarity" and developed the analysis that "third world women, such as Asians, Puerto Ricans, African Americans, Chicanas and Native Americans, experienced similar exploitation from a common oppressor" (Anderson-Bricker p. 60). In 1970, out of a debate around whether to admit members from the Puerto Rican Independence Movement and Puerto Rican Socialist Party, BWA became the TWWA, a shift that reflected arguments that broader Third World anti-imperialist organizing would be more effective (Springer p. 49).³⁹ Those who disagreed with this decision remained committed to challenging sexism within existing groups, such as the Young Lords Party.⁴⁰

In "Black Women's Liberation," a publication that appears in the TWWA archives, Maxine Williams (in a publication coauthored with Pamela Newman) explains "why women's liberation is important to Black women," citing the TWWA's formation:

Women's liberation must not isolate itself from the masses of women or the Third World community. At the same time, white women cannot speak for black women. Black women must speak for themselves. The Third World Women's Alliance has been formed in New York to begin to do this. We felt there was a need for a revolutionary black

³⁹ "Third World Women's Alliance: smash! Capitalism, racism, and sexism," appearing NATIONAL SNCC.

⁴⁰ Darrell Wanzer-Serrano, personal correspondence, June 2017.

women's movement to speak to the oppression of black women as blacks, as workers, as women. We are involved in reading, discussion, consciousness-raising and taking action. . . . When the Third World woman begins to recognize the depth of her oppression, she will move to form alliances with all revolutionary forces available and settle for nothing less than complete destruction of this racist, capitalist, male-dominated system. (p. 11)

This passage notes how the expansion from a Black to a Third World organization remains deeply grounded in the oppressions facing Black women. It also lays out the group's alignment with global anti-colonial liberation struggles, and contextualizes the group's decision to forge a multiracial alliance within this "common context" of struggle. As Roshanravan explains, "[t]he adoption of the political identification 'Third World' to name an organization composed of US Women of Color signaled their solidarity and sense of connection with struggles against European colonization and US military occupation taking place in Africa, Asia, and Latin America" (p. 11). In the TWWA's organizational rhetoric, a united front of Third World people is similarly pointed to as a way of to build more powerful movements. For example, in a letter of solidarity to United Filipinos for Equal Employment, TWWA members write: "Third World peoples as working people must unite in this effort, for when we work together there is such strength" ("Letter to United Filipinos for Equal Employment").

Exigencies for the formation of the TWWA included concerns that the Women's Liberation Movement did not reflect the needs of working-class women and women of color; and the Moynihan Report, which pathologized Black women and "matriarchal family structure" (Burnham and Tatnall). The TWWA "rejected a feminism that posits sexism as the primary source of women's subordination and developed an analysis predicated on the interaction of race,

class, and sex oppression and on an international perspective.”⁴¹ In her article “U.S. Third World Feminism,” Sandoval describes how women’s activism within a variety of Third World Liberation movements in the U.S. forged an analysis born out of “oppositional consciousness” to dominant feminist and Third World movements. The “U.S. Third World” framework, in other words, centered the embodied experiences of women of color, contextualized within internationalist anti-imperialism; the work they did flowed from this understanding of women’s liberation across multiple scales, from the intimate and embodied to the global.

After establishing itself in New York City, the TWWA formed a Bay Area chapter and Seattle chapter, meeting in churches and other shared political spaces (but not owning/renting space until the early 1980s, when they transformed into the AAWO). Linda Burnham refers to the TWWA Seattle chapter more of a “notion” than anything else (qtd. in Lee p. 21). The group’s archives indicate that the Seattle chapter did engage in significant work, if for a limited period of time. This work included a newsletter, film screenings, educational events, and coalition work. Archived documents indicate that the group was active as late as 1974 (“Letter to NY and Seattle”). Archival documents indicate that while there was correspondence about the possibility of a Los Angeles chapter of the TWWA, it did not come to fruition. Because of the different histories and migration patterns characterizing these three locations, the New York City chapter was primarily composed of Black and Puerto Rican women, and the West Coast chapters included Asian, Chicana, and Indigenous women.⁴² In 1977, the New York City chapter folded⁴³

⁴¹ Beal *Oral History* p. 2. See Roth, *Separate Roads to Feminism* for a full discussion of how this lineage of feminism developed in relation to white and Chicana feminisms.

⁴² “Paving the Way: A Teaching Guide to the Third World Women’s Alliance” notes that Arab-American women were also involved in the organization. Materials in Box 5, Folder 6 indicate that women in the organization also self-identified as Raza.

⁴³ The description of the TWWA for the archives does not give specifics about why this happened; in the future I plan to research this further.

and the Bay Area chapter began to transform into a mass activist organization with committees that included the National Committee to Overturn the Bakke Decision, Coalition to Fight Infant Mortality, Farah Strike Committee, organizing around Grand Jury testifying, Third World Front Against Imperialism,⁴⁴ International Women's Year Committee, California Coalition on Medical Rights, Conilio de Mujeres: La Razón Mestiza, Inez Garcia Defense Committee, Lolita Lebrón committee, Native American Project, Third World Socialist Feminist Organization,⁴⁵ KDP, Union of Vietnamese in the U.S., Venceremos Brigade, and Southern Africa Organizing Committee. As an example of what these coalition campaigns entailed, the Farah Strike committee archival folder includes packets with suggestions for letter-writing, speech-giving, and generally how to generate support for the boycott of Farah pants in solidarity with workers at the Farah plant. The Committee developed analyses consistent with the TWWA's regarding gendered, raced capitalist exploitation, framing the Farah strike as a "third world labor struggle in the U.S.": "95% of the Farah workers are Chicano. 85% are women. While Farah claims he is an equal opportunity employer, the fact is that, as workers, brown people come cheaper than white, and women come cheaper than men."⁴⁶ By 1979, the TWWA transformed into the Alliance Against Women's Oppression, which included white women and had more of a political-party structure, and in 1989 became a nonprofit called the Women of Color Resource Center, which operated in Oakland, CA until several years ago.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Campaign flyers include one reading: "Third World Peoples 'Charges' Honeywell with Genocide!" with three demands tied to the war in Vietnam. See Box 4, Folder 2 of TWWA archives.

⁴⁵ Box 5, Folder 22 of the TWWA archives includes writing by Zillah Eisenstein and Heidi Hartmann.

⁴⁶ See TWWA archives Box 5 Folder 6 for more information on the Bay Area Farah Strike Committee.

⁴⁷ "Historical Note." For a history of the WCRC and why it closed, see "Sharing Sorrow" on the end of the WCRC.

The TWWA was also shaped by, and participated in, activism against U.S. intervention in Vietnam; student movements; the Puerto Rican movement; land struggles in the Chicano movement; movements to free political prisoners including Angela Davis and Lolita Lebrón; Native American sovereignty struggles; workers' rights movements; and struggles for access to health care, housing, and education (Burnham and Tatnall). The group engaged in a broad range of coalition campaigns that linked violence against poor people (particularly women of color) in the U.S. and global U.S. military aggression and occupation. I name this work, albeit briefly, to provide a sense of the intersecting geopolitical analyses and histories that converged into a "U.S. Third World" political analysis. For example, in an interview with Kathleen Nutter, who assists professors in teaching with the TWWA archives, she noted that the West Coast chapter of the TWWA had done an organizing campaign via its Coalition to Fight Infant Mortality, drawing attention to the high rates of infant and mother mortality in a California hospital and laying bare the hypocrisy of calling the U.S. the "land of opportunity." Literature from this campaign indicates that in East Oakland, "26 of every 1000 babies die before one year of age" versus in Piedmont, where "4 of every 1000 babies die before one year of age."⁴⁸ Other campaign literature compares infant mortality in the U.S. and Cuba, and indicates that the Coalition to Fight Infant Mortality and TWWA co-sponsored an event with a doctor who went on a special delegation of health care workers to Cuba. The event included food, a slide show, speaker and discussion, was wheelchair accessible and included childcare.⁴⁹ The larger coalition

⁴⁸ "Our Babies Are Dying"

⁴⁹ "Infant Mortality in the U.S. and Cuba . . . A Comparison of Two Health Care Systems." This folder was marked "HST 278" in the archives, indicating that a class would be looking at these materials. The tremendous amount of research in this folder highlights movement-based exigencies for critical research and writing. This campaign is worth its own full documentation. See also Box 2, Folders 1-2 of TWWA archives.

campaign drew attention to the violence and racism of profit-driven health care;⁵⁰ an article from this campaign frames infant mortality as “state sponsored genocide.”⁵¹

As Beal notes in her oral history, this was one of the TWWA’s enduring legacies: making-visible the devastating impact of U.S. imperialism on both people within the U.S. and outside its national borders. As I previously mentioned, this “within and outside the U.S.” framing is limited because it reinscribes the U.S. nation-state as the unit of analysis (which has been critiqued by indigenous feminists); I invoke the U.S. nation-state as a constructed territory that is also a site of sovereign nations (such as the Onondaga Nation, adjacent to where I live and work). The TWWA’s interrogation of empire as constitutive of racism, sexism, and the oppression of women of color within and outside the borders of the U.S. distinguished it from middle-class white women’s political formations. The tension between middle-class white women’s activism and women-of-color activism was by no means new; it had animated women’s movements in the U.S. at least since the abolitionist movement. This tension manifested during the TWWA’s time in the context of issues like the political imprisonment of Black women. For example, in her oral history, Beal recounts that in 1970, the TWWA was marching down Fifth Avenue as part of a 50,000-person women’s liberation march, holding a sign that read “Hands off Angela Davis,” and was confronted by people from NOW who said “Angela Davis has nothing to do with women’s liberation.” As Beal notes: “we essentially responded, It has *everything* to do with the kind of liberation we’re talking about” (p. 46). Beal continues that although the TWWA did engage in coalition work with white/mainstream

⁵⁰ “Health Committee Coalition to Fight Infant Mortality Press releases” and “Who Will Highland Hospital Serve? Big Business or the Community?” These documents were part of the media and propaganda committee/strategy for the campaign.

⁵¹ See TWWA archives, Box 1, Folder 16.

women's organizations, there were major ideological/political differences. The TWWA rejected the reformist agenda of white middle-class women's movements, understanding it as compatible with the ongoing oppression of third world women (Anderson-Bricker p. 63).

In a presentation on Third World women's liberation (located in the Bay Area chapter's archived political education documents), TWWA members lay out "the difference in ways which Third World women and White women in the U.S. have related to the struggle for the liberation of women" as follows, drawing attention to the limitations of coalitional rhetoric that does not include material expressions of solidarity:

T.W. women in the U.S. see our struggle as a united struggle with our men. We still struggle together to overthrow the imperialist structure and its oppression by race, color, and sex. It may be asked why we have not as yet united with our white comrades (both men and women) against the capitalist system. We state that at times we have united for a common end. The Venceremos Brigade is a prime example of this. We realize however, at this stage of the struggle the contradictions that exist between our communities are too great and must be dealt with before any meaning and permanent unification to overthrow capitalism and imperialism can be made. White women and T.W. women have a common struggle against imperialism and both struggle against male supremacy. However, T.W. women face an over-riding problem which exceeds the importance of male superiority. This is of course the problem of white superiority caused by institutionalized racism. An alliance between T.W. women and White women must be based on actual struggle against imperialism and racism, and **not just a verbal acknowledgment of this struggle.**⁵²

⁵² "Third World Women Presentation" ("written by collective efforts of T.W. sisters").

To elaborate on the differences between Third World women's liberation and White women's liberation, the presentation offers constructive criticism of White women's political formations ranging from critiques of organizational structure, to the need for stronger analyses of classism/imperialism in addition to sexism, to the need for white women to be doing consciousness-raising and educational work in white communities. The TWWA's emergent intersectional politics can be seen in the following criticisms: "The struggle against racism and capitalism must be waged simultaneously with the struggle against male chauvinism and must not be viewed as different levels of struggle."⁵³

Such analysis can be understood as an early instantiation of intersectionality—a theory that is grounded in Black feminist theorizations of the interlocking nature of oppressions (Beal "Double"; "Editorial"; Combahee River Collective; Crenshaw; Collins; Springer). Crenshaw, for example, states that intersectionality is "a frame that prompts us to ask what falls between movements and what happens when these different systems of power and oppression overlap" (p. 205).⁵⁴ The TWWA was certainly dwelling at the overlapping intersections of systems of power and oppression, and in her oral history, TWWA organizer Linda Burnham situates the group as intersectional in its analysis, regardless of whether it used the term:

some of this [analysis is what] later came to be called intersectionality, which is a very complicated term, but the ideas behind that were formed in these early years, where people were essentially saying, We're whole people, and we can't combat women's issues as though we're unaffected by issues of race, as though we're unaffected by the

⁵³ "Third World Women Presentation" ("written by collective efforts of T.W. sisters"), p. 1, emphasis in original.

⁵⁴ Equal Rights Trust.

issues that face our broader communities. So the Third World Women's Alliance was an early—it's not the only—but was an early articulation of this. (p. 20)

The TWWA's stated goals for its work flesh out the expansive nature of the TWWA's intersectional analysis. For example, the TWWA's "Third World Women" presentation states the objectives of the TWWA as working to end oppression and exploitation of Third World people; working to create a socialist society free from racism, economic exploitation, and sexual oppression; "to create a sisterhood of women devoted to the task of developing solidarity among the peoples of the Third World and with all revolutionary peoples"; "to promote unity among Third World people within the U.S. in matters affecting the education, economics, sociological, and political life of our peoples"; and "to recreate and build solid relationships with our brothers destroying myths that have been created by our oppressor to divide us from each other and to work together to appreciate revolutionary love and respect."⁵⁵ The TWWA distinguished itself from what members saw as the white women's movement's positioning of men as the enemy: "White women have a tendency to label the actions of men as male chauvinism and sexist. We do not label our men but see our men as comrades in a struggle. We work to raise conscious not be labeling them but by talking with them and explaining to them the importance of ridding themselves of male chauvinism . . . our struggles against male chauvinism does not involve the fact that a man opens a door for us or lights our cigarett[e]. We would do the same for them. The important aspects of male chauvinism go much deeper. It means that our men just see us as to be free and independent revolutionary beings."⁵⁶ *Triple Jeopardy* also took up the question of male

⁵⁵ "Third World Women Presentation" ("written by collective efforts of T.W. sisters"), p. 2.

⁵⁶ "Third World Women Presentation" ("written by collective efforts of T.W. sisters"), p. 1. The longer version of this passage also contains reference to privileges held by women, but does not elaborate on the specifics of what these are.

chauvinism. In the group's later work, such as its IWD cultural events, we see that they collaborated with men, who did technical support, and also childcare. An evaluation notes that: "The Brother[s] who helped us out in every aspect, including childcare should be commended and encouraged for their efforts" ("Evaluation of International Women's Day, From Cultural Committee Discussions," p. 2).

The presentation states the concrete demands of self-identified Third World women as encompassing the following:

WHAT WE WANT AS THIRD WORLD WOMEN

1. The right to decide if and when we want children. There is no such thing as an illegitimate child. There should be free and SAFE family planning methods available to us, including abortion on demand.
2. No forced sterilization or mandatory birth control programs.
3. Guaranteed full equal and non-exploited employment controlled collectively by workers who produce the wealth of the society.
4. And end to racism and sexism which forces Third World women into the lowest payed service jobs and which insures we will be the lowest paid of all.
5. The establishment of free day care centers available to all, including facilities for pre-school older children.
6. The elimination of rigid sex roles which are oppressive for both men and women. The true revolutionary beings are not limit themselves to people as sex roles-objects.
7. Self-knowledge, the history of Third World women and their and their . . . liberation struggle; their relation to society, and the knowledge of their bodies must be made freely available.
8. All services necessary for human survival such as health care, housing, food, clothing, transportation, and education. These should be free and controlled administered by the people themselves.
9. Third World women should be full participants on all levels of struggle against imperialism..ie. administrative, political, and military.

The end of the presentation carves out a space for Third World women's liberation struggles in relation to both feminist and Third World movements: "WE CRITICIZE OUR MEN WHO CONTINUE TO TREAT OUR SISTERS AS LESS THAN EQUAL AND WE CRITICIZE SISTERS WHO REMAIN PASSIVE AND DO NOT JOIN IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST OUR COMMON OPPRESSION. WE WILL MAKE A REVOLUTION OF BROTHERS AND

SISTERS TOGETHER IN LOVE AND RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER. FORWARD ON IN THE STRUGGLE !!! Venceremos Hasta la Victoria siempre!”⁵⁷

In this list, and the conclusion, we see how the TWWA forged its politics in relation to sexism in Third World movements and racism in the civil rights movement. Issues like forced sterilization and workplace justice distinguish Third World women’s movements from white middle-class feminist movements; the demand for full and equal participation in Third World movements represented a challenge to male leadership in those movements. The TWWA’s analysis of the U.S. as constituted by Third World histories, and as a site of ongoing Third World anti-imperialist struggle specifically in relation to gendered oppression, distinguished it from both of these larger movements.

U.S. Third World Scene

As we see in the TWWA’s work, the U.S. is composed of multilayered internationalist influences and histories that are occluded by a “first world” framing that focuses solely on its governmental status as a global superpower. The intellectual, political, and artistic genealogy that Young refers to as the “U.S. Third World Left” further deconstructs gendered east/west, first/third world constructions, which masculinize ruling imperial powers and feminize “developing” countries in relation while flattening histories of resistance in both. R/C scholars might refer to this geopolitical construct as a “U.S. Third World scene.” An early issue of the TWWA’s newspaper, *Triple Jeopardy: Racism, Sexism, Imperialism*, theorizes this geopolitical context as “the belly of the monster” of U.S. imperialism, describing a multi-tentacled creature

⁵⁷ “Third World Women Presentation” (“written by collective efforts of T.W. sisters”) p. 6.

that different liberation struggles are weakening, but which self-identified Third World people in the U.S. have the responsibility of killing.⁵⁸



Figure 1: British imperialism, depicted as a multi-tentacled monster.⁵⁹

The metaphor of a monster whose tentacles reach into countries across the globe is an insistent reminder that there are no neat divisions between the U.S. and countries beyond its borders; at the time of writing, the U.S. has military personnel deployed in over 150 countries around the world.⁶⁰ The formation of the U.S. nation-state, and its reliance on enslavement, genocide, and war,⁶¹ deeply shaped the TWWA’s formation, development, and theorizations/practices of history, geopolitics, and form. Like any other consolidated geopolitical framework, “U.S. Third Worldism”—or operating from “the belly of the monster”—requires a relational reading of geopolitical contexts. Tuck and Yang note the degree to which Third World frameworks can

⁵⁸ “Editorial: What is the Third World?”

⁵⁹ “English Imperialism Octopus.” The notion of imperialism as a monster is also echoed in *Inside the Monster: Writings on the United States and American Imperialism*, by José Martí.

⁶⁰ DMDC. To clarify, this image of British imperialism is not from the TWWA archives.

⁶¹ See Andrea Smith’s “Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy.”

become complicit in the structure of settler colonialism in the U.S.; Narayan re-defines Third World feminism as referring only to feminists who were politicized in Third World countries; Young acknowledges that a "U.S. Third World" framework risks privileging justice in the U.S. over justice in the global south⁶²; Prashad draws attention to currents within Third Worldism that privileged bourgeois state-building interests ("nonwestern" elites who have benefitted from colonization and undermined liberation struggles also exist globally);⁶³ and Erevelles argues that Third World feminisms need to better attend to the centrality of disability to U.S. imperial expansion. Shohat and Stam note that critiques of Third Worldism situate it as "an inconvenient relic of a more militant period"; these critiques include the work of Shiva Naipaul, Aijaz Ahmad, Nawal El Saadawi, Assia Djebar, Gayatri Spivak, and Leila Gonzales, who interrogate Third Worldism's gendered nationalism, classism and other oppressions, as well as the heterogeneities, contradictions, and differences that are masked by uncritical invocations of national identity (p. 26). Indigenous and settler colonial studies scholars have critiqued the "Third World in the First World" framework because of the degree to which it still consolidates and privileges the First World (in this case, the U.S.) as the origin point for analysis and action. This is a problem because it both reinscribes "western" supremacy and erases indigeneity. For example, in the location I write from, Syracuse, NY, there is a sovereign nation, the Onondaga nation, which does not exist "within" the U.S. but is geographically bounded by territory claimed by the U.S. nation-state.

Because Third Worldism is grounded in national liberation struggles, to write about Third Worldism is to wrangle with the politics of nationalism. Histories like the TWWA's

⁶² See Shohat for a critique of the geographical delineation global north/global south.

⁶³ *A People's History of the Third World*.

complicate critiques of nationalism that situate it as inherently patriarchal. In “Why Transnational Feminism Needs Third World Feminism,” Ranjoo Herr argues that transnational frameworks should take seriously the role that nationalism played in radical women-of-color political imaginations and organizing. In their writing on Third Worldism, Shohat and Stam also argue for a situated understanding of nationalism (which has been broadly critiqued in transnational frameworks) and a critical understanding of the relationship between colonizer and colonized in order to guard against a broad dismissal of nationalism that does not fully account for structures of power: “nationalism changes its valence in different historical and geographical contexts” (p. 285). They further argue that to broadly critique nationhood is a “privilege available only to the already empowered,” and call for a “relational approach, one that operates at once within, between, and beyond the nation-state framework . . . call[ing] attention to the conflictual, hybrid interplay between communities within and across borders” (p. 345). A “U.S. Third World” scene thus thinks relationally about the dynamics among imperial and colonized nations, as well as the dynamics within these nations.

While this could be interpreted as a broad defense of Third World nationalism, Shohat and Stam are also wary of reifying a first/third world dichotomy, and “reject the binaristic dichotomy of a ‘good’ Third World nationalism, and a ‘bad’ First World nationalism” (p. 285). Partha Chatterjee has similarly argued against reinscribing the binary of good/bad nationalisms, orienting instead to the impact of them. Following these cautions, this dissertation takes Third World nationalism (particularly women’s anti-colonial struggles) seriously as inspiration for women-of-color organizing within the U.S. Anti- and postcolonial nationalism is often equated with (and dismissed as) patriarchal domination; however, such narratives occlude women’s revolutionary struggles against heteropatriarchy within Third World anti-imperialist movements.

The TWWA, for example, maintained an anti-imperialist stance in defense of Third World national liberation struggles, but pushed for an anti-sexist orientation within those struggles, provided material aid to women in these movements, and highlighted women's political work via *Triple Jeopardy*. Furthermore, by orienting to the “Third World *in* the first world,”⁶⁴ or “the belly of the monster,” the TWWA situated the U.S. as a site of Third World anti-imperialist struggles, rather than subscribing to the imperial “cartographic rule” of the transnational-as-“elsewhere” (Alexander and Mohanty). This stance is consistent with U.S. Third Worldism and Third World feminisms, which locate specific knowledges in self-identified Third World women who live in the U.S., and emphasize the role of diasporic racial formations in U.S. feminist activism (Mohanty; Alexander; Sandoval; Roshanravan). While there is no singular “Third World feminism” or “U.S. Third--World feminism,” we can understand these concepts as coalitional frameworks that encompass different but linked experiences, analyses, and solidarities (Mohanty; Jayawardena; Armstrong).

Despite their critiques of Third Worldism, Shohat and Stam also argue for the utility of a Third World framework (as opposed to North/South or East/West) as a way to signal both the “inertia of neocolonialism and the energizing collectivity of radical critique, but with the caveat that the term obscures fundamental issues of race, class, gender, and culture” (p. 27). This is certainly a major caveat. However, as Nash writes, critiques of Third Worldism should not “prevent us from recognizing the important role it has played in the making of the politics and intellectual life of the contemporary Left. . . . [Third Worldism] was an extraordinary and unprecedented achievement to construct and sustain over decades a political and intellectual

⁶⁴ This framework is compatible with Fanon’s notion of the “internal colony” (quoted in Young; Erevelles).

project capable of inspiring and harnessing the effort and commitment of millions of people in the advanced capitalist countries in solidarity with the struggles of people in the poorest societies” (p. 96). As the TWWA’s work indicates, Third Worldism also inspired liberation struggles against raced, classed, gendered oppression from within “the belly of the monster”⁶⁵

The TWWA’s history complicates and challenges several critiques of Third Worldism. For example, the group’s archives indicate that it engaged in meaningful coalition work with indigenous organizations and took on indigenous sovereignty struggles in its cultural events. Its critique of forced sterilization, labor exploitation, and military intervention in its cultural events and published material is consistent with a critique of the disabling force of U.S. imperialism. Furthermore, its cultural events highlighted women’s contributions to revolutionary struggles globally, overturning the notion that these struggles can be dismissed as sexist/masculinist (a rhetorical move that often furthers Orientalist tropes about "Third World" patriarchy requiring western intervention) (Jayawardena). This is not meant to write Third Worldism, U.S. Third Worldism, or (U.S.) Third World feminisms as innocent. For the purposes of this project, I want to foreground the material realities and histories of rhetoric and writing that are occluded by a stark, homogenizing first/third, east/west geographic binary. The TWWA, in a lineage of "U.S. Third World" groups, foregrounds the longstanding oppression of self-identified Third World peoples living within the U.S., the links between this oppression and global U.S. imperialism, and the linked oppression of women within and outside the U.S. In addition, the TWWA’s history foregrounds the longstanding women’s internationalist genealogies within the U.S.

These genealogies continued to shape social movement organizing rhetoric and writing practices in the U.S. long after Third World anti-imperialism faded from popular activist

⁶⁵ See “Editorial: What is the Third World?”

discourse, as the economy shifted into neoliberal globalization. For example, Linda Burnham's oral history (conducted by Loretta Ross in 2005), recounts participating in a WCRC-led delegation to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The Beijing Conference is the subject of Rebecca Dingo's book *Networking Arguments: Rhetoric, Transnational Feminism, and Public Policy Writing*, which identifies the Beijing conference as a rhetorical occasion for theorizing the intersection of transnational feminism, rhetoric, and writing. While Dingo's book focuses on the global circulation of public policy writing post-Beijing, Burnham's oral history traces the rhetoric and writing that emerged from an activist delegation to the conference from the U.S.⁶⁶

Burnham recounts that before the WCRC traveled to Beijing, the AAWO had sent a delegation to the 1985 U.N. World Conference on Women in Nairobi, and used it as a chance to highlight reproductive justice, wars in Central America, and other concerns that AAWO was organizing around (p. 31). For the Beijing Conference on Women, the WCRC brought together a delegation of over 100 women based in the U.S., representing issues around immigration, welfare rights, and homelessness; at the conference, the delegation held a caucus and workshop building relationships between immigrant women in the U.S. and women from around the world, and unpacked the relationship between income inequality and housing (p. 31). Burnham notes that in particular, the presentations by women who had been homeless had an impact at the conference: "many women from around the world were astonished to hear that there was such a thing as homelessness in the U.S. They had no idea, basically" (p. 31). Through preparing for the delegation to Beijing, the WCRC engaged deeply with the gendered impacts of globalization

⁶⁶ This difference in orientation reflects a broader difference between global/transnational and internationalist anti-imperialist feminist frameworks (Roshanravan; Herr).

around the world, and developed an understanding of how global economic policies were negatively impacting women around the world and in the U.S., and how women's understandings of gendered oppression was connected to "how they understood the impact of transnational capital on their communities" (pp. 31-32). When the delegation came back from Beijing, they translated/transferred their knowledge/experiences by putting together a popular education workbook called *Women's Education in the Global Economy*, which addressed the questions:

what is the impact of structural adjustment policies on women in other parts of the world? How are women's lives affected by the policies of the World Bank and the IMF? And how do women look at issues of work in the informal sector, trafficking in women, violence against women, the kinds of environmental toxins that women have to deal with--how do women understand those issues and how do women work on those issues? . . . we paralleled those questions with questions of women's double day, or double and triple day, and some other issues impacted especially by privatization policies here in the U.S. . . . it was both a continuation and a deepening of an orientation, a long-standing orientation towards the international arena and towards placing the work that we do in an international context. (Burnham p. 32)

Burnham's recounting of the delegation to Beijing reflects the TWWA's internationalist consciousness around women's oppression globally. The grounding in a "U.S. Third World" analysis, and the participants' deep connection to community organizing--combined with the fact that they themselves were negatively impacted by these policies--represents an analysis that is at once embodied and transnational. While the Beijing Conference is held up as a pivotal moment in global women's rights, for the WCRC members (some of whom were former TWWA

members), it was a chance to connect with grassroots organizers from all over the world, bring insights back to their own community-based work, and create pedagogical materials to deepen internationalist consciousness in community-organizing settings.

Burnham's account of the Beijing Conference, then, draws attention to the genealogies of Third World internationalism that shaped U.S.-based delegations to Beijing, and the post-Beijing insights that then informed local work in the U.S. The WCRC's genealogy, spanning back to the TWWA, and influenced by the multiple internationalist struggles surveyed in this chapter, also emphasizes the longstanding U.S. leftist-of-color internationalism that predated neoliberal globalization. Additionally, if we attend to the scholarship on intersectionality and intersecting forms outlined in the last section of this chapter, it brings into focus the influence of internationalist Black feminist genealogies on what is now often termed "global feminist"⁶⁷ frameworks, and the intersecting forms that emerge as a result--such as the workshop and popular education curriculum that Burnham cited. Genealogies of "U.S. Third World" activism thus blur first/third world binaries, demonstrating that those living in "the belly of the monster" experience the effects of U.S. imperialism and did significant rhetoric/writing work to link these lived experiences to the conditions of women worldwide.

Conclusion and Implications

In her writing on the TWWA's U.S.-based internationalism, Roshanravan writes that that global feminist frameworks that use the U.S. as an origin point for analyses often erase the longstanding women-of-color anti-imperialist genealogies *within* the U.S. Reorienting to the

⁶⁷ See, for example, Moghadam's *Globalizing Women: Transnational Feminist Networks* for an example of the transnational analyses and organizations that have arisen as a result of neoliberal globalization.

multilayered histories of the U.S., according to Roshanravan, requires an epistemic shift that was exemplified by the TWWA: “the Third World Women's Alliance emphasized a need to learn from women struggling for self-determination in different geopolitical locations. In this regard, the Third World Women's Alliance implied that the 'travel' necessary to globalize feminist agendas was less geographic than epistemic” (11).⁶⁸ This “U.S. Third World” framework similarly resonates with scholarship that guards against situating “the transnational” as “elsewhere” (Alexander and Mohanty) and re-situates the local as a representation of global forces (Carty and das Gupta). Thus, a “U.S. Third World” scene requires surfacing repressed histories of activism within the U.S.--a historical methodology that is consistent with Aurora Levins Morales’ argument that anti-imperialist historical work should ameliorate absences/erasures and emphasize global context.⁶⁹

As I explore in Chapters 2, 3, and 4, the TWWA made use of multiple forms in response to deeply embodied exigencies, in the context of high-stakes organizing work. The group’s work across form included political education texts, publications, and the various rhetorical forms comprising cultural work (e.g., songs, theatre). By foregrounding connectivity and interactivity, I do not mean to suggest that the TWWA’s work was simple, easy, or all-about-connection; on the contrary, as Bernice Johnson Reagan notes in her often-cited piece “Coalition Politics: Turning the Century,” coalition work is messy, painful, and often leaves participants feeling “threatened to the core”--particularly when coalitions are aiming to be accountable to the needs of the most-

⁶⁸ The TWWA’s rhetoric indicates that this epistemic “travel” situates the U.S. imperial/settler colonial state as a central site of Third World anti-imperialist struggle, but takes a lead from global anti-colonial activism. For example, Shohat and Stam point to the “Third Worldization” of the U.S. through waves of migration and argue that “[t]he First World/Third World struggle takes place not only *between* nations but also *within* them” (pp. 26-27).

⁶⁹ Morales.

marginalized. Deep, meaningful coalition work asks you to risk your life, as Reagan emphasizes. I understand coalition as whether or not you are willing to risk yourself for another--whether you are willing to go down together. The stakes were tremendously high; for example, the TWWA archives indicate that the TWWA was being closely tracked by the FBI, and TWWA member Kisha Shakur was incarcerated at seven months pregnant.⁷⁰ as Third Worldism is an imperfect, fractured, contested framework, so is U.S. Third World women's organizing. However, in this dissertation I take a lead from the TWWA's recognition that broad-based multiracial alliances are a deep necessity if liberation movements in the U.S. are going to win concrete, material changes. This is not meant to critique the work of groups with ethnically, racially, culturally, or linguistically-bounded memberships, but instead meant to recognize that in particular historical moments, such as the late-1960s, broad-based multiracial alliances were deemed necessary by particular women-of-color activists, for particular reasons, out of particular intellectual and political genealogies (and as we will see in Chapter 5, this work continues to influence activists, students, and scholars today).

As the next three chapters demonstrate, the group's principles and practices were developed out of a critical understanding of lived experiences, contextualized within anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-imperialist principles: "These principles were not taken from a book, but reflect our own life experiences. They are our own creation, let them guide us in our future work and study."⁷¹ Read together, these principles and practices give us a window into what it means to *do* intersectionality, and work from an intersectional orientation that situates history, geopolitics, and form as inextricable and constitutive of one another.

⁷⁰ "Dear Friends."

⁷¹ "Dear Sisters, Happy New Year to You And Your Loved Ones!"

CHAPTER 2

Building Lifelong Activists: Political Education and Publications

This chapter draws on the TWWA archives, including the group's internal education curriculum and newspaper *Triple Jeopardy: Racism Imperialism Sexism*, in order to demonstrate how the group taught the interlinked histories of women of color, and put struggles for women's liberation within and outside the U.S. into conversation. The TWWA promoted a relational, internationalist reading of women-of-color histories in the U.S. in its political education program, and made this analysis public by connecting local/global women's anti-imperialist struggles in its newspaper. In addition, the group participated in many other practices of political education and publication that allowed them to learn from and provide material aid to other self-identified Third World organizations in the U.S. Each of these practices deeply engages and works to connect the multiple historical threads that constitute the U.S. Third World scene.

By focusing on political education and publications, I do not mean to suggest that these were the group's only two important practices of writing and rhetoric. The archives demonstrate a rich body of practices, which include writing letters coordinating/reporting-back from different chapters of the organization; creating and distributing fact sheets to maintain coherence in linked campaigns across geographical locations; planning events and rallies; writing press releases, holding press conferences and interfacing with media; maintaining steady pressure in coalition campaigns around reproductive justice; answering letters from women around the world; making flyers and other campaign literature; writing up and distributing meeting reminders and detailed

minutes;⁷² and holding positions on the coordinating committee or other work committees.

Multiple documents have annotations, edits, lines crossed out, people's names written in margins, multiple drafts, indicating that organizational writing was a collaborative process.⁷³

Archived correspondence indicates that there was significant written labor required to coordinate the various chapters of the organization (e.g., New York City, Bay Area, Seattle), evidence of the work required to coordinate work across shared principles and share the lessons from each location; these letters also demonstrate the tensions that arose when communication was not consistent.⁷⁴ The TWWA also corresponded with women from all over the world. For example, a woman who was part of a women's liberation group in Japan wrote to the TWWA with questions about education and liberation for mothers and children.⁷⁵ It is no wonder Miriam Ching Yoon Louie noted that she learned how to write by participating in social movement organizing:

⁷² Within the TWWA, meeting minutes indicate that decision-making processes always involved rehashing the specific organizational histories that led to certain decisions being made. There is a consistent push to narrativize the group's history and work, and make sure that history is present in decision-making. This points to the important role of history--geopolitical, personal, and organizational--in the group's work at all levels.

⁷³ See, for example, line-by-line criticism on speech drafts in Box 4, Folder 1 of the TWWA archives.

⁷⁴ For example, there is evidence that the Seattle chapter received letters from frustrated Coordinating Committee members in other TWWA chapters, asking them to report-back to the other groups more frequently; it is clear in these letters that the coordinators of the Seattle chapter were involved in multiple organizing efforts, and generally overextended, and also losing energy because of the opportunism of other groups: "one of the reasons that we are having organizational problems is that we at one time tried to accommodate all of the left groups that come to us to support his and take part in that. And it just doesn't give us time to get ourselves on level ground. Also we found out that some of these groups in their racist ways just wanted us because we are third world to give credence to their programs. Besides and because of that we have decided to work on our own programs and activities" ("Letter from Mary").

⁷⁵ "Letter from Miyuki Takado." In their reply to her letter, TWWA members write: "The difference between the rich and poor is the same in every country. The effects of this capitalist system on the minds of our children is immeasurable"; they note that while they do not have an education program for children, the Black Panther Party's Community Learning Center in Oakland, CA might provide a model ("Letter to Miyuki Takado").

I learned to write while writing for the movement. I wrote leaflets, position papers, speeches, funding proposals, etc. So my initial training was in nonfiction and writing for a cause—to get people to do something, understand an issue better, or turn out to a picket line.⁷⁶

In some ways “political education” and “publications” are a false binary, and as the chapter moves into a discussion of the Bay Area chapter, we see how these two categories become one through internally-circulated newsletters and externally-circulated educational materials. For example, the New York chapter produced a document about the group’s history and principles that was then used by the Bay Area chapter during a 1975 period of framing the chapter’s goals and principles.⁷⁷

For the purposes of this chapter, the TWWA’s publications can be understood as distinct from its political education programs in part because of their broad circulation, and the multiple organizational purposes that were served by different publications. Throughout this chapter, I critically engage political education and publication documents drawing from rhetoric, writing, and literacy studies theories of intersectional rhetoric (outlined in the introduction) and relational literacies (Licona and Chavez). Specifically, I am interested in the relational understandings that women in the TWWA built across different histories and geopolitical contexts. Thus, throughout this chapter, I focus on the organizational practices, principles, and understandings that constructed a sense of intersecting histories and geopolitics in a U.S. Third World scene. Read together, the group’s publications and political education materials demonstrate how the group

⁷⁶ Personal interview, 26 September 2017.

⁷⁷ Ad Hoc Coordinating Committee “Dear Sister.” The letter notes: “Please remember that we need not pattern ourselves after anyone else or follow anyone else’s lead. Please look at these materials as guides to our discussion of the necessity for principles and goals.” This document was read alongside “Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership.”

fostered an intersecting understanding of U.S. ethnic histories, and put embodied experience, local struggles, and internationalist anti-imperialism into conversation.

The TWWA's Political Education

Political education--in the form of teach-ins, organizational internal education, and consciousness-raising--was common practice in the era of the U.S. Third World left. For example, SNCC held internal political education courses that members of the TWWA took (Lee). Education was also central to the U.S. Third World Left both in terms of creating spaces for political education, and working to transform institutional education by pushing for access and relevant content. Two important movements that took up these struggles were the Third World Liberation Strike at San Francisco State University and movement for Open Admissions at the City University of New York. In Carmen Kynard's *Vernacular Insurrections*, she traces how the movement for Open Admissions opened up access to CUNY for many students in New York City who had been systematically excluded from higher education. In our interview, Miriam Ching Yoon Louie noted that she had been involved in the movement at University of California, Berkeley, to establish educational spaces on the histories of Third World people, which eventually became area studies departments, meant to increase access to Third World histories for self-identified Third World students. The TWWA's political education program demonstrates how this larger movement foregrounding Third World histories in the U.S. was taken up to meet the exigencies of social movement organizing—namely, building shared analyses, deepening political unity, and recruiting new members/organizers.

Like the TWWA's principles and politics, the group's approach to political education was directly shaped by global internationalist struggles. In her oral history, TWWA organizer

Linda Burnham describes the influence of the Venceremos Brigade, which traveled to Cuba in the late 1960s/early 1970s:

There was a big emphasis on political education and really trying to prepare young people to understand something about colonialism, something about U.S. relations with Cuba . . . what U.S. capitalism is about and how it functions in the world, studying about racism and how it functions in the world and in the U.S. (p. 17)

Members of the TWWA attended the Venceremos Brigade's trips to Cuba as late as 1979,⁷⁸ and the TWWA continued to be involved in the Brigade's regional committee.⁷⁹ Miriam Ching Yoon Louie also emphasized the influence of the Venceremos Brigade on the TWWA's understanding of education and culture, citing the training in cultural imperialism that they received before traveling to Cuba. In "The Venceremos Brigade: North Americans in Cuba Since 1969," Iyengar describes the Brigade as an anti-imperialist education project at heart, which taught participants about both the country and revolutionary ideals (p. 236).

In addition to internationalist anti-imperialist currents in the U.S. Third World Left, the TWWA's political education emerged in conversation with consciousness-raising, which had been adopted by the women's liberation movement from the civil rights movement.⁸⁰

Consciousness-raising groups were used strategically to politicize personal experiences⁸¹ in the context of how gender discrimination bolstered other systems of oppression,⁸² and situate these

⁷⁸ "Letter from Staff for TWWA." This letter details a fundraising dinner to support two members who were selected to go on the Brigade.

⁷⁹ "Points to Bring Up/Out During Discussion with Regional Committee of the Venceremos Brigade."

⁸⁰ "Feminist Consciousness-Raising."

⁸¹ "The phrase, coined by Carol Hanisch, "the personal is political" was popularized and served as way for women to connect oppression based on gender, sexuality and race to political systems of discrimination" ("Consciousness Raising").

⁸² "Consciousness Raising."

problems not as individual but systemic, and solvable through developing theories and strategies for action.”⁸³ McLaren writes that consciousness raising is often situated as “the cornerstone of the women’s liberation movement in the United States,” and is typically attributed in New York Radical Women (NYRW), a group that began holding consciousness-raising groups in 1968 (p. 155) and was said to have been inspired by practices of the Civil Rights movement.

Consciousness-raising arose in response to similar dynamics that the TWWA emerged in response to: sexism in leftist movements, in which Marxism did not include a gender analysis, or “[e]ven when there was a gender analysis of the sexual division of labor in society, it did not always apply to the group itself”; such dynamics led to a split between women who remained in these groups, and those (like the women who formed the TWWA) who decided that it was necessary to form autonomous women's organizations (McLaren p. 155). Consciousness-raising has been critiqued as detracting from political organizing; for example, the TWWA was critiqued by SNCC leadership for being *too* education-focused and not engaged in enough direct action (Lee). However, proponents of consciousness raising argue that such internal/educational work was directly linked to action: “women sharing their experiences in small groups led to the realization that the problems women faced as individuals were not personal pathologies, but reflected a larger pattern of social and political discrimination. . . . this recognition of sexism as a social problem prompted action aimed at social and institutional change” (McLaren p. 155).

The TWWA’s political education differed from consciousness raising that emerged out of predominantly white, middle-class women’s political formations. Scholars and activists have noted that in consciousness-raising, “white, middle class, heterosexual women’s ‘personal’ experiences too often stood as the experience of all women. Women of color, working class

⁸³ “Feminist Consciousness-Raising.”

women, and lesbians used [consciousness-raising] to politicize their experiences in patriarchal societies as well as their experiences in the feminist movements.”⁸⁴ In the context of the TWWA’s political education, consciousness-raising sought to build a relational understanding of the different experiences of women of color in the U.S., contextualized in Marxist theories to situate capitalism and imperialism as the driving force behind gendered racialization and labor exploitation, and valuing the relationality of histories and knowledges brought by women from different racial and cultural backgrounds. Miriam Ching Yoon Louie described this process as a method of pushing back against larger societal segregation, pointing to the TWWA’s strength in fostering an intersecting analysis of U.S. women’s ethnic histories:

One of the beautiful things about the Alliance that I appreciate is it gave an opportunity for me as a Korean-Chinese third-generation American to learn about the struggles of my African American, Mexican American, Native American, Puerto Rican and Arab American sisters. Not everyone gets the opportunity to do that – parts of American life are still segregated. So having the chance to work together with women from diverse communities and share histories, sorrow and ways of healing and celebrating was such a blessing.⁸⁵

This type of embodied, intersectional historical education stood in stark contrast to the education that TWWA members had received in schools; Lee writes that in her interviews with former TWWA members, many commented that “the history of different peoples and nations was something they were unfamiliar with before joining the organization,” and that even the histories

⁸⁴ “Consciousness Raising.”

⁸⁵ Louie described the group as focusing on commonalities, taking a Marxist and national liberation focus (“triple jeopardy”) while noting that “it’s turned out to be a lot more than three forms of oppression.”

of their own people were hard to come by. The TWWA's political education directly tied embodied struggles and local histories to larger Third World anti-imperialist movements; Patricia Romney, a former member of the TWWA, describes the educational programs as "educating each other and educating our communities about [our] own conditions, conditions of women, conditions of women in the Third World, activism of women in the Third World" (qtd. in Lee 47).

Political education took place in the New York City, Bay Area, and Seattle chapters of the TWWA. It is worth looking at each chapter in turn, because although each group maintained a linked political orientation, the specifics of the political education varied depending on the local context. This demonstrates that the U.S. Third World scene is not homogenous; each locality is characterized by different histories, and each TWWA chapter's approach to political education reflects these differences. In the New York chapter of the TWWA, a political education subcommittee formed when it became clear that the organization needed clear ideological unity, and that new members needed a shared sense of politics and purpose for the organization. In December 1970, the group paused its public work, chose a "leadership cadre" of fifteen members, and began meeting four times a week for political education; the goal was to develop an ideological platform and structure that would help it develop into a national organization for Third World women (Ward p. 137).⁸⁶ By the spring of 1971, the group had completed this intensive process and moved into expanding its membership base and increasing its political activity; in order to do so, it developed an orientation session that emphasized readings in Third World anti-imperialist revolutionary theory and history:

⁸⁶ The leadership cadre covered topics such as "revolutionary ideology,' 'dynamics of imperialism,' and 'the political thought of Frantz Fanon'" (Ward p. 137).

The group adopted democratic centralism as its organizational structure, placing an emphasis on collective leadership to allow for the development of each member's potential. In the fall, prospective members went through an orientation to introduce them “to the goals and objectives of the organization” and “the ideology of the organization i.e. socialism.” The seven orientation sessions were led by various members of the group and focused primarily on studying Marxism and socialist theory. Required reading included Beal's “Double Jeopardy,” Linda La Rue's 1970 essay “The Black Movement and Women's Liberation,” and essays by Mao and James Forman. Works of Marxist theory by Lenin, Marx, and Engels were suggested reading, and a document called “Why Do We Study?” was used to explore the relationship between theoretical development and political practice. (Ward p. 137)

Through presentations of history, with an emphasis on the U.S.'s relationship to Puerto Rico, TWWA members in the NYC chapter developed a deeper understanding of the raced, gendered impact of U.S. imperialism on the group's local context. Lee writes that members met weekly at St. Peter's Church in Manhattan, and held bimonthly open meetings that non-members (including men)⁸⁷ could attend, engaging participants in political films, informational sessions, and discussion (p. 38). The New York chapter also held “Liberation Schools” where members engaged people of color communities in “examin[ing] the intersections of racism, imperialism, and sexism through interactive theater and discussion groups” (Springer p. 102).

⁸⁷ Per Chapter 1, this reflects the TWWA's principle of working collaboratively with men (specifically men of color), rather than situate them as the enemy. This represents an intervention in the mainstream feminist movement in the U.S. The TWWA also situated Third World men as one of their audiences for their newspaper *Triple Jeopardy*.

The TWWA archives indicate that before launching this political education program, the New York chapter went through a significant period of thinking-through of the organization's theory and purpose of education, and producing a written rationale. The rationale for political education begins with the disclaimer that “[t]here is no crash course in political education” (p. 1)—it goes on to articulate a notion of education-for-the-long-haul, with the purpose of training thoughtful organizers. Lee writes that the TWWA “provided the space where members had the opportunity to learn from each other's histories and struggles and forge solidarity out of commonalities” (p. 37); this required a commitment to naming shared values and analyses rather than assuming them based on organizational affiliation:

Our goal at this point is not to create advanced theoreticians or brilliant researchers – though God knows the movement could use a few. **Our job as part of a mass organization is, I think, to help develop political activists who have the energy, insight, and initiative to commit themselves to the growth of the TWWA and a lifetime of struggle.** What this means is that we don't assume commonalities and collective understandings that may not exist – we create them through our work. . . . if we assume unity on the basics rather than helping to buil[d] it from the ground up we will soon find ourselves on very shaky territory. (p. 2, emphasis added)

With the stated goals of “deepen[ing] the unity of the TWWA and to help give political and ideological direction to our organization” (p. 4), the rationale for internal education frames personal transformation as an integral part of social movement organizing. Although “transformation” is now thoroughly coopted into neoliberal rhetoric, in this context it is explicitly linked to larger social transformation, in the spirit of consciousness-raising:

A major part of this work of transforming society is the process of transforming ourselves. Through our becoming not only active political beings but more and more thoughtful and conscious political activists. The work of the [political education] subcommittee should be one of the main organized ways in which this transformation of each one of us takes place. (p. 4)

In other words, rather than situating personal transformation as an end in itself, the organizational documents situate personal transformation as a necessary and ongoing corollary to action. This committee further clarifies this point with the following: “[t]his is not to say we should as a committee or organization be exclusively introspective”; instead, there is a stated commitment to valuing the clarity and quality of collective political work, methods, and relationships (p. 5).

The Political Education Committee’s rationale documents suggest that the goals of becoming more “thoughtful and conscious” were borne out of collective work, not theorized in isolation. Working from this orientation, the TWWA political education program aimed to facilitate the relational, intersectional historical “fluency” that Alexander invokes in *Pedagogies of Crossing*: “We are not born women of color. We become women of color. In order to become women of color, we would need to become fluent in each others’ histories” (p. 269). To begin to facilitate this fluency, the focused primarily on “(1) why are we a Third World women’s organization and (2) how can we as Third World women most effectively organize. Through our work, it will become clearer as to why we are together but more importantly where we are going together” (p. 5).

In the early stages of the TWWA, political education was coordinated nationally; for example, a document titled “Third World Women’s Alliance Schedule of Weekly Political

Education Meetings for National and N.Y. Local” circulated among the chapters in 1972, was “designed to try to even political development around basic things.” The document indicates that weekly meetings between May and July would cover the following topics: “On Contradiction,” “Internalizing Dialectics,” “Thorough Analysis of Why People Have Left the Organization,” “Democratic Centralism and the Role of Leadership,” “Responsibilities of Membership,” “Workshop on Class,” “Theory and Practice,” “Protracted Struggle,” “Armed Struggle,” and “Methods of Work.” Following this program, the document notes that “the National Apparatus and the Local Chapter will begin to meet separately for political education.” This combination of centralized educational programming and local-specific education reflects the organization’s democratically centralized organizational structure.

Depending on the TWWA chapter, educational needs were necessarily interpreted in different ways, but consistently included a mix of reflecting on lived experience, learning Marxist theories, and invoking, constructing, and synthesizing the histories of different women of color in the U.S. For example, because the New York City chapter had been forged via a coalition of Black and Puerto Rican women (representative of the migration patterns that structured New York City), Puerto Rican history deeply shaped this chapter’s political education work. Burnham notes that when she lived in New York, she had less of an understanding of Mexican American, Chicana, and Asian immigrant waves, anti-immigration movements, and legislation; she gained an understanding of these histories from the West Coast chapter (Lee pp. 41-42). This points to regional differences in how Third Worldism manifested in the U.S., based on the different colonization and migration patterns that structured different geopolitical locations in the U.S. These differences manifested in generative ways; for example, between

1973-75, the Bay Area and New York City chapters corresponded about getting together to share experiences and work methods to grow the politics of the organization:

We would really like to get together with two members from the Alliance in New York in order to share ideas and experiences of the two branches. We feel this should be an investigational and informational meeting in order that we can better understand **the conditions of work in different areas**. We do not feel that the legalistic approach of constitution writing and goal and objective discussions would be productive. Since this type of discussion would be in a vacuum. As Lenin has said the political nature of an organization grows – TWWA will grow – from its methods of work and practice. We recommend that the meeting be on the West Coast (Bay Area), in August and that two representatives from New York come – we will pay half the air fare and of course provide places to stay, etc.⁸⁸

Through developing this shared understanding of U.S. women’s ethnic histories, the education program equipped members with a shared analysis, with the goal of building leaders within the organization. Lee notes that this approach is distinct from training “a few leaders to get into ‘good places’”; instead, members were trained in how to represent the group in larger coalition meetings through rotating leadership, skills-building, and meeting spaces that provided childcare so parents were not excluded from this leadership development (pp. 44-46).

In the West Coast chapter, Linda Burnham describes the TWWA’s political education as “a powerful learning community” that functioned “like a little voyage of discovery, trying to find texts that reveal that stuff and working at summarizing it and bringing it back to the people” (qtd.

⁸⁸ “For the National Report.”

in Lee, p. 40). Collective writing played an important role in this historical education and leadership development. Essays on Black, Asian, and Chicana women's role in U.S. history were produced for group study to promote a deeper understanding of Third World women in the U.S.:

the TWWA's Bay Area chapter produced extensive essays exploring Black, Asian American and Chicana women's role in U.S. history and handed them out for the sisters to read. One purpose of these essays was to present an overview and brief analysis of Third World women's participation in the U.S. labor force and the larger society. But these essays served mainly as educational tools that helped TWWA members from different racial-ethnic communities to understand the history of racism and women's oppression that shaped each other's lives. Published by the TWWA Bay Area chapter in 1978, the essays were part of a series that placed Black, Chicana, and Asian women within the overall history of the United States. (Lee pp. 40-41).

These documents surface the role of women of color as laborers and makers of the nation's wealth.⁸⁹ Marginalia indicates that there was back-and-forth and revision in the writing of these documents; for example, one TWWA member wanted a deeper emphasis on economic history and social class to complement the discussion of immigration history.⁹⁰

To complement their studies of Asian, Black, and Chicana women's histories, the Bay Area chapter studied dialectical materialism, historical materialism, Marxist theories of

⁸⁹ This emphasis on women of color as makers of the nation's wealth would surface again in the group's cultural work.

⁹⁰ In Kendall Leon's study of the CFMN, she describes the utility of marginalia on archival documents for teaching us about how organizational principles, practices, and theories were rhetorically developed and enacted. In the future, I will look more closely at one or more examples from the TWWA's documents to look at how these documents create these intersectional, relational understandings.

contradiction, critiques of liberalism, readings on “the woman question” and the women’s movement,⁹¹ and democratic centralism.⁹² In the archived educational documents, we see that TWWA members made an effort to summarize and synthesize Marxist theories into clear, digestible 2-3 page summaries, to make this theory more easily accessible. Marks on many of these documents, with names penciled into the margins, indicate that different TWWA members were responsible for different portions of the documents during discussion, serving as further evidence that political education also served as a site of leadership-development and rotating facilitation. Leadership skills should be understood in the context of the relational understandings and literacies that the group was building among different histories and geopolitical contexts; the group embodied this relationality by making sure its leadership was representative of the different racial/cultural groups that comprised the organization. The TWWA felt it was important to reflect its diverse membership in its committee structure (we see this in the formation of the Cultural Committee in Chapter 3); for example, in discussions about the Coordinating Committee, meeting notes indicate that “diversity”—a word that has become an

⁹¹ The Women’s Movement paper was discussed in preparation for International Women’s Day (“Letter from Steering Committee”).

⁹² These documents offer a situated account of the theory, pedagogy, and assessment of community-based education—following Leon in “Expanding the Boundaries of WPA Research,” I see these community-based organizations as important sites of theorizing about composition and rhetoric: “[r]ather than just look at case studies of writing programs as a way to learn about administration and change, we can expand the texts we draw on . . . what I am proposing is an argument of translation—to see the work of institutional change that has happened in spaces outside the university as relevant models to learn about how to be, do, and act in institutions . . . Valuing ‘diversity’ mean not just reaching a quota for ‘minority’ numbers but also valuing other histories and sites for administrative education.” For example, through my engagement with the TWWA archives, I’ve grown curious (and presented at CCCC 2018) about the degree to which principles of anti-racism and anti-sexism are embodied in the drafting of organizational documents themselves. The TWWA’s collaborative writing and editing practices make me think about how we can encourage broad participation in anti-oppression work within academia and writing programs/curricula not only through written principles, but through anti-racist, anti-sexist principles informing how those principles are written and enacted.

empty signifier of neoliberal multiculturalism today, within the TWWA referred both to racial/ethnic diversity and to diversity of labor experience:

The racial balance of the committees is important because we want to be able to take advantage of the diverse experiences and perspectives of our Asian, Latino, and Black sisters. The racial make-up of the organization should be reflected in each of the work areas. We don't want to reduce this to a mechanical matter or percentages but let's keep it in mind as a general consideration in forming the committees.⁹³

The positioning of difference as an advantage—or, as Audre Lorde puts it, as a resource⁹⁴—is extended beyond racial/ethnic background and into work experiences and age: “As a mass organization we will treasure and extend our diversity. This means reaching out to sisters of different age groups, different life experiences and different job situations.”⁹⁵

The TWWA fostered leadership skills among all members via trainings on how to chair a meeting, how to deliver a speech, create a slideshow, and produce a newspaper; Lee writes that such trainings also included skills that are typically associated with alphabetic literacy, such as how to write sentences, construct flyers, and set agendas (pp. 44-45). Just as the histories taught in the TWWA's political education programs varied by chapter location, the skills-building activities and outreach initiatives also varied depending on the expertise of particular women in each group. For example, Cheryl Johnson (now Cheryl Perry-League) had expertise in women's

⁹³ “Proposal on Permanent Work Areas,” p. 5.

⁹⁴ “The Master's Tools.”

⁹⁵ “Towards Defining the Political Direction of the Third World Women's Alliance,” p. 5. This is also evident in discussions about the Coordinating Committee: “The TWWA is also diverse in terms of life experiences and this too should be taken into consideration. We do not want to create a CC that is made up of all students or all health workers or all teachers, etc.” (“Coordinating Committee's Guidelines for CC Rotation”).

health, and held health workshops in the West Coast chapter that were connected to a health campaign around Zimbabwe.⁹⁶

In addition to these regional differences, the multiracial membership required members to deal with internal contradictions and the tensions that animate different histories of racialization. Indigenous writers have long pointed to the overlapping and often contradictory subject-positions of native, immigrant, and enslaved-person; although all three groups are subject to oppression and exploitation, they are also rendered complicit in each other's exploitation (for example, immigrants are structured into U.S. settler colonialism even as they experience marginalization and oppression). In our interview, Miriam Ching Yoon Louie noted that the group foregrounded similarities that were largely the result of patterns of racialized, gendered labor in the U.S., which broadly (if differently) impacted self-identified Third World women:

... we focused on commonalities. There were differences in the issues impacting different women and in terms of their roles in the segmented labor force. As mentioned earlier, the Alliance was influenced by Marxist and national liberation movements' analytical constructs, what we called Triple Jeopardy at the time. Movements like the LGBTQ movement have demonstrated the what, how and why's of those forms of oppression. That's a difference and vast improvement on past work.

When differences did come up, TWWA members made a practice of asking, "how do we understand them?" before refocusing on areas of common ground (Lee p. 43). Miriam Ching Yoon Louie echoed this in our interview, explaining that political education was a space where differences in anti-Black, anti-Latinx, anti-Asian, and other gendered racisms were unpacked,

⁹⁶ See TWWA archives Box 3, Folders 5 and 15.

naming differences but contextualizing these differences within a larger economic analysis that linked the exploitation and oppression of all these women. Thus, the relational literacies forged in the group, among different histories and experiences of gendered racialization, were contextualized within the larger anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist framework.

To mediate tension and increase accessibility in spaces of political education, the group adopted a pedagogical approach distinct from elitist and masculinist modes of interacting and learning. Lee writes that “the TWWA made a conscious effort to create an environment that cultivated the learning process in order that all of its sisters could participate in the discussions”; according to member Cheryl Perry-League, political education allowed women to “engage in discussion and dialogue [and] for women to feel no matter how they said [it] or which way they said it, it was safe” (Lee pp. 35-36). Political education also emphasized depth over performance, which pointed to the fact that some members (but not all) had had access to spaces of higher education. As Beal put it, “Some of us can think really quick and fast, but that doesn’t mean [we] think more deeply” (Lee p. 35). This depth was then reflected and sustained in the group’s archived documents; in our interview, Sharon Davenport emphasized the depth with which the group had conducted its work, and talked about how deeply affected she was by processing its archives (discussed further in Chapter 5).

Meeting notes from the Bay Area chapter show the degree to which political education was also an integral part of internal decision making. Leadership was charged with thoroughly engaging, discussing, and explaining membership’s ideas to the rest of the organization. Thus, internal proposals were understood as sites of important organizational education:

The sisters on the leadership body should help each other explain the reasoning behind any proposals put forth by the membership. The membership has the responsibility of

vigorously questioning the why and how of the leadership proposal or decision on any idea or issue. The entire Alliance must be involved in this questioning process so that real criticism and not just likes and dislikes are transferred to leadership when the coordinating committee begins to re-examine an idea or proposal. Without this vigorous questioning the relationship between membership and leadership will not become one of cooperation and genuine development for the whole alliance but rather a continual tugging. Through questioning that is as specific as possible both leadership and membership can get to the answers and the reasoning thus hitting the heart of the discussion around any idea or decision before the alliance. (p. 2)⁹⁷

This method of critical internal debate and discussion, and the focus on cultivating leadership, was linked to the political work the group was engaged in: “The harder the struggle the more closely membership must be aligned with leadership” (p. 5).⁹⁸ There was an emphasis on collective decision making on leadership, so that membership would be supportive of and engaged with leadership: “leaders are members, members are leaders.”⁹⁹ This de-hierarchizing of membership and leadership, and insistence on leadership-development, animated the group’s understanding of rhetor and audience across different contexts of the group’s work, as we see in the next two chapters on cultural work. In the context of political education, we see how historical education was undertaken to meet the exigencies of organization-development (e.g., the need for a shared anti-imperialist ideological platform), and to create the relationality and

⁹⁷ “Proposal for the TWWA May General Meeting.”

⁹⁸ “Proposal for the TWWA May General Meeting.”

⁹⁹ “Working Paper on Leadership.”

skills needed to do the everyday work of organizational decision making (e.g., through skills trainings on how to facilitate a meeting where divergent histories were being discussed).

The Bay Area chapter demonstrated the blurry lines between internal education and publications. In a One-Year Plan for the Bay Area chapter of the organization around 1976-77, the Bay Area group decided on three committees: Family Development, Cultural Committee (discussed in the next chapter), and Internal Education. The Internal Education Committee had a newsletter subcommittee that would report on TWWA events and general meetings, and include articles by the Education subcommittee. In addition, the Internal Education committee would begin an oral history project, and study affirmative action setbacks in education and employment (pp. 1-3).¹⁰⁰ Such activity was deemed important to the chapter for building historical consciousness and political direction:

Political direction is a combination of principles and goals, it is also a frame work of theory within which practice takes place. . . . We are a group of third world women who can agree that we need to transform society, using principles as our guidance force. . . . The role that study can play in the Alliance is to generate among the membership the need **to keep an open mind about the many great historians who have written about their conditions in their perspective countries.** (pp. 3-4, emphasis added)¹⁰¹

Elaborating on the central importance of history, the Bay Area chapter's Internal Education program is framed around the following questions and themes:

¹⁰⁰ "Coordinating Committee: One-year plan."

¹⁰¹ "History of the Development to Define the Organization's Political Direction"

what forms have the struggles of working people taken in the past?, what forms are they taking today?, the history of the development of racism in the U.S., what is the “women’s movement” past and present all about?, the history of Third World women, the role of Third World women in the women’s movement. We also want to learn more concretely about the situation of Third World women today. What is our general economic position? What kinds of jobs are we concentrated in? The committee might also develop a political education program for the organization and think about writing articles or finding other forms to make the fruits of our research and investigation available to others.¹⁰²

Such themes were also taken up by the Seattle chapter of the TWWA (“Seattle Third World Women” or STWW), which has not been documented in the secondary literature on the organization, as it was a relatively short-lived chapter. That being said, the TWWA archives include numerous letters written back and forth to Mary Stone in the Seattle chapter from other chapters, as well as flyers and newsletters documenting the Seattle chapter’s work. STWW documented its primary reasons for political education in a paper titled “Seattle Third World Women--Why Do We Study?” as follows: “To equip ourselves with the knowledge of the art and science of making a revolution”; “To build iron discipline, a firm commitment to a life of struggle and an end of exploitation and oppression”; “To build revolutionary **strength, initiative and imagination**”; “To build a **collective spirit**”; “To discover why human society is the way it is, why it changes and what further changes are in store for humanity”; “To fight certain destructive tendencies”¹⁰³; “To provide ourselves with the tools and critical eye to enable us to weed out corrosive elements through practice and testing people”; “To understand how **the role**

¹⁰² “Proposal on Permanent Work Areas,” pp. 3-4.

¹⁰³ These included individualism, selfishness, greed, liberalism, petty bickering, elitism, opportunism, egotism, anti-intellectualism, and narrow-minded nationalism.

of third world women in the home and in society at large fits into the general role of third world people in this country and to fully understand how our struggle as third world women fits into the struggle against exploitation and oppression of the people of our various communities”; and “To provide ourselves with a tool which will be a guide to action for changing the conditions of our lives, our children and our loved ones” (emphasis in original). I list these in order to highlight the dialectic between learning history and acting in contemporary struggles; in order to act for the betterment of conditions of life and work, it was deemed necessary to foster a collective spirit through an understanding of how the oppression of self-identified Third World people developed historically, and relationally.

To meet these goals, STWW held events like a Minority Women’s Workshop that was geared towards clarifying the group’s orientation and goals. The archived Minority Women’s Workshop schedule indicates that there had been small-group conversations that had built “unity” and they wanted to make these conversations accessible to others in the organization:

Our goal at this time is to make our position in the world clear to ourselves. Our ultimate goal is to make our position clear to the rest of society and to act on those convictions. To do that we must begin to build unity and find direction.¹⁰⁴

The workshop, which took place over four weekly sessions, covered four main topics: “Liberation and Minority Women,” “Women and Our Bodies,” “Angela Davis and Women in Prisons,” and “Women in the Work Force.”¹⁰⁵ Within each of these larger themes, participants discussed sub-issues including sexual objectification and sex roles; divisions among women; relationship to men of color; the question “what is liberation?”; physiology and sexuality; the

¹⁰⁴ “Minority Women’s Workshop.”

¹⁰⁵ “Minority Women’s Workshop.”

role of women workers in society and the labor movement; and employment discrimination. These themes demonstrate how the group put the scale of a woman's body into conversation with the scale of larger structural injustices, such as mass incarceration and labor exploitation, creating an understanding of how these two scales could be mediated through local action with STWW and its coalition campaigns.

Seattle Third World Women also held orientations, film screenings, and discussions; in their outreach materials for an orientation retreat, they described the group as follows:

Seattle Third World Women is working women, students, mothers who have been meeting on Wednesday nights since last winter. We are Asian American, Black, Chicana and Native American sisters with a common cause to get together about: racism and sexism. JOIN US!¹⁰⁶

A STWW flyer demonstrates the group's events over the course of a month during 1972-73¹⁰⁷ as including the following: the film "Red Detachment of Women, a "revolutionary ballet showing the role of women in the Chinese Revolution"; a discussion on "Native American Women and the Fishing Rights Struggle," in which "American Indian sisters from Frank's Landing, Washington will tell us about the Nisqually and Puyallup Indian fishing rights situation,"; a discussion of Chicanas, "the farm workers struggle, problems of the barrio both urban and rural"; and a discussion of women in the Black movement featuring a talk by Princess Rustad, a

¹⁰⁶ "Seattle Third World Women Orientation Retreat Schedule." The retreat itself included a discussion of the group's history, goals, objectives, processes, discipline, commitment, and committees, with a note that participants should "not leave any orientation materials where others might see....(refer to enclosed article on security)." This demonstrates the very real threats that the group faced, evident in the thick FBI file in the TWWA archives.

¹⁰⁷ "Seattle Third World Women Flyer, Schedule for June."

politically active Seattle resident.¹⁰⁸ Here, too, we see the juxtaposition and interrelation of different local campaigns and identities, contextualized within a global anti-imperialist analysis that highlighted the work of women in different revolutionary struggles.¹⁰⁹

In addition to internal and external political education to build capacity and recruit new members, education was also undertaken in TWWA chapters to support specific organizing campaigns. According to former TWWA member Zelma Toro, “what I really loved about the Alliance is that whenever we were going to take up some issue there was always some kind of a study, there was always some kind of group, always some kind of meeting together” (qtd. in Lee 40).¹¹⁰ Romney says, “when I look back on it, what we really [were] doing was educating each other and educating our communities about [our] own conditions, conditions of women, conditions of women in the Third World, activism of women in the Third World” (qtd. in Lee p. 47). For example, as we will see in Chapter 3, the TWWA’s Cultural Committee was tasked with developing study materials on International Women’s Day for the Bay Area chapter, to strengthen the group’s historical consciousness around the holiday as they organized IWD celebrations. Another example is that as the Bay Area chapter became involved with the

¹⁰⁸ “Seattle Third World Women Flyer, Schedule for June.” As was suggested by a committee member, it would be worthwhile to trace how this event impacted various struggles and communities.

¹⁰⁹ In the future, I hope to trace exactly what transpired in the Seattle chapter. Letters from Mary Stone of the Seattle chapter allude to the fact that members there were overcommitted and spread thin; I would be curious to learn specifically what struggles they were engaged in, and how their work evolved following the STWW chapter.

¹¹⁰ This is despite tensions that educational work was somehow separate from/not the same as political work. Patricia Romney (interviewed by Lee) quotes Phil Hutchings of SNCC, who was “kind of critical” of the TWWA, particularly NY chapter, and didn’t think they were “really activists” because he saw them as an “educational group.”

Coalition to Fight Infant Morality campaign, it created a working paper on the relationship between racism and infant mortality.¹¹¹

Archives also include correspondence and thank-you letters to people who had conducted informational presentations on Korea (which the letter praises as having been done with “time and care”);¹¹² China (which the letter praises because of the different materials that the presenter made available, and encouragement to develop the presentation into a full slideshow that could be presented elsewhere);¹¹³ the farmworkers’ struggle;¹¹⁴ welfare rights;¹¹⁵ and the Philippines.¹¹⁶ Providing editorial feedback was a consistent element of the TWWA’s thank-you letters; for example, in a letter regarding a presentation by the TEACH program, the TWWA suggests that the group should work towards smoothness and continuity to make the presentation easier to follow, while also praising the importance of the content of the presentation.¹¹⁷ In addition, the TWWA prepared political education materials for other organizations as a way of demonstrating solidarity through material aid (including research and document preparation). For example, the group prepared documents for a Black and Latin Workers’ Conference including documents on “History of Women in the Workforce,” “Women and Unions,” “Welfare,” and “Childcare.”¹¹⁸ In correspondence with the Committee for Solidarity with the Korean People in Berkeley, the TWWA responded to a request to support a campaign by writing: “As a concrete expression of our solidarity we would like to aide in the distribution of your leaflets (containing

¹¹¹ See Box 1, Folder 16 of TWWA archives.

¹¹² “Dear Pat & Belvin.”

¹¹³ “Dear Mimi.”

¹¹⁴ “Letter from Empleo Por Unidad.”

¹¹⁵ “Dear Ethel.”

¹¹⁶ See Box 3, Folder 4 of TWWA archives.

¹¹⁷ “Dear Loni.”

¹¹⁸ “Women in the work force.”

postcards). Would you please send us 50 copies?”¹¹⁹ I list these different archived documents in order to provide a sense of the TWWA as a hub for different educational documents; to demonstrate how seriously the group took political education in relation to other organizations; and to show how the group understood solidarity as necessarily concrete and not just at the level of discourse.

In Lee’s study of the TWWA, a major finding was that to former members, internal education was the most important aspect of the organization’s programming (p. 25):

Many of the sisters interviewed described political education meetings as the best part of their participation in the TWWA. Miriam Louie fondly remembered the history lessons were, ‘one of the strongest points about the Alliance. It provided [a] place to work very closely [with] women from other communities and learn about their struggles and they would be able to do that with you and your community. (p. 40)

Altogether, the three TWWA chapters’ political education work demonstrates concrete methods for facilitating an understanding of the different histories present within the organization, contextualizing them within international anti-imperialism, and building practices of thinking and working collectively. Political education programs built skills towards ongoing organizing, and explicitly situated self-identified Third World women in the U.S. as makers both of history and of the future, out of a context in which self-identified Third World women were written out of institutionalized historical narratives. Political education built skills and shared analyses via collaborative writing, trainings, interactive theatre, film screenings, summary of complex theories, and rotated discussion leadership. The pairing of U.S. women’s ethnic histories with

¹¹⁹ “To Committee for Solidarity with the Korean People, Berkeley.”

Marxist economic theory demonstrates that historical materialism provided the theoretical framework needed to draw together these histories and connect them to Third World internationalism. The TWWA's archived documents also demonstrate how education meets multiple purposes, including leadership building within the organization building and coalition building beyond it. Along with the group's publications (discussed in the next section of this chapter), political education served to flesh out the overlapping, layered geopolitical histories that comprise the U.S. Third World scene.¹²⁰

The TWWA's Publications

This section discusses both the TWWA's external and internal publications, with the goal of broadening the written record on the TWWA's publications and valuing the organization's internal labor as a practice of maintaining an organizational history.¹²¹ Just as the TWWA's political education should be understood in the larger context of political education and educational movements within the larger U.S. Third World Left, so should the group's publications. Print culture played a central role in the formation of the U.S. Third World Left. In part, print media functioned by bridging time and space and circulating the ideas from different liberation movements:

¹²⁰ In the future, as suggested by a committee member, I plan to unpack specific documents, events, and moments in terms of how political education and publications informed on-the-ground struggles through coordinated principles and campaigns. The Farah strike or infant mortality work would both be interesting to unpack in this regard.

¹²¹ As Leon and Monberg note in their rhetorical study of Chicana and Filipina political organizations, these internal documents often shed light on the underacknowledged labor of movement-building.

Print culture proved to be an absolutely essential technology of time-space compression by helping to disseminate Third World ideas across the globe. . . . The greater circulation of radical literature from around the globe depended on print and media technologies, national infrastructures, and transnational networks that, in a very real sense, shrank the distance between national contexts and the people in them. (Young p. 9)

Such circulating texts included many of the materials that the TWWA studied, including the writing of global anti-colonial leaders and Marxist theorists. Running in tandem to the Third World Left's global circulation of texts was the Women in Print Movement of the late 1960s/70s. This movement is documented in secondary literature as a primarily white women's movement, but one that carved out space for radical lesbians who were theorizing anti-racist feminism. The Women in Print movement gave rise to a vibrant print culture via the production and distribution of newsletters, magazines, newspapers, political and literary journals, and books, which they distributed in both local and national networks; these grassroots publishers and distributors connected via social gatherings like writing retreats and conferences (Pratt, "The Struggle" p. ii). During the 1970s, this movement exploded through access to mimeographs and Gestetners for self-publishing, and articles, manifestos, newsletters, and journals circulated widely: "By 1975, nearly 200 periodicals and approximately two dozen feminist presses supported the movement's print culture" (Evans p. 92, quoted in "Print Culture"). The movement's focus on cultivating women producers of texts intentionally countered the "head/hand" dichotomy privileging intellectual/written labor over the physical production of newsletters; Travis writes that "Women would never be truly free unless they first seized ownership of the means of cultural production and then restructured and de-hierarchalized that production, liberating the written word from the

material regime that had grown up to enforce the oppressive epistemological and moral structures of capitalist patriarchy” (p. 282).

The women of the Women in Print movement imagined their work as holding the potential to help readers imagine liberation from heteropatriarchy—and take control of the material means of producing knowledge about their own lives. This process of restructuring and de-hierarchizing production has its roots in the movement's Marxist feminism, which also ideologically shaped the TWWA's work. As Short explains, these politics were embedded in each of the steps of book production: production, promotion, distribution, message, and reception (p. 10). Like the TWWA, the Women in Print movement situated women as theorists and historical actors.¹²² “This vision of a dialectical relationship between skills and politics,” writes Travis, “was the ‘how’ of the Women in Print Movement: by embracing and working the dialectic, movement participants would create both a revolutionary women’s culture—one that made all women theorizers of gender—and a revolutionary print culture—one that undid the specialization and professionalization that had characterized printing and publishing since the early modern period” (pp. 280-81). Indeed, publishing through channels such as *Ms. Magazine* had professionalized feminism and constituted a liberal white feminist audience; there remained a need to make space for “vernacular” radical/revolutionary theorizing.

¹²² The Women in Print movement ran in the same circles as the TWWA; for example, the Women’s Press Collective in California began in 1969 when poet Judy Grahn and artist Wendy Cadden asked the San Francisco Mime Troupe to produce a play that Grahn had written; rather than produce the play, the Troupe offered their mimeograph machine to reproduce it, along with other feminist texts (Short pp. 4-5). The TWWA interviewed the San Francisco Mime Troupe as part of its cultural work, as we see in Chapter 3. Additionally, the Glide Memorial Church, where the TWWA held cultural events, donated \$500 to Wendy Cadden to purchase an antiquated Gestetner, which helped to build the Women’s Press Collective (Short pp. 4-5).

Reflecting on the Women in Print movement, Bunch draws attention to the centrality of literacy in women's organizing:

The creative rather than passive aspect of the written word is important for encouraging people to rebel and make change in society. Lack of access to the printed word has characterized most oppressed groups, and the struggle for control over words, thoughts, and deeds is one. Movements for change usually make literacy for their people a high priority. Literacy is a way to give individuals more information about their oppression and to assist their ability to think about and choose alternative courses of action for their lives. . . . If we want women to rebel against patriarchy both individually and as a group, these are essential skills. Literacy is a feminist issue, and teaching women to read, write, and think a priority in our movement. (pp. 218-19).

This understanding of women as theorists and leaders engaged in complex literacies was central to the TWWA's work. Miriam Ching Yoon Louie explains that: "[a] core Alliance concept was that every woman could be a leader if given the opportunity."¹²³ In the context of the larger intersectional framework informing this project, where intersectionality is understood in terms of histories, geopolitics, and forms, it is helpful to think about this literacy as *relational* across these various scales. These relational literacies, built through political education and publications, then informed on-the-ground campaigns and organizing.

These literacies were developed in part through the significant written labor within the TWWA. The group's newspaper *Triple Jeopardy: Racism Imperialism Sexism* is framed in secondary literature as the group's "most thoroughgoing exploration of the relationship between

¹²³ Personal interview. She links this to the trainings that the TWWA held on skills like how to facilitate a meeting.

theory and practice . . . Conceived and launched during the fall of 1971 (while the TWWA was conducting the orientation sessions), the paper was in some ways the TWWA's most enduring and important project" (Ward p. 137). *Triple Jeopardy* was theorized by members of the group as an organizing, recruitment, and educational tool that circulated histories of women's anti-imperialist struggle, contextualizing U.S. struggles in global U.S. imperialism.¹²⁴ Produced in the New York City chapter of the organization and edited by Frances Beal, *Triple Jeopardy* ran bimonthly from September 1971-summer 1975, at five issues per year in bilingual English-Spanish and 25 cents an issue. Incorporating articles, photographs, poetry, interviews, and editorials, the paper highlighted women's activism in the U.S., in conversation with women's struggles all over the world, from Chile to Vietnam to Cuba. It was directed towards an audience of third world, working class women and men; an internal criticism of the early papers addresses the need to refine this audience further to "the unpolitical sister," rather than those who were already connected to Third World anti-imperialist political struggles.¹²⁵ The paper broadly focused on "establishing capitalism as the basis of these oppressions and socialism as the only route to liberation for third world people" (Anderson-Bricker p. 62). The TWWA maintained a principled stance of not including advertisements in *Triple Jeopardy*;¹²⁶ according to the TWWA archives, the paper was understood as "the official news organ of the Third World Women's

¹²⁴ See Mecenas's work on "coalitional rhetoric in print and new media" for a R/C take on how collective composition supports coalition building (in that case, in terms of U.S. Asian American politics).

¹²⁵ "Dear Cheryl."

¹²⁶ For example, the TWWA received a letter from someone conducting a study on rape victims who asked whether they could advertise in *TJ* and said no, redirecting them to the group Bay Area Women Against Rape ("Dear Friend").

Alliance, and as such, the political objectives of the newspaper closely parallel the objectives of our organization.”¹²⁷ Its editorial staff were entirely volunteer.

Like the TWWA’s political education programs, *Triple Jeopardy* situated history as a necessary tool, arming readers with information about the history of racism, sexism, and imperialism. In the paper, history was tied to everyday material struggles, including inflation, food costs, energy crisis, monopolies, Nixon's economic policies, economic exploitation of workers, intolerable working conditions and unequal distribution of resources in the U.S. A recurring column "On the Job," included interviews with women workers to show the similarity of oppressions faced by women of color and identify ways to counter them; the juxtaposition of these articles with reporting from global anti-colonial struggles was representative of how the paper connected global imperialism to the everyday lived realities of women of color in the U.S. The paper also elaborated on the relationship between the history of capitalism and the formation of gender. It included articles on Cuba, China, the Soviet Union, North Vietnam, North Korea, Sudan, Guinea-Bissau, Albania, Mozambique, and Palestine (Anderson-Bricker p. 63). Its range of articles included a “Skills” section that taught mechanical/technical skills (knowledge that was stereotypically framed as "masculine") and situated these skills as necessary for liberation struggles; local/international news particularly relevant to women of color; and health information (Ward pp. 138-39). For example, a report titled "Anatomy and Physiology" illustrates how the TWWA sought to use the paper as a vehicle to empower women of color with health information; the TWWA also put together a booklet titled “Women and Our Bodies” that was used in a health workshop, created when six members became pregnant and realized they had very little information about pregnancy (Ward p. 139-40). Through constituting the identity

¹²⁷ See Box 4 of the TWWA archives.

of “third world woman” in the U.S., and the linked geography of the “third world” both within and outside the U.S., the paper thus built a relational, transnational framework for understanding gendered, racist, imperial oppression.

Triple Jeopardy also used history to stage critical theoretical interventions in the raced, classed limitations of the white middle-class feminist movement in the U.S. For example, while middle-class white women had historically argued for the right to work, working class women/women of color noted that many of them had *always* worked, and that Black women had a history of forced labor during enslavement. Another example is that the middle-class white feminist movement was advocating for abortion rights, while many of the members of TWWA were fighting the U.S. state’s forced sterilization practices. Another rhetorical practice in the newspaper was to historicize the material conditions of women’s lives in socialist states, and argue that these women faced less violence than in capitalist states. For example, articles outlined the history of the development of U.S. capitalism and the living conditions of Third World women under it, juxtaposing this with the living conditions of women in socialist nations such as Cuba, focusing on health care and infant/maternal mortality rates; such juxtapositions linked sexism to capitalism via reproductive justice (Anderson-Bricker p. 62). The paper also highlighted women's central role in revolutionary movements past and present, including Guinea-Bissau, Cuba, Chile, Palestine, and more. Such interventions were connected to the spirit of larger currents in the feminist movement by historicizing and making-public so-called “private” concerns, such as reproductive justice, with specific concern for the struggles faced by self-identified Third World women. As TWWA organizer Linda Burnham puts it:

the intention of [*Triple Jeopardy*] was to really speak to the ways in which women of color experience the world, and speak to the issues that were not at that time being

addressed by the white women's movement, or the mainstream women's movement. And it was the early side of the recognition that women of color faced issues and discrimination and marginalization, not only as women, but as people of color, as people with particular class background, et cetera. (p. 20)¹²⁸

Putting women-of-color feminist struggles in the U.S. into conversation with women's anti-colonial struggles worldwide, and posing socialism as a necessary alternative to capitalism, the paper served three primary functions for the TWWA: 1) "clarify[ing] what the realities are" by disseminating information of particular interest to Third World women; 2) "engag[ing] in current ideological struggles" by posing a counter to conservative, anti-intersectional threads in both the Black Power and women's liberation movements; and 3) serving as an organizing tool that both spread the TWWA's ideology and recruited members (Ward p. 138). Additionally, because *Triple Jeopardy* was circulated to the other chapters of the TWWA, it served as a method of internal education and coordination.¹²⁹

According to Ward, the first issue of *Triple Jeopardy* included an editorial by Frances Beal that "exemplifies the way that feminism in general, and black feminism in particular, politicized areas of life not generally within the purview of radical political action" (p. 139). The editorial "affirm[ed] the role of black (and all Third World) women as an autonomous, organized force in a movement for revolutionary change . . . confirmed the political agency of women of color . . . and the necessity of struggling against women's oppression in conjunction with the struggles against racism, economic exploitation, and imperialism" (Ward p. 140). In "Editorial: What is the Third World?" the TWWA crystallized its ideology by linking the larger

¹²⁸ See Box 4 Folder 2 of the TWWA archives for full rationale document for *Triple Jeopardy*.

¹²⁹ See, for example, correspondence to Seattle chapter in Box 4, Folder 4 of the TWWA archives.

geographical concept of the Third World to a mass liberation struggle against oppression of man by man, nation by nation, and woman by man.

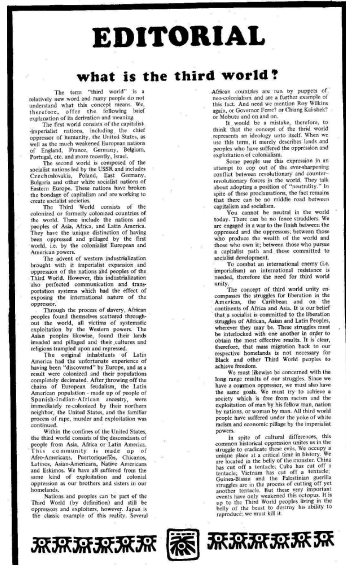


Figure 2: “Editorial: What is the Third World?”¹³⁰

The paper also featured letters from political prisoners, including Angela Davis and Lolita Lebrón. In addition to covering the cases of women political prisoners in *Triple Jeopardy*, the TWWA members worked with Angela Davis Legal Defense Fund and interviewed her for the paper. The TWWA also set up a committee to support Lebrón (which includes petition signatures), and the TWWA’s FBI file also indicates that Lebrón subscribed to *Triple Jeopardy* from prison, and contributed writing to the paper.

¹³⁰ From *Triple Jeopardy*, Box 7 of the TWWA archives (first issue).



Figure 3: Angela Davis and Lolita Lebrón on the February/March 1972 issue of *Triple Jeopardy* for International Women’s Day.¹³¹

The group’s support of Davis and Lebrón, and juxtaposition of them on this cover, reflected its rhetorical practice of connecting the violence faced by women of color within and outside the U.S. to U.S. imperialism, and in doing so, linking their cases and visually representing Third World internationalism. The two women side by side on this cover encourage relational-literacy-building in readers, thinking across Black/Latinx struggles both within and outside the U.S., and thinking about political imprisonment as a gendered, imperialist phenomenon. The Angela Davis Defense Committee held events like “Luncheon in San Jose in Support of Angela Davis,” in which TWWA members held discussions, generated support for support rallies around Davis’s trial, distributed issues of *Triple Jeopardy*, and “pointed to the importance of Third World People supporting the rally.”¹³² This juxtaposition also reflected the group’s political opposition to the

¹³¹ From Box 7 of the TWWA archives.

¹³² See “Luncheon in San Jose in Support of Angela Davis.” This was part of the coordinated work of the National United Committee to Free Angela Davis and All Political Prisoners (a full

prison-industrial-complex: "The group spent much of its energy working on issues related to prisons, establishing a program where they corresponded with prisoners across the country (male and female), sending issues of *Triple Jeopardy* and other literature to inmates, and publicizing the cases of political prisoners" (Ward p. 143). Written letters in the TWWA archives indicate that they were corresponding with incarcerated people all over the U.S., and organizing bail funds.¹³³ For example, Seattle Third World Women was involved with Women's Bail Fund, and organizational documents note that they were involved because of the high percentage of third world women in prison, many of whom stay in jail because they cannot afford bail; the rising number of political prisoners and those politicized around their experiences of imprisonment; those who commit "crimes of survival"; and the need to draw more attention to women's prisons in the Northwest U.S.¹³⁴ Seattle Third World Women made it a point to hold discussions that centered the experiences of those who had been imprisoned.¹³⁵ Copies of *Triple Jeopardy* were also sent to prisoners including Wallace J. Austin, Jr., of Soledad Central Prison, who wrote a letter of deep appreciation to the TWWA pointing out the hypocrisy that government officials were not imprisoned for their crimes: "I am scheduled to be released from this chained society after spending eight years of my Black life in prison for something less than 'WATERGATE.'" In their reply to his letter, TWWA members clarified their organizational role and responded to his request for help obtaining employment upon his release from prison, writing: "we are not an

list of the organizations involved in this coalition is available in the TWWA archives, Box 5, folder 5, on coalition letterhead).

¹³³ See, for example, correspondence with the Seattle chapter in the TWWA archives, Box 4 Folder 4.

¹³⁴ "Women's Bail Fund."

¹³⁵ "FLYER: Minority Women, THIRD WORLD WOMEN." The flyer frames imprisonment as experience: "join us for an informal discussion on women in prisons with a young Chicana sister who has experienced this state's institutions. . . . Women of all ages, all ethnic groups, Please come!"

organization that provides services to the community” and redirecting him to Glide Memorial Church, which had a job service. This demonstrates an important distinction between a social service provider and the TWWA’s goal of creating a revolutionary mass alliance.¹³⁶

Such work indicates that the TWWA connected individual cases to the larger problem of mass incarceration, political imprisonment, and the economic forces driving crime. It is important to note that the solidarity and alliance represented by the juxtaposed images was paired with material support for Angela Davis’s (and broadly, prisoners’) struggles; in other words, it was a visual rhetoric with theoretical/political depth and material consequence. This work also included support work for imprisoned men of color, as we see in a 1976 letter expressing support for Hugo Pinell, Luis Talmantez, Fleeta Drumgo, Willie Tate, Johnny Larry Spain and David Johnson, and arguing that they be released.¹³⁷ A similar letter was sent regarding the San Quentin Six in 1976: “We as Third World Women, mothers, workers and active members of the many ethnic communities in the Bay Area, firmly believe that these men have more than paid their debt to society. Only by their immediate release on parole and return to their families and communities can justice be done.”¹³⁸ This work around imprisonment demonstrates how the TWWA envisioned internationalist anti-imperialism on a local level, taking on the oppression of

¹³⁶ Austin Jr. “Greetings”; “Letter to Wallace J. Austin, Jr.”

¹³⁷ “Letter to Adult Authority.” The letter reads: “We are an organization comprised of representatives of many major minority groups in the San Francisco—Bay Area. As third world women, mothers, workers, and active community members, we firmly believe that each of these men can and will be assets to their communities and we would like to welcome their return. We point to Mr. Willie Tate, the only one presently on the outside, as an example of successful reintegration into the community and good citizenry. Further, we believe that these men have more than paid off their debt to society and only by their immediate release on parole and return to their families can justice be done. We urge each member of the Adult Authority to recognize the overwhelming community support that exists for these men, thus their ability to succeed on parole and to grant them their freedom immediately.”

¹³⁸ “Letter to Office of the Governor of CA.”

self-identified Third World people living, working, and organizing in the U.S. *Triple Jeopardy* was a central way that the group rhetorically juxtaposed global internationalist struggles with these local struggles, and circulated that analysis to readers.¹³⁹

The TWWA archives indicate that in addition to *Triple Jeopardy*, chapters also produced internal newsletters and bulletins to keep the group's membership updated on what the organization was doing, and to create a written record of the group's work. The West Coast chapter of the TWWA produced a newsletter, which in part functioned as an internal political education tool;¹⁴⁰ the Seattle chapter produced a newsletter titled *Seattle Third World News*, which served a similar function.¹⁴¹ For example, archived documents on *Seattle Third World News* included a discussion of Mao's piece "Combat Liberalism,"¹⁴² which had been part of the TWWA's political education program; other archived documents show that there was internal discussion in the Seattle chapter to hash out rhetorical purpose of this newsletter, and internal presentations on the newsletter.¹⁴³ In addition to these internal publications, the TWWA produced publications for other organizations. For example, a letter from KDP, or the Union of Democratic Filipinos (which will be discussed in the next chapter), thanks the TWWA for working towards the publication of the organization's anti-martial law book, and for the TWWA's financial contribution, which KDP notes "will assist the struggle back home in the

¹³⁹ The paper is often looked to as a source of information on the TWWA for secondary research today; archivist Kathleen Nutter indicated in our interview that the archived newspapers are one of the Sophia Smith Collection's most-used holdings.

¹⁴⁰ See Box 1, and Box 4 folders 5, 18, and 19 of the TWWA archives.

¹⁴¹ See Box 4, Folder 4 of the TWWA archives; for photocopies, see Box 4 Folders 18 and 19.

¹⁴² This piece also played a role in the Bay Area chapter's political education program ("Agenda, General Meeting").

¹⁴³ For evaluation/rhetoric questions, newsletter on Combat Liberalism, subcommittee notes, and newsletter presentation. Additionally, the TWWA's publicity committee did outreach, media, and other publications including leaflets and posters, and created a publicity rap for use throughout the organization; see Box 4, folder 9.

Philippines.”¹⁴⁴ KDP indicated that this book supported their goal of consciousness-raising around the brutality of the Marcos government,¹⁴⁵ and TWWA members also received as a symbol of appreciation a card made by Filipino political prisoners.¹⁴⁶ In this case, publication can be understood as a concrete expression of material aid and solidarity.

Archived publications from other organizations (including KDP) offer a record of the group’s affiliations; for example, the group exchanged copies of Vietnam Veterans Against the War’s publication *Winter Soldier* for copies of *Triple Jeopardy*.¹⁴⁷ The group had done solidarity work with veterans and active members of the U.S. military in other capacities; for example, when several Black men were beaten by white military members in what is known as the “Kitty Hawk Incident,” the TWWA organized support for the men who had been beaten; and the group was in correspondence (and sending copies of *Triple Jeopardy*) to the Black Serviceman’s Caucus in San Diego concerning the incident,¹⁴⁸ in which Black sailors were charged with “inciting a ‘riot’ which actually started as an authorized attack on Black sailors.”¹⁴⁹ In other words, the group’s anti-imperialist framework extended to violence faced by people of color within U.S. institutions broadly, and also as evidence that the exchange of written documentation should be understood in relation to concrete expressions of solidarity through material aid. Altogether, the TWWA’s internal and external publications demonstrate the written labor of

¹⁴⁴ AK Staff for K.D.P., “Dear Friends.”

¹⁴⁵ “Letter to TWWA from KDP, November 12, 1974.”

¹⁴⁶ “Letter to TWWA from KDP, November 18, 1974

¹⁴⁷ “Friends in Struggle.” The letter expresses solidarity with VVAW’s objectives, and remarks that *Winter Soldier* “is important for wide distribution within the armed forces, movement groups and all americans.”

¹⁴⁸ “Dear Brothers in Struggle.” Members of the Serviceman’s Caucus had been imprisoned.

¹⁴⁹ “To All Movement Organizations and Media.” This example, as suggested by a committee member, would be worth unpacking more in the future in terms of how anti-racism was enacted across contexts, within and outside imperialist U.S. institutions like the military.

alliance-building and the deep significance of local and global Third World histories for building a Third World anti-imperialist alliance in the U.S. Through publications, the group was able to materially support other organizations; circulate histories and geopolitical analyses among its membership and potential members; correspond with people both within and outside the U.S. who were suffering the raced, gendered impacts of U.S. imperialism; and situate members as writers and theorists, contrary to dominant and denigrating portrayals of self-identified Third World women.

Conclusion and Implications

The TWWA's political education and publications demonstrate the deep interrelation of U.S. Third World histories that animated the work of the U.S. Third World Left, as well as the interrelated scales of the body, locality, and internationalist anti-imperialism that animated the group's writing and rhetoric. As rhetorical and pedagogical practices, political education and publications support economic- and political literacy development about the interrelation of Third World histories in the U.S. scene, and a relational understanding of how these histories intersect--in other words, relational literacies that mediate intersecting histories and geopolitics. The group provided access to history through multiple means, including internally-circulated publications, presentations, and materials created for other groups, and shared the written labor of producing these materials.

Ultimately, it was these material links between local and global that animated the TWWA's transition into an organization with paid staff and an office space. In 1979, the Bay Area chapter of the TWWA obtained a grant for \$4,250 from the Vanguard Public Foundation in

San Francisco so the “Third World Women’s Material Aide Committee” could do educational work around Southern Africa.¹⁵⁰ The majority of the funds would go towards publicity and educational materials.¹⁵¹ In 1980, the group would rent a space in the San Francisco Women’s Building.¹⁵² In the application for the grant, the Third World Women’s Material Aid Committee described itself as committed to:

(1) educating third world communities about the liberation struggles in Southern Africa, particularly highlighting the contributions and role of women and children, and (2) raising material and, in the form of money, focusing on the needs of women and children of Namibia and Zimbabwe. Through this work, we will be contributing to the building of a mass South African solidarity movement in the United States. We are requesting a grant of \$9,300.00 to develop educational materials (including pamphlets, multimedia displays, slideshows, and skits) and organizing approaches (including newsletters, speakers, publicity materials, educational forums, and general operating expenses).¹⁵³

Education, and the production of publications for circulation and outreach, thus represent two of the group’s most enduring practices of writing and rhetoric that built relational understandings and literacies among histories and geopolitical contexts. The next chapter turns the focus to the group’s cultural work, which expanded the repertoire of rhetorical forms that the TWWA used to circulate its historical and geopolitical analyses.

¹⁵⁰ “Letter from Evelyn Shapiro.”

¹⁵¹ “Vanguard Application Form.”

¹⁵² “Women’s Building Rental Agreement.”

¹⁵³ “Vanguard Application Form.” There is much more to say here about the shift from TWWA to AAWO, and the implications of including white women and adopting more of a political-party structure. In the future I hope to trace and unpack this history.

CHAPTER 3

Theorizing Culture: The TWWA's Cultural Committee

The fact that we as [Third World] women come together to work is an absolute necessity given the frightening rate of degeneration and reaction that's seizing this country. And the future looks pretty bleak to [Third World] people. . . . We need to develop organizational forms, new ways of working that will capture the imagination of the people of this country beyond the old rally/leaflet/forum/speech syndrome.

--"Reconstitution Committee," First General Meeting, 1975¹⁵⁴

As Third World diaspora people in the US, we took these insights and applied them to our situation, analyzing the race, sex and class constructs that rationalized our subordinate status and mocked our cultures as inferior, exotic, etc. We challenged ourselves to develop cultural expressions that shed light on our status and envisioned transformation and liberation. We looked for ways to encourage people to step forward, join the struggle, make sense of losses and celebrate victories.

Those perspectives complemented other works people were reading during the period, like Franz Fanon, who critiqued colonized mentality of the intellectuals in oppressed nations. Those Third World revolutionaries viewed culture broadly, expressed not only through a poem or song, but also through the literacy level of a people, influenced by differential access and exclusion. We tried to take a broad perspective and treat culture as core to how we live and relate to each other and the natural world.

--Miriam Ching Yoon Louie, former TWWA Cultural Committee member¹⁵⁵

In the mid-1970s, the Bay Area chapter of the TWWA began to prioritize specific types of work that were marked as "cultural." The first epigraph quote highlights the urgent, embodied exigencies that animated the TWWA's turn to "new ways of working," and the fact that the group saw creative "forms" as necessary to capture audience imaginations and move self-identified Third World women in the U.S. to political action. This is not meant to suggest that the TWWA *did not* use rallies, leaflets, forums, and speeches—to the contrary, their archives are filled with these documents. However, the organization saw rhetorical creativity across form as a

¹⁵⁴ "Presentation at 1st General Meeting of TWWA."

¹⁵⁵ Personal interview.

necessary corollary to alphabetic/print-based movement rhetoric and writing such as political education and publications.

R/C might refer to “forms” as genres/modes; references to mode/multimodality/genre throughout the chapter should be understood as gestures towards “translating” the TWWA’s theories for the field of R/C. For the purposes of this study, I define modes as “set[s] of socially and culturally shaped resources for making meaning” such as “writing and image on the page . . . moving image and sound on the screen, and speech, gesture, gaze and posture in embodied interaction,” and multimodality as the study of “how and to what social and cultural effects people use and transform resources for communication including speech, image, gesture, gaze, and others.” (“Mode” and “About”). The TWWA archives indicate that the group referred to “forms” as “cultural work,” with culture defined as “arts, methods, techniques, and expressions.”¹⁵⁶ In other words, “forms” encompasses multiple genres and modes, as well as ways of producing them. The second epigraph indicates that the group’s understanding of culture was expansive, linking literacy and access, shaping modes of relating and ways of living. In this sense, “form” is deeply rhetorical, in that the use of new forms was tied to the TWWA’s explicit purpose of engaging audiences in anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-imperialist organizing work, meeting the exigency of building the TWWA as an organization.

Drawing on the archived meeting minutes of the TWWA Cultural Committee, this chapter surfaces the behind-the-scenes organizational labor of developing a theory of culture, with particular attention to the intellectual, political, and artistic genealogies of three organizations that the Cultural Committee interviewed as part of its work. This theory of culture would undergird the “new forms” that the group developed and performed (explored further in

¹⁵⁶ See TWWA archives, Box 3, Folder 20.

chapter 4). This chapter demonstrates the role of multiple modes and genres--including theatre, songs, and visual displays--in communicating intersecting histories and geopolitical analyses in a “U.S. Third World” context. By surfacing the TWWA Cultural Committee’s methods of theorizing culture, I draw out the labor of producing theory within the TWWA. Through archival research on the TWWA’s cultural committee and interviews, I argue that cultural work across form has unique affordances for making intersectional connections across multiple histories. Anti- imperialist cultural work like the TWWA’s emerges a site where the group’s engagement with U.S. Third World histories takes shape across multiple forms, shaped by the overlapping geopolitical histories that constitute the U.S. Third World scene.

The TWWA’s Cultural Committee

Just as the TWWA's political education and publications were influenced by a broad range of feminist, anti-racist, and anti-imperialist political struggles, so was their theory of culture. The TWWA’s cultural work emerges within a larger context of "U.S. Third World" cultural production. There was an explosion in the number of political and cultural organizations during this time—several of which are covered in R/C scholarship (Kynard, Hoang, Mecnas, Leon, Monberg, Wanzer-Serrano, Lathan, Pough). As Miriam Ching Yoon Louie notes:

There were so many experiments taking place, such as Teatro Campesino, a spinoff of the United Farmworkers Organizing Committee and in your direction the Nuyorican Poets Café. The Union of Democratic Filipinos developed Sining Bayan, a music/theatre group. There was Los Siete based in the San Francisco Mission to free political prisoners. We had our first IWD celebration at the Black Panther Party's Learning Center. They ran breakfast and afterschool programs for kids and health services, too. These organizations

captured revolutionary impulses shaking our world and homeland countries. When the radical movements of the long 60s waned, a number of the organizers found a way to continue to exercise their craft as individual artists or within legacy groups.

These organizations engaged in cultural production in part as a method of articulating internationalist politics (Young, Njoroge, Spira). Njoroge points to the convergence of anti-colonial and civil rights movements in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the direct links between culture, politics, and geography: “The immersion of musicians, artists, and activists in diverse cultural and political matrices enabled their artistic and political visions to express and encompass African-American and Third World political aspirations and formations at a critical historical conjuncture, to create and share sophisticated aesthetics, rhythmic philosophies, and poignant political visions” (p. 102). Likening Third World cultural productions to a “polyrhythmic and multivocal discourse,” Njoroge suggests that such work “compress[es] miles of diaspora” and “embodie[s] an alternative archive of the history of decolonization” (p. 87). Young similarly writes that the term “Third World” invokes a “time-space compression that helped bridge geographic, ideological, and experiential gaps between U.S. minorities and Third World majorities” (9).¹⁵⁷ The cultural politics of the U.S. Third World left, in other words, melded geopolitics, political theory, embodied experiences, and histories into expressions of internationalist anti-imperialism.

¹⁵⁷ For other studies of specific Third World cultural formations in the U.S., see Mullen and Ho, Minh-Ha, and Shohat. The use of the TWWA archives today can be understood as a type of similar “time-space compression.” These studies focus on individuals and groups that were marked as cultural producers (e.g., musicians and filmmakers); the TWWA, on the other hand, has been primarily understood as an activist organization. This is not to reinscribe the artist/activist binary, but to demonstrate how the TWWA’s understanding of culture was deeply tied to its commitment to internationalist political organizing.

TWWA members similarly blended multiple political genealogies in the group's political/cultural work. Members had been active with the Asian American movement, anti-Vietnam war activism, Third World Liberation Front, Latin Action, the Puerto Rican independence movement, and housing struggles in west coast Chinatowns (Lee). However, Cuba had a particularly strong influence on the group. In her oral history, former TWWA organizer Miriam Ching Yoon Louie notes the central role that the Cuban Revolution played in U.S. leftist imaginations--particularly because of the fact that Cuba is "right under Uncle Sam's nose" (Lee). As Chapter 2 touched on, many TWWA members had been directly shaped by their experience with the Venceremos Brigade,¹⁵⁸ an organization inspired by the Cuban Revolution that aimed to challenge the U.S. economic blockade by sending activists to Cuba to harvest sugar cane.¹⁵⁹ Three members of the Bay Area chapter--Linda Burnham, Cheryl Perry-League, and Miriam Ching Yoon Louie--had traveled to Cuba via the Brigade. These trips established multiracial networks among U.S. activists; served as a meeting place for Third World liberation activists from all over the world; and emphasized political education through presentations on the history of colonialism, capitalism, and racism--emphases that (as we saw in Chapter 2) deeply influenced the TWWA's orientation to education (Lee pp. 48-50).¹⁶⁰ Cuba was a strong cultural influence on the broader culture of the U.S. Third World Left as well; Young writes that "Castro's Cuba held a special appeal because it offered a model for integrating cultural

¹⁵⁸ See Lee (pp. 29-32). In Lee's interview with Miriam Ching Yoon Louie, Louie notes the important connections forged among Third World activists from the U.S. during the trip to Cuba, and the political training they received.

¹⁵⁹ See "Who We Are and What We Do." The Venceremos Brigade's emphasis on political education would deeply influence the TWWA's political education work.

¹⁶⁰ For example, Linda Burnham notes that the Venceremos Brigade offered her first "fairly systematic political study," and situated the U.S. and western nations as imperialist (Lee p. 50; see also Burnham *Oral History*).

production and radical politics. Cuba's investment in film, literature, and art demonstrated the centrality of cultural production and its creators to the attainment of national autonomy" (p. 9). In our interview, Miriam Ching Yoon Louie described a position paper that discussed the cultural imperialism that people living in the U.S. risked carrying to Cuba via the Brigade; the paper was meant to prepare activists to engage with and learn from political work in Cuba:

with the transition from outright colonialism to neocolonialism, the colonizers transitioned from outright political and economic rule to neocolonial structures that allowed them to maintain domination even though many countries had won nominal political independence. Cultural imperialism claimed Western cultural superiority as opposed to earlier rationalizations of biological superiority, though some earlier reactionary ideologies continued to operate. Study and discussion took place largely within movement structures of study groups, discussion groups and liberation schools, not within academic institutions per se. Many movements of that era prioritized revolutionary theory, study and practice.

TWWA members theorized culture as representative of the capacities, labor, and vision of self-identified Third World people living in the U.S., and the group's archives indicate that the planning and delivery of cultural events met multiple organizational goals. These include communicating organizational principles; engaging audiences in political education; coalition building; outreach; skills-building; and practicing/refining a democratically centralized organizational structure.¹⁶¹ The archives also document the material labor of producing cultural

¹⁶¹ This orientation towards committee work and larger organizational goals was also evident in the Coalition to Fight Infant Mortality campaign, of which the TWWA health committee took part. In "Letter to TWWA sisters, September 7, 1979," the health committee writes: "We are calling on ALL Alliance sisters to take up this campaign in various ways. We need to see this as an organizational task and strive to break away from any narrow views of our committee work."

work; its aims of skills- and leadership-building, education, and outreach; and offer evidence of the affective power of cultural performance in supporting the group's principles and goals.

Existing secondary sources have touched on the New York City chapter's use of guerilla theatre as a method for education and leadership training. Drawing on an interview with Frances Beal, Lee notes that "Beal fondly remembers a form of role playing or 'guerilla theater' involving the TWWA's Puerto Rican sisters" in which members would act out familiar scenarios such as the double-duty of wage work and domestic work; as Beal put it, "[t]hese 'guerilla theater' scenarios taught women how to handle difficult situations that came up in family or work environments. The sisters would act out what they should do when such situations arose, and they were taught to fight back. It was an effective training method that the TWWA developed as part of the leadership development process" (p. 45). Springer writes that the TWWA held "Liberation Schools" in New York in which people of color could "examine the intersections of racism, imperialism, and sexism through interactive theater and discussion groups" (p. 102). The group's cultural events made use of a variety of intersecting forms, and had a strong educational component; Linda Burnham (writing with Erika Tatnall) notes that the group's community celebrations "featured song, dance, drama, food and family -- all interwoven with information about the economic and social concerns of women" (p. 55). For example, the group's International Women's Day celebrations "brought together several elements: speeches and presentations, cultural performances, children's activities and food" (Burnham and Tatnall p. 46).¹⁶² The group's Cultural Committee--which produced these celebrations--has not yet been documented in the secondary literature through a thorough engagement with its archives; this

¹⁶² For example, archives indicate that the group held choir rehearsals ahead of cultural events. (which included a choral arrangement of a Langston Hughes poem). See "Letter about February 9 General Meeting."

section of the chapter addresses this gap. Chapter 4 will turn the focus to International Women's Day.

The Bay Area chapter of the TWWA engaged in an explicit study of culture during the fall/winter of 1976, as they developed their one-year plan for the organization. During this time, they decided on three permanent work areas: Family Development,¹⁶³ Cultural Committee, and Internal Education. The goal for this one-year-plan, presented by the coordinating committee to the rest of the organization, was to develop political unity, continuity, and clarity through a central, organizational work plan.¹⁶⁴ These permanent work areas followed a period of several months of organizational reflection on its goals and tactics since 1973, out of which it was assessed that “the political direction was implied and never expressed externally as an organizational philosophy.”¹⁶⁵ International Women’s Day (IWD)--the group’s primary cultural event--emerged as a way of engaging new people, expressing principles of unity,¹⁶⁶ and organizing audiences’ thoughts, experiences, and understanding of history.

It was during this time that Miriam Ching Yoon Louie joined the Bay Area chapter of the TWWA; it was 1975, and the group was defining its political direction, engaging in political

¹⁶³ “Proposal on Permanent Work Areas.”

¹⁶⁴ “Draft of 1-Year Plan Proposal from CC to rest of the organization

¹⁶⁵ “History of the Development to Define the Organization’s Political Direction,” p. 2.

¹⁶⁶ The Family Development Committee would also do historical work: “Family Development could include the areas of: organized child care programs, home care, schools & educational system, youth programs, battered children, child health needs as well as child care for our meetings. The committee could also deal with birth control/sterilization, women’s health care, maternal care, nutrition, history of the family, family relationships, and single parent families. We should remember here too that the fact that the committee would be focused on family, and includes the concerns of men as well as women & children, is already a political statement still to be articulated more fully” (pp. 2-3). From “Proposal on Permanent Work Areas.” The history of the family is juxtaposed with Cuba via documents like the “Cuban Family Code” (see Box 5, Folder 27 of the TWWA archives). There was also a call within this committee for children’s books with a “third world orientation” (“General Meeting Announcement for Feb. 1977”).

education, and undergoing an expansion in membership. During the expansion, both Louie and Linda Burnham were recruited out of the committee planning IWD. As Louie remarks:

The principles of the Committee to Celebrate International Women's Day (IWD) were the boiled down politics of the TWWA, targeting sexism, racism, class exploitation with an internationalist identification with women in different national liberation movements of the Third World. The Bay Area TWWA helped establish the celebration of IWD to be an annual event people looked forward to. IWD highlighted the struggles of sisters in different communities and included cultural performances. The next year after a broader recruitment of new members, the work was reorganized into the Cultural Committee, Family Development Committee and Political or Internal Education Committee. Many of the women in the organization had small children at that time, and childcare for our events included a million babies.¹⁶⁷

In refining the group's political direction, it was noted that there needed to be more public work; cultural work in general, and IWD in particular, were situated as methods for testing principles through concrete work, and conducting broad outreach:

Much of our work since the development of the principles has been internally directed. Our energies have been devoted primarily to building and formalizing our organizational structure and work method. This was certainly important work for the expanded TWWA, but now it is time to try and break out of perfecting our organization on paper. We must again put our principles to the test in concrete practice as we did with IWD. We must begin to consider what our external work will be and put our political ideas to the test by

¹⁶⁷ Personal interview.

presenting them to people outside of the organization. Recognizing that we do our best work when organizing on a mass level (e.g. IWD) and that we are striving to build a broad based, mass organization we must look closer at what this means for the Alliance.¹⁶⁸

This report on the organization's political direction clarifies that although cultural events might be criticized as a "one shot deal," they support the organizational goals of developing a Third World working women's perspective and "project[ing] it into our communities" by "giving voice to the aspirations of Third World women."¹⁶⁹ Such work is characterized as having a long-term value that cannot be immediately assessed, in part because of its contribution to a long-term project of synthesizing U.S. Third World histories and experiences:

aside from providing the TWWA with an important organizing tool, IWD and similar kinds of forums **give us the opportunity to pick up the scattered and diverse threads of our people's thinking and present them in an organized and vital way. This process does a great deal to advance people's understanding of our history and the problems of our society.** The results are not immediately tangible but we should not look at this type of work in terms of cost-effectiveness. Its long range value, both for our organization and for our communities is not in doubt. So we should continue to see organizing for IWD and other forums as an important part of our work.¹⁷⁰ (emphasis added)

¹⁶⁸ "Towards Defining the Political Direction of the Third World Women's Alliance," pp. 2-3.

¹⁶⁹ "Towards Defining the Political Direction of the Third World Women's Alliance," pp. 2-3.

¹⁷⁰ "Towards Defining the Political Direction of the Third World Women's Alliance," pp. 2-3.

Situating IWD as a way to reach a large audience of Third World women, this quote continues that along with other work, IWD is a site where the organization “put[s] forward the politics of our principles.”¹⁷¹ The reference to people’s “scattered and diverse threads of thinking,” and argument that cultural events offer a space to “pick up” these threads and re-present them, suggest that cultural events were an important site of intersectional praxis, drawing together various experiences and histories and synthesizing them under an internationalist Third World politic.

Out of this context, the Cultural Committee was initiated and tasked with developing cultural presentations for IWD, organizing groups “to work on food, songs, and dramatic piece,” and developing study materials for the committee. While Internal Education was understood as a method for political development within the organization, both Family Development and the Cultural Committee were conceived of for outreach:

Internal education will contribute to our understanding of our society and Third World Women’s place in it and so to our political development. Family Development and the Cultural Committee will provide us with ways to reach out to others. What we deal with in our day to day lives – family, the economic situation, education, etc. – should be incorporated into the life of our organization. Through the Family Development Committee we can speak to brothers and our youth. The Cultural Committee will help us to reach out to even more people in our communities. Research about ourselves and our history, the identification of how things affect us as third world women, and the basis for a deeper understanding of U.S. society.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ “Towards Defining the Political Direction of the Third World Women’s Alliance,” p. 5.

¹⁷² “Proposal on Permanent Work Areas,” pp. 1-2. This notion of meaningful research is echoed by the professors interviewed in Chapter 5.

All three committees were meant to facilitate leadership- and skills-building, including the ability to compose and facilitate discussions using various forms: “The work areas will also serve as a way to further develop our leadership potential. There are so many skills to be learned in each area—how to create and give a slide show, how to prepare a forum, how to do fruitful research.”¹⁷³ This focus on work across form is elaborated on as follows, and linked to the need to highlight the lived experiences and material conditions of Third World women’s lives:

[The Cultural Committee] would have the opportunity to develop many different forms to express the condition of Third World women. These might include media and the arts, skits, slide shows, songs the whole organization can learn, silk screen, movies, newsletter, etc. The committee will also be able to tackle the questions of what is culture?, what is political art? what are effective cultural forms for children and youth? It is also a good place to give expression to the idea of international solidarity.¹⁷⁴

Culture thus was linked to organizational activity and goals in various and overlapping ways.¹⁷⁵

Throughout their archived administrative documents, we see that the TWWA was working to develop methods to coordinate committee work so it all directly supported the organizational purpose and principles of unity. Meeting minutes indicate that TWWA members sought to have the organizational makeup represented on each committee in order to draw from the “diverse experiences and perspectives” of the multiracial membership.¹⁷⁶ Thus, cultural work was

¹⁷³ “Proposal on Permanent Work Areas,” pp. 1-2.

¹⁷⁴ “Proposal on Permanent Work Areas” p. 3.

¹⁷⁵ It is important to note that the “idea of international solidarity” as expressed via culture should be understood alongside the *material aid* that the organization also engaged in (e.g., to women in Zimbabwe, to the United Farm Workers, and later through the Vanguard Grant to teach people in the U.S. about ‘Southern African struggles’).

¹⁷⁶ Proposal on Permanent Work Areas,” p. 5.

constituted by (and constituted, through engagement with audiences) the intersecting histories and perspectives of the TWWA itself.

This understanding of the mutually constitutive quality of intersectional culture and politics is reflected in a Cultural Committee report that put forward a theory of culture for the organization: “[c]ultural work expresses the objectives and political views of the whole organization. It must not stand apart from the organization. It is a tool by which the organization can reach its goals.”¹⁷⁷ In the report, we see that the TWWA begin to outline the expansive understanding of culture described by Miriam Ching Yoon Louie in the introduction to this chapter:

Culture should be defined broadly, **not just as the artistic products of a society such as poems, paintings, songs, etc.**, but as the total reflection of human creativity of each society depending on traditions and on class outlook. . . . we must struggle to reflect the working class outlook of Third World women and our traditions of courage, steadfastness and love of family and people in the midst of struggle for equality and justice. **Our culture is the reflection of our individual and collective creativity as productive human beings.** (p. 4, emphasis added)

The group clarified this reference to productivity (in the sense of labor) by noting that the “material cultural riches” of the U.S. were created by the exploitation Third World people—and these riches, framed as “the fruits of our labor,” *includes* culture (p. 4). This emergent definition similarly situates culture as both material and constitutive, connecting individual and collective, bound by common experiences of oppression and exploitation within the U.S., but also drawing strength from Third World histories, traditions, and liberation struggles.

¹⁷⁷ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 4.

Out of this larger definition, the Committee further defined cultural work as a “tool” to meet organizational goals—one that “expresses the objectives and political views of the whole organization,” without “stand[ing] apart from the organization.”¹⁷⁸ Reflecting on her experience attending the TWWA’s cultural events and then, years later, processing the group’s archives, Sharon Davenport points to the fact that cultural work involved significant rhetorical and organizing training:

they were educating women of color to organize events. They were people who had some experience organizing events, but they really allowed--not allowed, but taught--women who were part of that organization how to organize an event like International Women's Day. They brought people in, taught them how to chair meetings, to plan, to organize, to give speeches--I mean, that's huge, giving speeches, wow--and how to recruit people.¹⁷⁹

Cultural work, then, should be understood and interpreted not just in terms of the events themselves, but via the labor of the women of color who organized them. The Cultural Committee understood cultural work as “meshing” with other committee work, writing that “the cultural arm of the organization should rely on the organization as a whole to put into practice the inspirational ideas raised by cultural work.”¹⁸⁰ In other words, influence flows both ways, from cultural work to organizational work and vice versa.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 4.

¹⁷⁹ Personal interview.

¹⁸⁰ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 4.

¹⁸¹ This is distinct from the instrumental uni-directionality (from politics to culture) often ascribed to “political art.” Gencarella and Pezzulo note that performance studies scholars have accused rhetorical scholars of such instrumental foci in our work (p. 3). I would redefine it as a *purposeful* culture; as theorists of cultural rhetoric have noted, culture is “persistently rhetorical” (CRTL).

The “inspirational ideas” invoked in this quote get at the embodied, relational, affective dimensions of culture and performance, particularly as culture and performance are framed as fostering identification with Third World anti-imperialist political principles. While culture is explicitly defined by the Committee as “educating and organizing people around progressive ideas and causes,” it is defined as having “special” rhetorical effects, particularly when its content is “rooted in the realities of the mass of people in order to bring out certain ideas and move people to new insights and action” (p. 4). Political education, too, was not seen as a uni-directional flow from performers to audience; Cultural Committee members note that cultural work necessitates clarification of organizational ideas, and deeper understandings of audience members’ lived experiences, histories, and “Third World women’s revolutionary traditions” (p. 4). This suggests a recursive work method in which cultural work can reconfigure pedagogical methods and organizational processes. It also suggests that teaching the intersecting histories of Third World women’s revolutionary traditions via cultural work was seen as a central way to push the organization to grow and develop in productive ways.

Cultural work, then, is also recursive; it involves not only collaborative writing and production, but also the process of materially shaping culture so that it directly engages audience and Alliance members’ lives and histories, and shapes the work of the Alliance itself. This blurs performer/audience binaries; as the Cultural Committee notes, methods of producing culture should not only follow the principles of democratic centralism that structured the TWWA, but also dialectically engage the audience, “taking ideas and situations from real life, concentrating them and presenting them back to the audience. The audience, through reactions and comments give further input.”¹⁸² This method would allow them to abide by a tenet of cultural work

¹⁸² “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 5.

espoused by all three organizations they interviewed--“From the masses to the masses”—and also build an organizational culture of interpersonal reliance, “the spirit of democracy and collectivity,” and confidence in democratically centralized structure, which the Cultural Committee described as “disciplined leadership.”¹⁸³ As we will see in Chapter 4, meeting minutes indicate that working on cultural performances such as International Women’s Day was where organization was most able to refine its coordinated democratically centralized work. Furthermore, the group’s focus on the labor of cultural production mirrors its performances of U.S. history, which focused on the central role of the labor of Third World people in building the wealth of U.S. empire. This suggests that the group’s theory of culture embodied the political goals of Third Worldism, with a deep class-consciousness leading to mass participation in liberation struggle, rather than a reinscribed performer/audience binary where the majority of people did not see themselves as political/historical actors.

The Cultural Committee also indicated that education was a crucial component of cultural work, defining it as a combination of “book study” and “life study” or social investigation. They noted that cultural forms flow from the foundation in politics and education: “the emphasis is on political content and education first, from which come entertainment and form.”¹⁸⁴ Out of its study of cultural work, the Committee crystallized several guiding questions that demonstrate the imbrication of culture and education: “What study would improve our grasp of the political point of view of the TWWA? How shall we conduct social investigation? These questions are key for successful cultural work and work in general.”¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 5.

¹⁸⁴ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 5.

¹⁸⁵ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 5.

Altogether, the TWWA Cultural Committee offers a grassroots, movement-based understanding of the rhetorical affordances of cultural work across form for connecting intersecting histories and experiences and moving audiences to action. The report concludes with a statement on the “importance of defining and understanding the audience,” connecting audience analysis to the explicit purposes of cultural work towards political organizing, and situating “unity” as the goal of cultural performances:

Cultural and political work are successful only by accurately defining the audience and defining the level of unity the organization has with them. **The point of cultural work is to raise the level of unity with the audience so the audience and performers are more unified and able to work together. . . . we must define our audience more clearly and assess our level of unity with them.** Then, our task is to use the theme and goal of the year plan to raise the level of unity through IWD and the Cultural Evening and all other work we do. (emphasis added)¹⁸⁶

For the remainder of this chapter, I want to turn the focus to the process by which the TWWA arrived at this theory. What methods supported the development of the group’s theory of culture? What do those methods tell us about rhetoric, writing, and theory in the TWWA’s work specifically, and the U.S. Third World Left more broadly?

As both Beal and Burnham noted in their oral histories, invocations of intersectionality often do not account for the community-organizing histories that underlie them. This has influenced my methodological approach to learning about the TWWA via its archives; a focus on

¹⁸⁶ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 5. This notion of unity has implications for theories of rhetorical identification that are beyond the scope of this chapter, but which I hope to revisit in the future.

archival documents surfaces the methods and labor that made-possible the TWWA’s theory of culture. Meeting minutes indicate that there were several steps involved in developing this theory of culture: 1) forming a Cultural Committee that is consistent with the larger organization’s political principles, vision, and goals; 2) conducting interviews with other Bay-Area arts organizations; 3) summarizing and synthesizing those interviews, drawing out themes and political trends in terms of how each group understood the relationship between art and politics; 4) developing a written report that builds on the summary/synthesis, articulating a theory of culture for the TWWA; and 5) sharing/discussing their analysis to the larger organization via a written report, which TWWA members were asked to read and bring to a general meeting for discussion.¹⁸⁷ The next section of the chapter focuses specifically on the TWWA’s research on other Bay-Area arts organizations, because this offers further insight into the local contours of the U.S. Third World scene that formed both the backdrop and site of struggle for the Bay Area chapter’s work, and the development of its theory of culture.

Intersecting Geopolitical Histories

In its discussions with other Bay Area arts organizations, the Cultural Committee distilled three main points that were deemed relevant to its own cultural theorizing: “1. the relationship between politics and culture in general, and between political work and cultural work; 2. the work method used to develop cultural presentations; and 3. the major lessons that could be useful to the Alliance experience.”¹⁸⁸ Additionally, Committee notes indicate that its research should be used “a reference point for future Alliance work”—in other words, the insights of other political

¹⁸⁷ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work.”

¹⁸⁸ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 1.

arts organizations were understood as having implications for the organization as a whole, rather than solely the Cultural Committee.¹⁸⁹ Designating a Cultural Committee as a permanent work area, conducting research on other Bay-area cultural organizations, and creating a document on the TWWA's understanding of culture, indicates the way the organization transformed the need to engage audiences and build organizational capacity into three concrete political formations and tools: organizational form, research method, and summarized/synthesized report of findings for internal education, debate, and discussion.

The Committee interviewed three organizations: the San Francisco Mime Troupe, Association of Vietnamese Patriots in the U.S., and KDP (Union of Democratic Filipinos). Each group's theory of culture is influenced by anti-colonial liberation struggles, and each group professed a different theory of culture that was in some way tied to its internationalist analysis located in the U.S. Third World scene. These groups demonstrate the Third World cultural and physical geography the TWWA both constituted and inhabited. Read together, the cultural theories of these three organizations suggest the intersecting, intertextual geopolitics of the TWWA's cultural work, and a geopolitics of the U.S. Third World scene more broadly. Out of these three interviews, the TWWA Cultural Committee distilled lessons for defining, producing, and theorizing culture, and analyzing target audiences.¹⁹⁰ Each of the three groups made use of a range of forms in order to educate and mobilize audiences, but differed in its understanding of the rhetorical work of culture, including exigencies, purposes, methods, and specific analyses of

¹⁸⁹ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 1.

¹⁹⁰ The group's understanding of cultural work—distilled from the synthesized insights of these three arts organizations—is made explicit in the Cultural Committee report. These three organizations were not the only cultural influence on the TWWA; archived documents note that the group's understanding of culture would be derived from "lessons learned from talks with three cultural groups, participation in [International Women's Day], and written material" ("One-Year plan," p. 1).

the U.S. Third World scene. Here, I historicize each organization to trace its political/cultural influences, and in doing so, surface the geopolitics of each organization's theory of culture. This section of the chapter departs from the specific TWWA history, but I include the background information on each group because it offers a detailed window into the cultural work that shaped and was shaped by the U.S. Third World scene broadly, and the TWWA specifically. From this history, we also gain a sense of how each group intersected politically with the TWWA's organizing work, demonstrating the deep interrelation of culture and politics, and the influence of each group's work methods on the TWWA as the TWWA developed its own methods of producing new cultural forms.

The San Francisco Mime Troupe's intellectual, political, and artistic genealogies engage lineages of cultural work from political struggles around the world, from Russia to France to Cuba to Germany. The Troupe began in 1959 in the Bay area, where they performed silent theatre; they then moved on to develop a contemporary adaptation of *commedia dell'arte*, a popular theatre from the Italian Renaissance characterized by "stock characters in grotesque masks who improvise[d] much of their dialogue while playing close to type . . . mak[ing] sport of human foibles and universal complaints while burlesquing the most socially or politically prominent members of a given community" (Doyle). The Troupe's *commedia dell'arte* took the form of outdoor comedy shows "adapted from classic plays and anachronized to satirize evil in the present"; they also performed indoor plays that included live music ("History"). In 1965, one of the group's *commedia dell'arte* performances was publicly censored for "suggestive . . . words and gestures"; when the group began setting up to perform it anyway, they were arrested (Doyle). Troupe founder R.G. Davis later remarked that "[t]he job of the artist in politics is to take leaps the politicians never take"; this event "helped set a wave in motion that would soon hit

the country like a riptide” in which avant-garde theatre converged with New Left political activism (Doyle). Davis adapted *commedia dell’arte* in order to theorize “guerilla theatre” as a practice of public, didactic, satirical performance (Doyle). The group also derived inspiration from Bertolt Brecht, a German poet, playwright, and Marxist theorist of performance.

Troupe founder R.G. Davis had crossed paths with the TWWA’s civil rights movement genealogy in 1965, with a controversial theatre production titled “A Minstrel Show, or Civil Rights in a Cracker Barrel” that the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee sponsored performances of nationwide; this performance was followed up with a 1967 “L’Amant Militaire,” a *commedia* adapted to satirize the Vietnam War that “toured campuses across the Midwest neck-in-neck with recruiters for the Dow Chemical Company, makers of napalm” (“History”). Read together, these two plays invoke First World/Third World interconnectivity, demonstrating a transnational literacy around the consequences of U.S. imperialism, and its normalization on college campuses.¹⁹¹ The group formed a marching band, and music became an integral part of its performances, in the tradition of American musical theatre. The Troupe eventually became multiracial and multigenerational; continued to satirize and critique the U.S. government during the Reagan and Bush administrations; and still works today in San Francisco (“History”).

The Troupe’s theorization of “guerilla theatre” invokes the spirit of Che Guevara’s writings on guerrilla tactics (which drew inspiration from Vietnamese anti-colonial writings). Spanish for ‘little warrior,’ *guerilla*, when applied to theatre, suggests “unannounced, politically or socially motivated performances in public spaces for an unsuspecting audience”--in other

¹⁹¹ See, for example, Giroux’s *The University in Chains* and Chatterjee and Maira’s *The Imperial University*, both of which invoke Eisenhower’s “military-industrial-complex” speech and note that the original draft of the speech called it the “academic-military-industrial-complex.”

words, performance that was not “officially” sanctioned (“History”). The phrase “guerilla theatre” is often attributed to Troupe founder R.G. Davis or Troupe member Peter Berg; in “Guerilla Theatre: 1965,” Davis argues that guerilla theatre is meant as “[e]ffective protest or social confrontation” that “confront[s] hypocrisy in the society” (p. 132). This understanding of theatre can be traced to “the legacies of Russian agit-prop, Antonin Artaud's Theater of Cruelty, and Erwin Piscator and Bertolt Brecht's Epic Theater” and went on to influence U.S. groups including the United Farm Workers' El Teatro Campesino (or “farmworkers' theatre”) (McCoy).

The other two groups that the TWWA interviewed were framed in nation-specific terms (Vietnam and the Philippines), but both professed a broad internationalist politics and worked with people across embodied subjectivities and political identifications. There is very little published information on the Association of Vietnamese Patriots in the U.S., but the available sources indicate that it was part of a global international solidarity effort to end U.S. aggression in Vietnam and support Vietnamese independence and freedom. When the war was over, the Association co-sponsored an event with many organizations, including Vietnam Veterans against the War, that drew several hundred people (VVAW). The group still participates in events commemorating anti-Vietnam-war activism; for example, on March 28, 2015, Nguyen Ba Cheung from the Association of Vietnamese Patriots participated in “People's History of the Vietnam War Teach-In” in Cambridge, MA, highlighting the 50th anniversary of the 1965 anti-war teach-ins (“People's”). Throughout the TWWA archives, we see evidence of solidarity work with Vietnamese anti-colonialism, and references to Vietnam's longstanding struggle against

French colonialism and then U.S. aggression. The Vietnamese anti-colonial struggle played a central role in anti-imperialist political imaginations and analyses in the U.S.¹⁹²

The KDP, framed as a Filipino organization, was also an explicitly internationalist, Third World anti-imperialist group that drew inspiration from Filipino-American socialist politics, social movements in the U.S., and Third World anti-colonial revolutions (especially the Philippines). The group formed in 1973, and its “vast amounts of propaganda” worked to establish it “in the forefront of protests against the Marcos regime and racial injustices”; propaganda and cultural work have been situated as the KDP’s “most tangible and far reaching accomplishment,” with propaganda defined as “anything that informed the community about its issues, history, developments in the Philippines and around the world, and popularized the KDP and its politics” (Toribio pp. 155, 167). The group’s cultural work spanned a wide array of forms, including:

a national newspaper, a theater group, cultural programs, calendars, books, pamphlets, a record album, songbook, slideshows, posters, workshops, speaking tours, an endless number of leaflets . . . newsletters, . . . a ‘revolutionary’ cookbook of Filipino dishes . . . t-shirts commemorating Andres Bonifacio’s birthday, denim aprons with the Katipunan sun logo used for selling the *Ang Katipunan*¹⁹³ newspaper, and even loose fitting red pants worn during performances of revolutionary songs at community events. (Toribio pp. 167-8)

¹⁹² For example, in *The Ideologies of Theory*, Fredric Jameson writes that “the American movement remains organically linked to its Third World ‘occasion’ in the Vietnam War itself” (p. 183).

¹⁹³ The follow-up to *Kalayaan*.

Under the umbrella of “cultural work,”¹⁹⁴ KDP produced an “album of revolutionary songs from the Philippines sung by KDP activists,” a songbook, performances, skits, one-acts, and full length theatre productions “depicting stories of resistance in both the Philippines and the U.S. including stories of elderly in Chinatowns, immigrant nurses, Filipino Muslims, the young wives of Filipino American soldiers post-WWII, sugar workers, and the first wave of Filipino immigrants, backed up by establishing a performing arts group called Sining Bayan that found actors, crew members, and funds from the community” (Toribio p. 169). Put simply, cultural work was at the heart of the group’s political organizing in Filipinx communities in the U.S. The group’s geopolitical ties manifest in its genres, and as we will see shortly, also in its methods.

The TWWA subscribed to KDP’s early publication *Kalayaan*,¹⁹⁵ which linked anti-racist struggle in the U.S. to anti-colonial struggle in the Philippines through a variety of textual forms, including stories about struggles against Marcos in the Philippines, local organizing stories, “artworks, poems, short stories, and even a lexicon of Filipino words” (Toribio p. 161).

Attracting both immigrant Filipinos and Filipino-Americans from various social movements (Civil Rights, anti-war, student-led, Third World, Asian American, New Communist, Philippine communist and national democratic, liberal-progressive Christian churches), the group’s multiple chapters also drew on the political lineage of organized labor struggles on the west coast, such as the Filipino-worker-initiated 1965 grape strike that led to the formation of the United Farm Workers (Toribio pp. 156-57). The TWWA had also been involved with the United Farm Workers, specifically by helping to build Agbayani Village, a retirement community for farm

¹⁹⁴ KDP’s theory of culture distinguished it from other, more politically conservative Filipino social and cultural organizations, and its theorization of culture was thus politically distinct from other Filipino cultural formations in the U.S. (Toribio p. 159).

¹⁹⁵ When the *Kalayaan* collective became the KDP, it adopted a democratically centralized organizational structure and an anti-imperialist analysis of global oppression (Toribio p. 163).

worker organizers. Similar to the TWWA, KDP had a multiracial genealogy. Activists had often been influenced by and/or involved in Black and Latinx organizations including the Black Panther Party and MEChA; many members had been in multiracial social circles in poor/working class areas and gravitated towards Third World anti-imperialist struggles, such as campaigns for Asian American studies courses or for the needs of the elderly in the Chinatowns of west coast cities (Toribio pp. 159-60). In addition to its Filipinx and Filipinx-American members, “[a] number of white, Japanese, Chinese, and Pacific Islander activists joined the organization” (Toribio p. 166). Drawing inspiration from the Filipino communist movement’s politics and organization, KDP developed a two-pronged political program that was “national democratic (Philippine focused) and socialist (U.S. focused)” — a political stance that blended the U.S. Civil Rights Movement’s anti-racism with the Filipino national liberation struggle (Toribio pp. 158-9). This echoes the TWWA’s synthesis of self-identified Third World women’s internationalist organizing with the civil rights movement in the U.S.

As Lee traces in her history of the TWWA, the members had been influenced by work in many different organizations before joining. Because groups like TWWA and KDP were cross-pollinated with other revolutionary groups, their theories of culture informed each other. Each group’s theory of culture is deeply rooted in U.S. geopolitics as well as multiple internationalist influences. This suggests that their theories of culture should be understood as geopolitically intertextual, and echoes the TWWA’s previously-cited documents that describe the utility of cultural work utilizing multiple forms for pulling together the “diverse threads” that characterize the experience and knowledge of U.S. Third World audiences.

The Purpose of Culture & Methods of Producing It

Each of the three groups interviewed by the TWWA Cultural Committee forwarded an understanding of culture and its implications in a U.S. context, and a desired result from its performances--namely, to persuade people to get involved in broad-based alliance-building to redress social injustices and fight for deep transnational structural change. By focusing on how each group interpreted the purpose of culture, we get a sense of how each group aimed to work from within "the belly of the monster," and how they put into practice the intersecting geopolitical influences on their theories of culture. We also get a sense of how the TWWA's understanding of culture was theorized in relation to the work of other Leftist groups in the Bay area.

The Mime Troupe defined U.S. culture as fostering "individualism, powerlessness, and cynicism"; as a result, they saw the need for cultural presentations that projected "positive images of ourselves" and the sense that people "have the genius, talent, and experience to run their lives."¹⁹⁶ This doesn't mean that their characters were entirely likeable; on the contrary, the characters' purpose was to "crystallize the main social problems that people face in everyday life" and enable people to see themselves, "even though at times they may be full of shit."¹⁹⁷ The Troupe members interviewed by the TWWA attributed this focus to a shift in the group's stated purpose for performance; it had begun as a way of depicting "the contradiction between the people and the pigs," but became a way of getting at the contradictions between people (p. 2). Through this, they aimed to both affirm people's sense of what is right and their capacity to enact change, and also to invoke a sense of anger at injustices in order to move audiences to action.¹⁹⁸ Thus, their theory of performance mobilized both an affective and logoi-based understanding of

¹⁹⁶ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 2.

¹⁹⁷ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 2.

¹⁹⁸ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 2.

culture, and aimed to create characters with whom audiences could identify--for better or worse--and transform themselves and society as a result.

The Mime Troupe's understanding of the purpose of performance revealed a tension. One on hand, it was explicitly insurgent and demonstrated long-range-vision: "You are trying to convey the belief that if one spent their whole life fighting, it would be worthwhile. We need to develop a long term perspective, a persistency."¹⁹⁹ This is reminiscent of the TWWA's theory of political education, which they saw as a space in which people could develop as political activists "[w]ith the energy, insight, and initiative to commit themselves to the growth of the TWWA and a lifetime of struggle."²⁰⁰ At the same time, the Mime Troupe did not aim to communicate easy or unilateral solutions for social problems, or expect that a single show would convince an audience. They hoped that their work would impact the audience, and be "absorbed in relation to the other things happening in people's lives"; success was measured by "help[ing] people see something in a new way. . . . a small something that stays with people, that becomes part of the way they think."²⁰¹ However, because the group didn't have "an organizational way to follow up on audience feelings," they felt that they were limited in the degree to which they could assess the impact of their performances.²⁰² In the next chapter, we will see that the TWWA's post-cultural-event critical evaluations--along with audience-follow up and letter-writing--directly addresses this concern.

The Association of Vietnamese Patriots, on the other hand, was shaped by both the U.S. and Vietnamese political contexts, and situated their cultural work as flowing from this

¹⁹⁹ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 2.

²⁰⁰ See TWWA Internal Education rationale, p. 2.

²⁰¹ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 2.

²⁰² "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 2.

transnational geopolitical orientation. Because Vietnam had waged a longstanding struggle against foreign domination, this theme was central to the group's cultural work, but the focus was expected to shift in accordance with the post-Vietnam war political context.²⁰³ Association members noted the bifurcation of art and culture that had taken hold under the Saigon regime in Vietnam, in which "people had defined politics narrowly, associating it with cheating, corruption, and under-the-table dealing," while defining art as "a thing in itself, 'art for art's sake'"; post-war, however, politics was understood to involve "all aspects of human life, of the struggle for human dignity," with art "serv[ing] the people and be[ing] used to advance the people's struggles."²⁰⁴ This analysis of the Vietnamese political context did not translate easily to a U.S. context, which the Association attributed to the different stages of political development in Vietnam and the U.S.:

Culture should both come from and be aimed at the people. . . . The Association felt that because people in the U.S. haven't figured out how to proceed politically, cultural work is also at a difficult stage. Within the U.S. progressive movement people are still debating such questions as national vs. racial oppression, who is the working class, who are the different sectors which make up the people and who are the hero[e]s of this country. In Vietnam many critical problems have been resolved owing to dynamic political leadership and a powerful mass movement.²⁰⁵

The Association thus offered a geopolitically-specific understanding of culture—one that responded to both the national scenes in Vietnam and the U.S. The TWWA Cultural Committee members noted that the Association shares the Alliance's analysis of women's integral role in

²⁰³ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 1.

²⁰⁴ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 1.

²⁰⁵ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 2.

liberation struggles²⁰⁶—this is the first reference to gender in the Cultural Committee report, and an indication that a central challenge for the TWWA would be emphasizing women’s activism in their cultural work.

Like the Association, KDP “defined culture broadly as a manifestation of the economy, of the way society was organized, of politics”; like the Mime Troupe, they explicitly distinguished their proletarian cultural work from the U.S.’s capitalist culture.²⁰⁷ However, they were the only group out of the three that conceived of culture as both an organizing tool and method of organization-building (p. 2). Out of the three, they were explicitly attuned to audience, noting that before doing a cultural presentation, they gauged the audience’s political level, and then adapted the presentation in order to “agitate the audience in a positive way and inspire them to action.”²⁰⁸ The content of the presentations was often tied to problems in the Filipino community; KDP aimed to present solutions and “express progressive ideas through cultural work so as to unite the people.”²⁰⁹ This purposeful understanding of culture foregrounds the constitutive possibilities of cultural work, and a sense of its potential to facilitate affective, embodied identifications rooted in anti-oppressive political principles.

The three organizations also expressed different work methods for producing cultural work—methods which draw attention to the messy, collaborative labor of writing and producing cultural performances, the role of political education in this process, and the capacity for the cultural work to directly shift political education methods. For example, the Mime Troupe had

²⁰⁶ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 2.

²⁰⁷ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 1.

²⁰⁸ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 2.

²⁰⁹ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 2. Here, I am following the CRTL’s methodological ethic of working with the framework put forth by the history I am trying to learn and document.

recently produced the play “False Promises”²¹⁰ and had tried to develop it by engaging the membership in study and collaborative script-writing; however, “everyone got so involved in their own reading material, they couldn’t communicate it or hear what others had to say. So they ended up having to read one thing in common and having huge, frequent discussions before the play began to take shape and could be scripted by 2 or 3 people.”²¹¹ While the actors had originally wanted to do something around the 1976 Bicentennial,²¹² racism emerged as the major focus out of discussions about Troupe members’ ethnic backgrounds; this “created the need to study people’s concepts of race” and led to Troupe members **discussing their histories with family** (p. 3). Out of this process, the group developed a common vocabulary around racism.²¹³ The Troupe members indicated that this process led the whole group to read media more critically, see the theatrical potential in everyday life, and discuss potential play ideas with “primary source” people who were part of historical struggles.²¹⁴ Finally, they emphasized the value of multiple modes in performance, particularly music, which “can be used to blow the top off a moment” and “get across more than might come out through straight dialogue.”²¹⁵ This reflection on the production of “False Promises” suggests the emergent literacies in cultural work—written, embodied, transnational, and multimodal—as well as the capacity of cultural

²¹⁰ The San Francisco Mime Troupe offers the following description of this play: “Set in a Colorado mining town in 1898 where Mexican and American workers are organizing a copper mine, this simple story evolves into an epic that links the stories of Mexican and white miners, black and white dance hall queens, and a black soldier to the global machinations of Teddy Roosevelt and J.P. Morgan. The play also ties in U.S. expansion into Puerto Rico, the Philippines and Hawaii with the development of the American West” (“1976”).

²¹¹ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 3.

²¹² The TWWA was also involved in coalition work towards planning the Bicentennial, and there was a massive demonstration in Philadelphia that year.

²¹³ This echoes the TWWA’s theory of internal education, which emphasized the need to generate shared understandings rather than assume them.

²¹⁴ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 3.

²¹⁵ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 3.

work to deepen organization's political analyses and methods, and individual members' understandings of their own embodied geopolitical locations. Additionally, it points to the intertextual generativity made possible by engaging in multimodal cultural work (e.g., music + dialogue, the sum of which is understood to be greater than its component parts).

The collaborative labor of movement-based cultural work also emerged in the Association's discussion of its writing process for performances, which involved small-group scriptwriting and large-group discussion, editing, and practice. This collaborative engagement with the draft script was cited as "amazing" by Association members because of the process by which members inserted new ideas into the presentation as they practiced the drafted parts.²¹⁶ While the Mime Troupe indicated that its purpose was to inspire both affirmation and anger in audiences through performing interpersonal contradictions, the Association aimed to invoke the patriotism of Vietnamese-Americans through a mix of forms (such as poetry, slides, and songs), with music drawing inspiration from popular Vietnamese genres such as departure/love songs.²¹⁷ However, the Association also tried to push patriotism/nostalgia forward by both entertaining and educating the audience on contemporary political developments through what they called "a new kind of humor, in new principles."²¹⁸ This indicates that cultural work can serve not only as a reflection of an organization's principles and existing political realities, but can also serve as a space for developing politics expressed through recontextualized genres.

Out of the three groups interviewed, KDP had the most clearly delineated work method. They noted that they shifted rhetorical strategies for performance based on the different local

²¹⁶ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 2.

²¹⁷ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 3. This gets at the differences between genre and modality, and how they were theorized differently in these archival materials. See, for example, "Genre."

²¹⁸ "Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work," p. 2.

contexts in which they might perform; for example, the organization noted that it makes a difference whether they are producing a presentation themselves, or engaging in coalition work, and that they presented at Filipino conventions in different communities in which they develop cultural presentations “around relevant happenings in the particular community that people are concerned about.”²¹⁹ This context-specific process draws attention to the multiplicity of experiences of U.S. Third Worldism in different U.S. localities, which were also evident in the TWWA chapters; the New York City chapter was composed of mostly Black and Latinx women, while the West Coast chapter comprised Black, Asian, and Chicanx women, and did coalition work with indigenous women’s groups. These differences are attributable to different patterns of colonization and migration within the U.S., and point to the constraints at play in efforts to foster identification with Third Worldism in different U.S. localities.

In productions like “*Isuda Ti Imuna*,”²²⁰ the group noted that research played an important role in their process,²²¹ presumably to learn the history of the Filipino Left in the U.S. Study was integrated into the group’s work method for producing a cultural presentation, which included establishing a topic; studying/investigating the topic, its root causes, and struggles against it;²²² outlining scenario and characters; assigning people to produce rough drafts; sharing rough drafts with the broader group; and going through several rounds of editing.²²³ KDP members referred to the collectively-created script as “writing assignments,” indicating the

²¹⁹ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 3.

²²⁰ *Isuda Ti Imuna* translates as “those who were first” and was written in 1973; it is “loosely based on Filipina/o American Popular Front-era writer and activist Carlos Bulosan’s text, *America is the Heart* (1946)” and documents “harsh experiences faced by Filipino laborers along the West Coast” (Gonzalves p. 343).

²²¹ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” pp. 3-4.

²²² For example, at the time of the interview they had recently “investigated community housing struggles in Seattle and [done] a play with that subject for the Far West Convention there.”

²²³ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 3.

pedagogical tenor of cultural work method in the organization (and clear resonance/relevance for R/C). The members noted that throughout this process, they found it important to summarize their work-in-progress, foreground their political goals, and engage in critical reflection (in the form of criticism/self-criticism),²²⁴ with the goal of characterizing whether problems that emerged were “political, organizational, or ideological.”²²⁵ The KDP identified a weakness in their method as being that they studied more practical than theoretical documents, and aimed to rectify that to strengthen their long-term work.²²⁶ This points to the theoretical rigor of the group’s cultural work, and its *praxis*-oriented commitment to ongoing critical reflection--one that echoes the TWWA’s.

Altogether, these three organization’s theories and methods for producing cultural work synthesize the importance of each group’s political theories and principles; collaborative writing and editing processes; recursive and location-specific political education; the multiple modes and literate abilities that are fostered and circulated in cultural work; an internationalist understanding of culture in a U.S. scene of writing; and a desire to inspire reflection and growth in audiences, mobilize affect, and move them to action. While many activist groups engage in cultural work, what distinguishes these three groups is their grounding in Third World internationalist political principles. The three groups conceive of a purposeful culture that directly wrangles with the hegemonic culture and geopolitics of the U.S., while also drawing out

²²⁴ Criticism/self-criticism, which the TWWA also engaged in, was influenced by Maoist thought.

²²⁵ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” pp. 3-4. For national-level presentations, this process would be followed in the national organization, then handed off to regional chapters, which would study the event, materials, and delegate set-building, singing, acting, slideshow-making, and other relevant tasks (p. 3; this is characteristic of a democratically centralized organizational structure).

²²⁶ “Summary of Meeting with Other Groups to Talk about Cultural Work,” p. 4.

linked lineages of liberation struggle both within and outside the U.S. Furthermore, the interviews indicate that cultural work can recursively shape organizational methods. By looking at how these theories were synthesized/adapted by the TWWA, we get a sense of the particular geopolitical contours of Third Worldism in the U.S., the TWWA's explicit anti-sexist, anti-racist, anti-imperialist, focus, and how these two things manifested in the group's theory of cultural work. This theory, in turn, as we see in the next chapter, allowed the group to initiate community organizing that flowed from the intersecting histories and geopolitical analyses that comprised the TWWA.

Conclusion and Implications

The TWWA Cultural Committee's work, along with the cultural theories of the three organizations that it interviewed, demonstrate the deep interrelation of history, geopolitics, and form in "U.S. Third World" cultural production. The TWWA Cultural Committee's work demonstrates the affordances of multiple forms for teaching "U.S. Third World" histories; the intersecting cultural histories and geopolitics that comprise the "U.S. Third World" scene; and the deep exigencies that led the group to work across form. The three organizations interviewed by the TWWA, and the TWWA's theory of culture, showcase a multiplicity of forms, emphasize history and education, and demonstrate global geopolitical influences, linked through principles of Third World anti-imperialism. Additionally, we see the deep interrelation of form and organizing, as organizers were trained in how to create a variety of texts and produce cultural events.²²⁷ When we surface the labor of producing cultural theory, then, we see the intersectional

²²⁷ This resonates with scholarship positioning alliance building as multimodal labor (Licona; Licona and Chávez; Mecenas).

connections across multiple arts groups and "U.S. Third World" histories, as well as the deep interrelation of embodied experience, local struggles through a geopolitical rhetoric blurring scales that are often treated as discrete.²²⁸ This interrelation of embodied, local, and transnational scales is mirrored in the TWWA's Cultural Committee, which was grounded in the relationship between committees within the organization, between the TWWA and other organizations doing cultural work in the Bay area, and in the dialogic character of U.S. Third World cultural theories.

We must understand the TWWA's use of multiple forms in terms of their connectivity and intertextual generativity,²²⁹ and in relation to the TWWA's political principles, organizational structure, political objectives, and the multiple geopolitical scales that the TWWA's work engaged.²³⁰ At the same time, the group's cultural work emerged out of its community-organizing exigencies, so it was geared towards engaging audiences in organization-building and the development of economic and political literacies. Altogether, the TWWA Cultural Committee's research draws attention to the interrelation of culture and geopolitics in self-identified Third World women's organizing work in the U.S. The next chapter looks at how the TWWA actualized and evaluated this understanding of cultural work through events that integrated display, music, theatre, food, speeches, and multiple skills/roles that allowed TWWA members to participate in the creation of culture. Through engagement with archival materials

²²⁸ This resonates with indigenous studies frameworks that situate land, bodies, and knowledge as always-already in relation to one another, and R/C theories that surface the interrelation among various elements of the scene of rhetoric (Fleckenstein). What R/C has referred to as "the transnational" is a lived, embodied phenomenon for many people--a central, constitutive part of people's rhetorical situations that is experienced locally.

²²⁹ See, for example, the NCTE's "Position Statement on Multimodal Literacies," which emphasizes the "interplay of meaning-making systems (alphabetic, oral, visual, etc.)."

²³⁰ This does not suggest a uni-directional flow from culture to politics or politics to culture, as we see in the archival texts I draw from in this chapter, and it is not a purely instrumental understanding of rhetoric as enacting particular, foreseen goals. Thus, it challenges some of the critiques of rhetoric by performance studies scholars.

documenting the process of planning, producing, and evaluating cultural performances, we get a sense of the process of transforming cultural theory into practice. This is a messy process to be sure, but it is one that demonstrates processes of teaching history, using multiple forms, in response to deeply embodied exigencies.

CHAPTER 4

“Freedom We Know is Possible”:²³¹ The TWWA’s Cultural Events

Culture is simultaneously the fruit of a people’s history and a determinant of history.
--Amilcar Cabral (quoted on a TWWA event program)²³²

This chapter looks at how the TWWA’s theory of culture was put into practice through events commemorating International Women’s Day (IWD). Drawing on interviews, archived event programs, scripts, songs, and committee evaluations, this chapter focuses on the TWWA’s use of multiple modes and genres in spaces of cultural performance. These events used display,²³³ music, theatre, food, childcare, and speeches to communicate the TWWA’s principles and educate audiences about intersecting U.S. Third World histories. I argue that multimodal/multigenre performances have particular affordances for linking multiple histories and geopolitical locations into a “U.S. Third World” political identification.

I begin with an epigraph by Amilcar Cabral, leader of anti-colonial movements in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, because he identifies how the erasure of indigenous cultures²³⁴ forms a centerpiece of colonial domination, land/resource theft, and forced assimilation. This quote, originally appearing in a speech given at Syracuse University in 1970 titled “National Liberation and Culture,” continues as follows: “as long as a section of the populace is able to

²³¹ “Dolores’ Report for Gen. Meeting”

²³² See Box 2, Folder 23 of TWWA archives.

²³³ While there are not archived images of the displays, “List for Display” includes the following: “guard photo of lynching, cover of pamphlet, black women in factories, woman doing piece work, Rosa Parks getting fingerprinted, black sister raising fist, military period, working in Levi Strauss, black women w/sign end poverty, for our lives, for our children.”

²³⁴ This points to a tension in invocations of Third World anti-colonialisms on U.S. settler colonial soil (see, for example, Tuck and Yang).

have a cultural life, foreign domination cannot be sure of its perpetuation” (p. 12).²³⁵ This quote thus situates culture as geopolitical, material, and constitutive; the “fruit of a people’s history and a determinant of history,” it constitutes “a people” along an axis of shared history and common future. Culture, in this framework, is central to the continuation of liberation struggles, rooted in a deep sense of history. The second epigraph draws attention to the way history shapes individual lived experiences, traversing/un-doing both linear time and spatial geography. This quote also reconstitutes individuals’ material histories as positive (through invoking “strength” and “courage”), and collective (through invoking “our people”). Thus, individual histories are reconstituted as potential Third World histories.

As the previous chapter notes, IWD was identified by the group as a site in which it could enact its principles of culture, and highlight the centrality of women to Third World liberation struggles. In *Critical Transnational Feminist Praxis*, Swarr and Nagar write that there is a “tension between embodied practice in community arts and a pervasive use of disembodied technologies to document and discuss this practice” (p. 17). Indeed, it is difficult to capture cultural performance given the “methodological predicament” of representing embodiment in the two-dimensional space of a computer screen (Perry and Medina p. 64). I am grateful that Sharon Davenport agreed to an interview for this project; she offered reflections on the TWWA’s cultural work based on her own experience attending the group’s IWD celebrations in the Bay Area during the 1970s.²³⁶ That being said, the purpose of this chapter is not to deliver a play-by-

²³⁵ See also Grande’s *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought* and Morales’ “The Historian as Curandera” for examples of how history and culture are deeply material and how the suppression of indigenous education is about resource extraction.

²³⁶ As Davenport put it in our interview, “I went to them, I was in Berkeley and Oakland in those days, and that was sort of a thing, go to the IWD, which was organized by the TWWA, and get to know everybody there, get to know people there. . . . I wasn’t part of the TWWA, but I definitely benefitted from the work that they did.”

play account of what transpired at the TWWA's cultural event. Instead, I draw on archived documents in to reconstruct the TWWA's principles and purposes for cultural work; the role of history in this work; and the utility of multiple forms for achieving the group's purposes and goals. As a result, this chapter focuses on the behind-the-scenes, organizational labor scaffolding cultural events; this focus is grounded in Leon, Monberg, and Wanzer Serrano's studies of movement rhetoric, which emphasizes behind-the-scenes organizational and multimodal work, and Licona and Chávez's theorization of the role of multimodal labor in comprising relational literacies. I register an ongoing tension around the use of the terms "mode" and "genre" because they are not used by the TWWA. However, "multimodality" can be understood as referring to the TWWA's use of multiple, intersecting "forms" to synthesize multiple, intersecting histories.

Through engagement with archival materials documenting the process of planning, producing, and evaluating IWD cultural events (which included a fundraising event for IWD titled "An Evening of Third World Culture"), we get a sense of the messy labor of transforming cultural theory into practice. Drawing from archived meeting minutes, programs, transcripts, theatre scripts, songs, poetry, instructions, report-backs, and evaluations, this chapter demonstrates that the TWWA's cultural performances mobilize histories across mode and genre to synthesize embodied experience, local struggles, and internationalist anti-imperialism. As the chapter title indicates, this synthesis took place in an affirming, celebratory environment that was meant remind participants and audiences alike that freedom is possible, and situate them as historical actors in the struggle for freedom.

Engaging Third World Histories through IWD

IWD has long been subject to a struggle over history/genealogy/origin. LeSavoy and Jordan historicize IWD to 1911 with German socialist Clara Zetkin, who “fused tenets of socialism with feminism,” emphasizing labor and suffrage; the authors trace how IWD was first rejected and then taken up by the Bolsheviks in post-1917 Russia (p. 245). However, it became a mainstreamed event that often elided the day’s roots in internationalist labor organizing. This tension has played out recently; in 2017, women in over 50 countries planned an International Women’s Strike for IWD, citing “renewed radicalism, solidarity and internationalism”; in an extensive platform, the coalition calls for an end to gender violence, and calls for reproductive justice, labor rights, full social provisioning, anti-racist and anti-imperialist feminism, and environmental justice (“Our Platform”). This platform faced criticism/backlash because of its stance in solidarity with Palestinian liberation as part of its larger call for anti-racism and anti-imperialism. This contemporary debate is instructive as it gets at ongoing tensions around what is part of “feminist politics,” and whether they can be circumscribed as outside the realm of particular geopolitical struggles.

One of the TWWA’s IWD flyers emphasizes women’s labor as a central tenet of IWD, and focuses on the labor of self-identified Third World people on U.S. soil:

International Women’s Day has been recognized for the past sixty-three years and commemorates the 1909 New York Shirtwaist strike organized by women garment workers demanding a ten-hour work day and better working conditions for all. We feel International Women’s Day has special significance for Third World women, who are largely either workers or members of working class families—and for working women as a whole. Our work and our event has been geared toward rediscovering the history of Third World women and their very real contributions to the building of American society.

We are also centering on their struggles and victories as working people both past and present.²³⁷

The Bay Area IWD celebrations were organized through the Third World Women's Campaign to Celebrate International Women's Day (TWWCCIWD), which the TWWA played a central role in:

The Third World Women's Committee to Celebrate International Women's Day is a group of Asian, Black, Latin and Native American Women from throughout the Bay Area. International Women's Day . . . The work of our Committee is guided by three principles. Active solidarity with working people around the world who are striving for social change. Acknowledgment of the contributions of women as an integral part of the whole movement for a better way of life, dignity and justice. Recognition of the leading role that women have played in the fight for human rights.²³⁸

Women including Angela Davis, Dolores Huerta, Fannie Lou Hamer, and members of the Black Panther Party were reached out to about IWD; a note says that Fran Beal attended the California event.²³⁹ In planning for 1974 IWD, a letter details the goals of the event:

Our goals in organizing this event are to bring forth the international and political significance of International Women's Day as well as to help develop leadership amongst third world sisters in the United States. We see this project as an effort to educate ourselves in the preparation of displays, booths, etc. as well as to provide a learning experience for all those brothers and sisters who attend. We feel that the spreading of

²³⁷ "IWD Flyer."

²³⁸ "Letter from Vicki Alexander."

²³⁹ "List of People, IWD."; "Coordinating Committee List."

information to a broad sector of the population of the United States in an honest, non-rhetorical and non-feminist way is essential to the organizing for change in this society.²⁴⁰

The references to "non-rhetorical, non-feminist" education here refers to the TWWA's ongoing critique of solidarity at the level of discourse without material aid, and a white middle-class feminist movement that elides the experiences, analyses, and needs of women of color. In their 1976 program for the IWD celebration, the Third World Women's Committee to Celebrate International Women's Day situates the historical importance of this day, and the intervention in history that the event seeks to make:

Dear Sister/Brother,

International Women's Day, **March 8 is a holiday celebrated by peoples around the globe. Its birthplace are the streets of New York's Lower East Side where women textile workers marched, demanding better working conditions and an end to child labor over a hundred years ago.** This day assumed global dimensions in 1910 when it was first proclaimed as International Women's Day. Since its inception International Women's Day has meant action, an occasion utilized by working women to sum up our experiences as to more effectively forge our vision of the future. Like the history of IWD, the history of America's women of color has been active, momentous, and gigantic in proportion. **Because our collective labor has been decisive in the creation of America's wealth and in the continued survival and development of our families and peoples,** we believe that IWD is a day to be celebrated not only by women, but by all of our people.²⁴¹ (emphasis added)

²⁴⁰ Alexander "Letter to Han Suyin."

²⁴¹ "IWD Event Program," 1976.

The 1976 event included a program that overviewed the history of IWD, the history of the TWWA, skit, poetry, joint singing, and “good 3rd world food and conversation,” with childcare provided and lyrics to poem (Langston Hughes’ “Mother to Son”) and “Songs of Going Afar” appearing in the program to encourage participation.²⁴²

History was also performed through theatre skits that captured the different experiences of women of color in the U.S. In our interview, Miriam Ching Yoon Louie reflected on how the skits helped to teach history and make it real for audience members:

The histories of people of color that were not well known are better understood by pockets of people now. Those basics were reflected in the Triple Jeopardy analysis. They were reflected in skits produced by the Cultural Committee, that took a slice of somebody's history or a day in the life of a woman coming home from work and issues she faced. Learning hidden histories was core to the group, as was exploration of the commonalities shared between different racial and ethnic groups.

For her, stories are the best way to teach history:

In learning through history as you mentioned I think choosing a good story is important. I say this from the perspective of a writer of fiction and poetry and curriculum developer. If you choose the right metaphor, the right story, it will provide the platform from which people can access their own stories. History is often processed more effectively when conveyed through popular education methods.²⁴³

In order to crystallize histories via story, skits highlighted specific characters that illuminated shifting labor and economic trends in the U.S. For example, during one skit, three women stood

²⁴² “IWD Event Program,” 1976.

²⁴³ Personal interview.

on stage together Each woman read a script in turn, drawing on Black, Chicana, and Indigenous U.S. histories. Through juxtaposing these histories, we see the overlapping influence of enslavement, war, and genocide on gendered racialization in the U.S., and hear echoed the importance of history in remembering these processes, and highlighting the everyday women who are not remembered or celebrated. For example, a Black woman reads a narrative that spans slavery through the Moynihan Report:

I was brought here to work the tobacco fields of Virginia, and I been here working ever since. You say you've heard my history a thousand time. Well it may take telling a thousand times more before it all gets told – and told right. I know you read about those two beautiful, bold black sisters Sojourner and Harriet. But what do you know about my old aunt Sarah who plotted and planned our escape while the white folks call us docile. Or sister Jane who never heard of a weaker sex. She plowed as many miles of hard, rocky earth as her sharecropper husband and kept the children fed as well. . . . Cousin Esther taught herself to read so she could help her children get through school. She raised a family of nine strong kids. And when her husband left, Mr. Moynihan called her a matriarch. Blamed her for the problems in the black community. I cried when by baby Ida came home from school. Grown folks had spat on her, thrown rocks at her. I didn't want her to go back. But I knew we'd both be stronger if she did. No—you haven't heard it all. There's a lot those history books don't tell. Listen to the voices of my sisters. (p. 1)²⁴⁴

This piece demonstrates how histories of gendered racialization play out in the TWWA's context, highlighting the everyday experiences of people who are not written into the historical

²⁴⁴ “Scene I.”

record. The organizers still upheld known figures, such as Sojourner Truth, who appeared on the 1976 IWD program brochure; however, these figures were in conversation with histories of lesser-known women who also lived through these histories. This program cover for the 1976 IWD event juxtaposes Sojourner Truth with images of people holding a protest sign reading “Stop Killing our Asian People,” a fallen woman with “1890” emblazoned on her clothing (the year of the Wounded Knee massacre), an image of a small child reading, and an image of an anti-war protest. Historical figures and contemporary struggles, in this program, are visualized side by side.

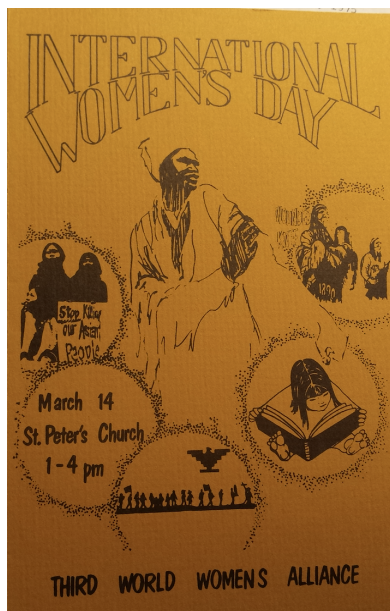


Figure 4: 1976 IWD program cover.²⁴⁵

The monologue that followed the Black woman’s offered similar historical context regarding Chicana women, linking labor, racism, colonization, and imperial wars:

²⁴⁵ “International Women’s Day program,” 1976.

Yo soy Raza, Chicana, Latina. We have a proud history, a struggling present and a developing future. Our labor has been exploited to make this country rich. Your streets of Califas speak of our history in Mexico, those states and peoples so viciously robbed in the name of progress. You told me in the name of Guadalupe you would help restore our culture, our language. But your racism was created to support—"You stupid Mexican—get back to work!" The sun has no mercy on the field workers. Neither do the genocidal working conditions. Schools in New Mexico did you say? Doctors in migrant camps did you say? My sister will no longer let you exploit her Willie Farah! Basta Ya! Mi padre esta muerto. He died of black lung disease in Bisbee, Arizona. But my uncle's union won in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Consuela and Margaret organized the East L.A. moratorium. We don't want any foreign medals for Vietnam. You continue to build your road of imperialism against my sisters in Mexico, Central and South America and against their Families. But you will never be able to wipe away our strength.²⁴⁶ (p. 2)

The final narrative offers the perspective of an indigenous woman, speaking in a composite voice representing multiple tribes, linking colonization, westward expansion, and broken treaties in North America to U.S. imperialism abroad:

My name is Morning Flower. My bloods are of many great people – Sioux, Cherokee, Navahoe, Apache. From Oklahoma to Arizona I have left historic imprints on these lands. In 1890 I was (Cheyenne/Sioux) massacred at Wounded Knee, South Dakota. I was raped and skinned like an animal to make Nebraska "safe" for the railroads. Custer stomped my children for gold and his 7th cavalry was honored with 40 medals. Reimbursements! Broken treaties! Educational assistance! Broken treaties! Control over tribal affairs!

²⁴⁶ "Scene I."

Broken treaties! Washington, D.C., you have tried to wipe away these memories, so you send me to your schools and create television Indians. We will not melt in your pot America, nor decorate your houses with our beads and our culture. My address is at Pine Ridge on Ho Chi Minh Trail. (p. 3)²⁴⁷

This narrative weaves together historical and geopolitical analysis, demonstrating how reclaiming erased memories and stolen culture enables a sense of connection between indigenous struggles and solidarity with the people of Vietnam. Following these scenes, a more dialogic scene was performed, depicting a workplace conversation between phone operators, discussing workplace stress and struggles (such as a lack of childcare and maternity leave) and reflecting on a workers' strike at Sears: "why is it that whenever we want something that we should be getting anyway, we have to raise all kinds of hell[?]" (pp. 1-2).²⁴⁸ Together, these skits show how the individual voices of women of color were historicized, and then put into conversation in a contemporary American workplace, blurring and linking embodied experience, local organizing, and internationalist anti-imperialism.

Cultural Events as Organization-Building

At the time that the TWWA shifted towards prioritizing cultural work in general and IWD in particular, archived organizational documents indicate that members were engaged in extensive conversations about the role of the coordinating committee, the relationship among committees, processes for effective decision-making, and strategies for unifying the organization's work towards its shared principles and goals. Organizing cultural events emerged

²⁴⁷ "Scene I."

²⁴⁸ "Scene II."

as a strategy to address these concerns. For example, during a discussion/reflection on the organization's political direction, meeting notes indicate that IWD 1974 functioned positively for the group's collective work process by clarifying shared principles and work methods, and giving new members concrete ways of plugging into the organization's work. Meeting minutes indicate that IWD played an important role in determining the organization's political direction; a document "History of the Development to Define the Organization's Political Direction" indicates that between 1973-76, IWD played a central role in implementing the goals of struggling against imperialism and promoting third world unity. This paper also demonstrates the way the group's careful documentation of organizational history, and commitment to members' consciousness about organizational history, parallels its orientation towards broader Third World histories:

[Organizing IWD 1974] taught us how effective a group of Third World women can be when organizing around principles of unity. . . . Through working on IWD the political direction of the TWWA was implied in these principles but not expressed externally as an organizational philosophy. . . . In July, 1975, the organization expanded five-fold, The majority of new sisters had worked with the TWWA on IWD. Our first task was to define the principles of unity for our new expanded organization. The principles were developed from those that had been tested in our work on IWD. This is important because we found through that work that the principles were capable of uniting a very broad base of Third World women. Those principles, with further elaboration and development, became the political foundation of the TWWA as part of a conscious effort to maintain that broad

base. In other words, we sought to create a political perspective that the vast majority of Third World women could relate to.²⁴⁹

This quote indicates that principles allowed for broad participation; in other words, it wasn't enough for the organization to label itself "anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-imperialist," but sought to engage a broad base of self-identified Third World women as organizers.

Archived documents, including progress report guidelines and evaluations (discussed later in this chapter), serve as evidence of the organization-building/rhetorical-skills-building work of planning these events. For example, members were instructed in how to prepare reports for general meetings, introduce reports and facilitate discussion of them, summarize findings for large-group discussion, and solicit feedback from individual committees.²⁵⁰ There was also an extensive organizational procedure for deciding whether to endorse an event or campaign when other groups asked for support.²⁵¹ IWD events took 3-3 ½ months to plan, so this was a long period of work that required organizational commitment (hence all the detailed documents about how individual committees relate to each other and to the steering committee).²⁵²

One of the main events during this long planning process was fundraising for the event. Fundraising events, such as the "Third World Cultural Evening," also met clear organizational objectives, as we see in the following critical reflection:

²⁴⁹ "Towards Defining the Political Direction of the Third World Women's Alliance," pp. 1-2.

²⁵⁰ "Progress Report Guidelines."

²⁵¹ "Recommended Endorsement Process for TWWA." This document includes the cautioning that "to make a decision solely on the basis of written principles without considering what people and how they are working to realize the goals would be idealistic. But it is also necessary to keep in mind if a basic issue should be supported even though we might not be in total agreement with those who are working on it" (p. 2).

²⁵² "Notes – Michelle."

We accomplished several objectives. The cultural event was an enjoyable expression of the vast richness of Third World peoples' cultures. It reflected our lives as working people joined in unity and dignity and struggling to build a collective future. Financially we accomplished our objectives. Further, in the planning and implementation of the program we were able to exemplify our principles which are as follows:

1. Solidarity with working people – Locally, Nationally, and Internationally.
2. Acknowledgment of the Women's Struggle as an Integral Part of the People's Struggle.
3. Recognition of the Leading Role Women have Played in the Movement for Social Change.²⁵³

The planning process for cultural events was understood as an important site of organizational training, skills-building, and leadership development. When the group began organizing the "Third World Cultural Evening" fundraiser for IWD,²⁵⁴ they explicitly noted that the planning process should build organizational capacity in the TWWA by "[c]arry[ing] through the principle

²⁵³ "Letter from Phillis Tonye."

²⁵⁴ The Third World Cultural Evening had the explicit purpose of raising funds for expenses of the Third World Women's Committee to Celebrate International Women's Day, and to publicize for the upcoming IWD celebration (1975) through leaflets/posters ("Third World Women's Committee to Celebrate International Women's Day: Riki"). The cost of attending the cultural evening (\$2.50) included a raffle ticket - the prizes included 25 lbs of rice, children's art, and Third World art ("Raffle Tickets"), including art from the local Chicano community ("Third World Women's Committee to Celebrate International Women's Day: Riki"). Money was also raised through selling donated baked goods, and people were encouraged to participate not only as performers, but also through volunteering backstage, as ushers, selling baked goods, doing childcare, and/or doing cleanup ("Third World Women's Committee to Celebrate International Women's Day: Riki"). The purpose of the Cultural Evening was "to raise funds for the expenses of the Third World Women's Committee"--there had also been a house party—and the Cultural Evening (1975) raised \$1099, with an additional \$40 from the bake sale ("Publicity Meeting at Miriam's"). An evaluation of the cultural evening situated it as a success, with its political impact being that the program "unite[d] several third world cultural groups in a program expressing the richness of the cultural life of third world people" ("Dear _____"). The Third World Cultural Evening was also organized in coalition with National Committee to Overturn the Bakke decision (see Box 5, Folder 20 of TWWA archives).

that Third World women can initiate, plan, and carry through such a program” and developing leadership.²⁵⁵ Given the context of the 1960s/70s and the Moynihan Report, cited by Burnham and Tatnall as one of the instigating factors in the TWWA’s formation, this principle pushed against racist, sexist notions of what women of color were capable of. As Sharon Davenport put it, this was “revolutionary,” considering that families of color were seen in mainstream culture as “not capable of doing this kind of organization and participation.” In a thank-you letter following the 1975 “Third World Cultural Evening,” the labor of creating the event is explicitly recognized: “We wish to thank each and every one: the performers, the lighting technicians, the sound technicians, the backstage crew, the custodians, the ushers, those who worked on the Bake Sale, those in Child Care and all the various task workers.”²⁵⁶ Internal documents, such as sign-up sheets for events, demonstrate the way the organization politicized discrete tasks, and made-available ways to plug into the planning, from cooking to tabling to childcare to organizing historical displays.²⁵⁷

In other words, cultural work is material—it required a permit, budgeting, Xeroxing, obtaining permits from the city— all the mundane work scaffolding the performance itself.²⁵⁸ Work areas for IWD included publicity (outreach, ongoing orientation speakers bureau, endorsements), media (TV, radio, newspapers, publications, posters, leaflets, pamphlets, thank you notes), program planning (speakers, skits, displays), cultural events (musical activities, food, ushers, communications set up, floor managing, child care, stage managing, decorations, committee table set up, clean up), and fundraising (bake sales, parties, raffle tickets, cultural

²⁵⁵ “Draft: Political Purposes and Goals, Third World Cultural Evening.”

²⁵⁶ “Letter from Phillis Tonye.” Archived training materials indicate that the celebrations allowed TWWA members to gain skills in running sound and lights and emceeing, as well.

²⁵⁷ See “Task Sign-Up Sheets” and “Potluck Speech 1975.”

²⁵⁸ See fundraising materials / financial documents in TWWA archives Box 3, Folder 6.

evening, contacting institutions that contributed to the previous year's celebration).²⁵⁹

Endorsements were widespread and included *The Black Scholar*, several Asian organizations, Bay Area Alliance Against Racism and Political Repression (*People's World Newspaper*), Bay Area Radical Teacher's Organizing Collective, individual academics, Coalition of Labor Union Women S.F. Chapter, Concilio Mujeres, Angela Davis, c/o National Alliance Against Racism & Political Repression, and Tricontinental Films Center.²⁶⁰

A flyer for IWD included the quote, "Too long have others spoken for us" (quoted from *Freedom Journal*, the first Black newspaper, 1827), creating a sense of history tied to enslavement, abolition, and "U.S. Third World" intellectual production and political work.²⁶¹

The flyer describes the event and the multiple rhetorical forms used as follows:

Our speakers will include Sister Johnnie Tilman of the National Welfare Rights Organization and Sister My Loc from the Union of Vietnamese, as well as a photo display of the history of Third World women in the U.S., a skit, cultural performances, and foods from various cultures. Childcare will be provided. This event is being planned and prepared by Third World women from throughout the Bay Area. We represent housewives, workers, students and mothers of many ages. This reflects our need to develop Third World women's leadership and to speak from a Third World perspective. However, the event is in no way restricted by sex or race. We hope that all people—especially families and friends will join us in saluting the work of Third World women.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ "Notes – Michelle."

²⁶⁰ "List of IWD Endorsements, 1975."

²⁶¹ "IWD Flyer."

²⁶² "IWD Flyer."

A write-up of IWD appeared in *The Black Panther*, describing the audience's enthusiastic response to the event, its interactive historical education, featured activists such as a striker from Farah, and its participatory practices like singing.²⁶³

As the program got underway, the enthusiastic audience of men, women and children joined a group of international sisters, headed by Sister Joanne Miyamoto in singing 'Songs of Struggle'. The auditorium of the Center echoed with the chorus of one song, 'When in doubt, try to keep a trying', reflecting Third World women's historical struggle to keep their families together and to survive the harsh conditions imposed on them by racism. In another song, Sister Miyamoto received prolonged applause when she sang, 'We don't want a piece of your pie, we want to bake our own'. . . . A series of entertaining skits followed which humorously but truthfully portrayed aspects of Third World women's lives on the job and at home. Following the skits, a delicious array of international food was served. Also, during the intermission, the celebration participants viewed the beautiful displays put together by the Third World Women's Committee. . . . Sister Janice Cobb then gave a poetry reading followed by the keynote address by Sister Tillman. She has been in the welfare rights struggle for several years and her remarks on the history of that struggle were especially enjoyed by the audience. . . . The celebration concluded with 'The Rising of the World's People in Song' by the Third World Women's Committee of Bay Area Progressive Musicians with the audience joining in. The spirit and organizing ability of Third World women in the Bay Area was beautifully demonstrated in this celebration that was tremendously enjoyed by all who attended.

²⁶³ "3rd World Women Tie Rights to Liberation." A photo caption notes: "Toni Vincent + 600 in attendance at Community Learning Center."

Here we get a sense of the affective power of performance, tied in to historical education, and the capacity-building that such events enabled within the organization. As a Cultural Committee evaluation notes: “people told us that they were really impressed with the singing, which was a good way to involve people.”²⁶⁴ This article also demonstrates how such events created spaces for people from different political organizations (e.g., the Black Panthers, Farah strikers, and welfare organizers) to come together and put their experiences and work into concrete conversation in a celebratory environment. A *Guardian* article in 1974 circulated a report of the IWD events to a national audience, writing that “The Third World Women’s Alliance offered a rousing program of fantastic food, hilarious skits and speeches by Doan Thi Nam Huu from the Union of Vietnamese in the U.S.; by Virgie Delgado, a Farah striker, and by Johnnie Tillmon of the National Welfare Rights Organization. The afternoon ended with singing by the audience, a chorus and orchestra.”²⁶⁵

Cultural events had material goals and outcomes, and these events were directed towards an audience that reflected the group’s membership. Performances were focused on growing the organization and building capacity through content that resonated with self-identified Third World people in the U.S. For this reason, it is not surprising that the speeches from these events intentionally blurred performer/audience divisions, situating audiences as historical actors:

Our artists also portray our most loved and honored heroes. Propelled to the forefront of our struggles by our energy, our heroes are given from by artists who capture in a few lines or brush strokes our intimate reverence for those we regard as our own. **Our art does not portray our heroic figures as larger than life, it portrays them as life itself –**

²⁶⁴ “Evaluation of International Women’s Day, From Cultural Committee Discussions,” p. 2.

²⁶⁵ Mallin “Women Demand Equality.” Another article appeared in *In Struggle* in March 1974 as well.

our life as Third World people in America . . . Tonight, in the performances of our cultural evening, we will see just a glimpse of the cultural life of Third World people. But even as we enjoy this evening we should remember that we are enjoying a celebration of ourselves; that **to applaud the performers is to applaud ourselves; to hear a call to action is to hear our own voices calling ourselves to further action**; to be uplifted and strengthened is to know the strength and virtues of the best we have to offer humankind. Our struggle continues; our victory is certain. Our culture is both an expression and a weapon to achieve this.²⁶⁶ (emphasis added)

Thus, the TWWA's cultural events' celebratory environment served as a call to action, in part through constituting a Third World-identified audience that included those on- and off-stage.²⁶⁷ Archived letters and secondary literature indicate that cultural events did indeed recruit new members; for example, Grace Shimzu joined the TWWA because she was impressed with 1975 IWD celebration in San Francisco for "dealing with issues of race, class, and sex" and also because the group was "very [committed to] community stuff" (qtd. in Lee p. 33). In an evaluation for IWD 1976, the Cultural Committee notes that at these events, "many members felt proud to be a part of the organization," and "Some friends even asked when the next membership drive would begin."²⁶⁸ Other archived letters indicate that the group received messages from around the U.S., from Iowa City to Brooklyn, regarding articles they'd read about the TWWA's IWD celebrations, asking how they could get involved in such work.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ "Third World Cultural Evening speech," pp. 2-4.

²⁶⁷ This celebratory environment was also evident in the behind-the-scenes work of the group – including house parties as fundraisers, and handwritten notes indicating that filing parties included cognac, beer, and cream-de-coco ("Agenda for Coordinating Committee").

²⁶⁸ "Evaluation of International Women's Day, From Cultural Committee Discussions," p. 2.

²⁶⁹ "Letter from Linda L. Kapler"; "Letter from Mary Stefan"; "Letter from Mary Jordan"; "Letter from Jonita Jones."

Critically Evaluating Cultural Events in Relation to TWWA Principles

After each year's IWD celebration was finished, individual committees completed critical evaluations, which were written up and circulated to the other TWWA members. The evaluation guidelines were extensive; the 1975 guidelines were nearly four typed double-spaced pages covering how principles manifested in subcommittee work, whether subcommittees developed as a collective unit, meeting preparation, problems and how they were resolved, communication between steering committee and subcommittees, leadership development, contact with other organizations, evaluation of the concrete mechanics of the event itself, and recommendations for the following year; it also included audience analysis and rhetorical analysis of the content of the speeches given at the event in relation to the stated principles.²⁷⁰

Evaluations were conducted by those involved in the cultural committee, childcare, decorations, publicity committee, "The Committee Speech" committee, and program committee, demonstrating the intentional work of each aspect of the IWD events, and the valuing of the behind-the-scenes labor of producing the event. Evaluations were understood as "an invaluable aide" for the following year's IWD planning; for example, a letter from the steering committee reflects on the 1974 IWD evaluations as follows:

In addition to clearly defining and describing the process of putting together IWD '74, they are filled with suggestions, recommendations, tips, and cautions. We hope that this year's evaluation will be just as helpful, both to us – in terms of synthesizing what we did and why, the political impact and importance of this kind of organizing to the movement,

²⁷⁰ "Evaluation Guidelines."

and future prospects for the Committee and IWD – and to those sisters who will work on IWD '76.²⁷¹

While evaluation documents indicated that TWWA members did not shy away from deep criticisms of organizational problems, moments when performers did not uphold the group's principles, and other missteps,²⁷² archived documents indicate that evaluation had the potential to be a generative practice of knowledge-making and goal-setting, rather than a chore:

The evaluation process will be exciting. Talk to your family and your friends who participated in the work or attended on March 9th. Talk to your sisters in the Committee. Find out how folks responded to our work and the celebration. Have we given IWD new and fuller meaning? The evaluation is our opportunity to gain new perspectives. We must learn from our past work so that we can advance our ideas, approach the future with imagination based on solid practice, and push forward the movement of our peoples.²⁷³

Through practices of critical reflection, members of the TWWA thought about the interrelating components of planning IWD, and created a written record that would inform the following year's celebrations. Critical reflections (of larger events, and criticism/self-criticism by individual members), while they were deeply incisive and questioned the very foundations of the work the group had done, were meant to be “in the spirit of goodness and LOVE and in the light of moving forward.”²⁷⁴ These critical reflections also allowed them to assess the effectiveness of

²⁷¹ “Letter from Steering Committee,” p. 1

²⁷² For example while some archived materials (such as *Triple Jeopardy*) were bilingual English/Spanish, critical reflections indicate that language was a major limitation of the TWWA's work. Rather than broadly critique the group for this limitation, I want to think about why a group of self-identified Third World women living in the U.S. would share English as a common language, and think about the histories of colonization and enslavement that created the conditions for a predominantly English-speaking Third World organization.

²⁷³ “Letter from Steering Committee,” p. 2

²⁷⁴ “Dear Sisters.”

the different forms they used in their cultural events; for example, written evaluations indicate that music was particularly popular with their audiences, and that it can “blow the top off” a moment of performance.²⁷⁵

The Cultural Committee’s evaluation of the 1976 IWD celebration highlights the importance of internal political education to the group’s cultural events, as the committee critically evaluates its shortcomings during the planning process, one of which was: “We assumed that everyone knew the history of IWD and didn’t make provisions for new members.”²⁷⁶ We also see reference to form, referring to the entire event, and the organizational constraints at play: “We did not think out what kind of format or method of organizing for the celebration would best fit into the organizational priorities for the period. Instead, we fell back into the old forms of organizing a massive IWD celebration.”²⁷⁷ To revise this conception, the group decided to focus on involving families and friends in the planning, and draw from the group’s principles (hashed out during the recent internal work) to set new goals for the event: “a) emphasize the dignity and accomplishments of women, particularly Third World women; b) celebrate the expansion of our organization and introduce the Alliance as a viable community organization; and c) draw out the history and significance of IWD so as to popularize the holiday.”²⁷⁸

Evaluations offered lessons for the whole organization to take away. For example, the Cultural Committee crystallized lessons from IWD 1976 that emphasize coordination within and outside the organization:

²⁷⁵ From a cultural performance evaluation.

²⁷⁶ “Evaluation of International Women’s Day, From Cultural Committee Discussions,” p. 1.

²⁷⁷ “Evaluation of International Women’s Day, From Cultural Committee Discussions,” p. 1.

²⁷⁸ “Evaluation of International Women’s Day, From Cultural Committee Discussions,” pp. 1-2.

When beginning any work, any project, we should ask the questions, “How does this particular task/project relate to the total organization? What are the Alliance’s goals and priorities for this time period? How can our work fit into these priorities? . . . We should listen to the ideas of the Coordinating Committee because they reflect the needs of the total organization. Within our Committee, we should listen to and try to understand what our CC representative puts out as not just representing her individual feelings, but also representing larger organizational concerns. . . . As an organization, we might begin to think out guidelines for any work that involves “meeting the public”, e.g., events, coalitions, etc. . . . We are at a new, difficult stage in our organization. We are much larger and more complex. We have 3 separate working committees, but we need to work to keep ourselves together as an organization and not become totally cut off in our separate spheres.²⁷⁹

Evaluations also note parts of the event that did not gel with organizational principles. For example, the Childcare evaluation noted that there were problems because the film screened for children “had stereotyped portrayals of black servants,”²⁸⁰ which points to the pervasiveness of the problematic representations that IWD, in part, sought to counter.

Broadly, these evaluations point to the importance of a written organizational record/history to turn to, and improve future work. There were concrete methods of integrating these insights into the new year’s celebration. In other words, evaluation was a practice of critically reading history and developing historical organizational consciousness and transforming organizational memory (in the form of written documents) into concrete action. For

²⁷⁹ “Evaluation of International Women’s Day, From Cultural Committee Discussions,” p. 3.

²⁸⁰ “Childcare – Evaluation,” p. 3.

example, the 1975 Decorations Committee evaluation indicates that the first meeting towards 1975 IWD focused on the 1973-74 evaluation and suggestions.²⁸¹ The Decorations Committee evaluation notes that “Silkscreen pictures and posters were donated by a Latino sister to be placed in the auditorium”—along with raffle ticket, this notes that the event showcased visual art of women of color.²⁸² The Publicity Committee’s critical evaluation points to the need for principles to be more specific and materially-enacted:

The three principles, are basically shallow. They do not really call for anything from us and they don’t force us to develop a base for work, for study. In this year’s work, the principles became no more than rhetoric and often a tool for us to hide behind when real answers to political questions were asked of us while working with each other and with non-committee members. In conclusion, the publicity committee felt that the principles as developed for this year were a fine beginning but not enough for us to develop a method of touching the problems of Third World Women and not relevant to our own position as Third World Women.²⁸³

This committee evaluation also gets at the material struggles of women on the planning committee, from childcare to bilingualism to financial constraints (which came into play when making planning phone calls, driving and spending money on gas, etc.)—to not tend to such things, they say, “smacked of bougieness.”²⁸⁴ The reference to bilingualism surfaces again in the program committee evaluation, specifically in terms of how outreach/publicity should have been

²⁸¹ “Decorations – Evaluation on decoration task for 1975,” p. 1. Committee members (written on evaluation) include: Melanie Daumont, Joanie Yee, Grace Shimzu, Miriam Louie, Karen Howe and Toni Vincent.

²⁸² “Decorations – Evaluation on decoration task for 1975,” p. 2.

²⁸³ “Publicity Committee, Criticism/Evaluation” p. 1.

²⁸⁴ “Publicity Committee, Criticism/Evaluation” p. 3.

more accessible to bilinguals.²⁸⁵ The reference to “rhetoric” comes up again later in the report as the evaluation calls for:

a clear statement and understanding of our political goals not just a statement of three broad and somewhat rhetorical principles. They must be developed before leadership can fully blossom within us – one of the main purposes of committee work. This purpose seemingly was lost to the overriding necessity of building a program, building an event. What is our goal is the important question and we know that planning the event is our means of testing our development toward the goal, and it should not be the goal in and of itself.²⁸⁶

These evaluations indicate that there were different interpretations of the affordances/limitations of principles for structuring event-planning, and different conceptions of the role the event would play in the larger organization. The publicity committee offered critical feedback on the event itself, connecting the forms themselves to TWWA principles: “This year there were too many speeches and they tended to be individualistic rather than collective for Third World people. This year the skits were not action or solution oriented as they were last year.”²⁸⁷

A different format would help to awaken another interest in IWD for Third World People next year. The new format should keep in mind our intention to reach out to Third World People, bi-lingual or mono-lingual and increase involvement of Latino and Native American sisters as well as other Third World Sisters. Next year it is imperative that the day itself is put into proper perspective.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁵ “Program Committee Evaluation” (handwritten note on back of formal notes).

²⁸⁶ “Publicity Committee, Criticism/Evaluation” p. 4.

²⁸⁷ “Publicity Committee, Criticism/Evaluation” p. 6.

²⁸⁸ “Publicity Committee, Criticism/Evaluation” p. 7.

“The Committee Speech” committee²⁸⁹ discussed its’ multi-step, collaborative writing/drafting/revising process and its rhetorical goals: “addressing a broad audience, not alienating anyone, avoiding political sloganeering, bring optimistic.”²⁹⁰ The Program Committee evaluation describes the IWD celebration as a success, with a large, diverse audience; it criticized the length of the program, which meant that by the time the speech with framing principles happened, people had already left.²⁹¹ The Program Committee critically engaged the “politically knotty” question of why there were so many different performers and rhetorical forms, reorienting to interconnectedness and relationality:

We need to get over the insecurity that leads to trying to include every single third world grouping and every medium of communication—dance, song, drama, poetry, and speech. Of course there is great value in having representatives from various areas of struggle and different cultural presentations, but only if we are solidly prepared and able to provide the essential political interconnections. . . . Otherwise the audience is left with a great mass of impressions which are not necessarily politically interrelated or reflective of our principles and goals.²⁹²

This evaluation also notes the tensions around speakers/performers and what they said on stage-- how the organizers could not control what they said, but should work closely with them ahead of time to make sure they understood the purposes of the event and the principles guiding it--

²⁸⁹ ““The Committee Speech’ Committee.” This group included Vicki Alexander, Dolores Price, and Pat Takayama (according to these meeting minutes).

²⁹⁰ ““The Committee Speech’ Committee.”

²⁹¹ “Program Committee Evaluation,” p. 1.

²⁹² “Program Committee Evaluation,” p. 2.

principles that, broadly, TWWA members felt were effective in uniting a broad audience.²⁹³

Such tensions get at the larger tension between the cultural and the political, a divide that IWD events sought to deconstruct (as we saw in the Cultural Committee report in Chapter 3):

we do need to be able to give more guidance to speakers so that they can relate their wealth of life experience and political experience to our principles. With cultural performers the situation is often even more difficult because we have to deal with larger egos and the so-called sanctity of artistic expression. What we must remember is that most cultural presentations are just as ideologically loaded as speeches. If we don't function this way, and fall into thinking that a dance is just a dance, then we will continually be unpleasantly surprised. Do we want to demoralize our audience with the depiction of a succession of depressing stereotypes, or can we see the possibility of uplifting our audience with a better understanding of the origins and reasons for such gross distortions and how to combat them.²⁹⁴

Cultural events were understood as spaces that encouraged identification with the TWWA's principles, through content that reflected both the commonalities and diversities of self-identified Third World people living in the U.S. Discussing the purposes/goals of cultural work was seen as an opportunity for internal education, and TWWA members held political education sessions in a general meeting during the event planning process. Members decided that the "Third World Cultural Evening" performance was meant not only to publicize the IWD celebration, but to "[r]each a broad spectrum of people, including older people, our neighbors,

²⁹³ The report reads: "we felt the principles were very effective in uniting a wide range of people and that we learned more and more about their meaning as we progressed in our work" ("Program Committee Evaluation," p. 4).

²⁹⁴ "Program Committee Evaluation," p. 2.

families and friends” and “[r]eflect the life of Third World people through the performers and the program as a whole.”²⁹⁵ Additionally, members decided that the program would promote “the idea of solidarity by: a. educating and opening ourselves to each other’s experiences b. bringing out the commonalities among Third World people as working people in this country even while appreciating the diversities.”²⁹⁶

Once principles and goals were set, members met with performers and technicians to make sure they had a shared sense of the event, and sent copies to the speakers.²⁹⁷ For example, in the planning for an IWD 1975 “Cultural Evening” fundraiser called the “Third World Cultural Evening,” performers were supplied with a list of principles for the event: “1. Solidarity with working peoples 2. acknowledgment of the women’s struggle as an integral part of the people’s struggle²⁹⁸ 3. and recognition of the leading role women have played in the movement for social change.”²⁹⁹ Archived letters also indicate that in planning IWD 1975, the group corresponded with Fern Mathias of the American Indian Movement and Digna Sanchez of the Puerto Rico Socialist Party and supplied both women with a list of principles for the event, emphasizing that the group hoped to highlight the role of women in both movements during the IWD event itself.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁵ “Draft: Political Purposes and Goals, Third World Cultural Evening.”

²⁹⁶ “Draft: Political Purposes and Goals, Third World Cultural Evening.”

²⁹⁷ “Meeting with Performers and Technicians.”

²⁹⁸ This principle is also evident in the TWWA’s interactions with other organizations. For example, in a 1973 meeting with the United Farmworkers and Farah Strikers, TWWA members describe their goal as “examin[ing] how women in your struggle function as an integral part of your organizing effort and some of the specific problems which they face” (Letter to United Farmworkers Union”).

²⁹⁹ “Letter from Phillis Tonye.” These principles (according to a thank-you letter after the event) were elaborated on through the planning/implementation process.

³⁰⁰ “Letter to Puerto Rico Sociality Party”; “Letter to Fern Mathias.”

Our goals in organizing the event are to bring forth the political and international significance of International Women’s Day and to let people know about the crucial role Third World women have played in building this country. We will also emphasize the leading role that Third World Women have played in the progressive struggle of working people. We see this project as an opportunity to educate ourselves and to spread information to a broad sector of the U.S. public in an honest and clear way. We know that the process of putting together such a celebration is an essential part of the organizing for fundamental change in our society.³⁰¹

By seeking to educate self-identified Third World audiences about the political significance of IWD, the TWWA participated in a long history of intentionally rewriting/reconstituting the history of IWD--in their case, by focusing on the racialized, gendered labor that built U.S. imperial wealth. A handwritten note in the IWD 1974 archived documents historicizes IWD to 1857, when immigrant women workers marched to protest working conditions in NYC; the 1908 movement for a 10-hour work day, unions, and laws against child labor; Clara Zetkin’s proposed celebration of IWD in 1910; and the U.N.’s recognition of International Women’s Year in 1975.³⁰² Archived documents also indicate that the TWWA engaged in internal education around the history of IWD; for example, at a December 15, 1974 meeting, members were provided with copies of readings by Engels on the origin of family and the state, an article in IWD published in *Triple Jeopardy*, and an article by Clara Zetkin in preparation for IWD planning.³⁰³ Together, these three readings demonstrate the group’s socialist-feminist analysis, grounded in the particular experiences of women of color in the U.S. In various iterations of the group’s IWD

³⁰¹ “Letter to Puerto Rico Socialist party”

³⁰² “IWD Timeline”; see also “Presentation on IWD”

³⁰³ “IWD Meeting Minutes”

celebrations, they would foreground South African women's struggles against colonization and apartheid,³⁰⁴ and women's labor organizing in Germany.³⁰⁵

The voices of self-identified Third World women played a central role in educating audiences about these histories, and tying them to ongoing political struggles. In *Paving the Way: A Teaching Guide to the Third World Women's Alliance*, Burnham and Tatnall write that the TWWA's IWD celebrations served an educational function by featuring the voices of Asian, African, Latin American, and Middle Eastern women, who spoke about "the core issues facing wome[n] in their countries that the forms of struggle they employed," which "strengthened relations between TWWA and women's organizations internationally (p. 47). Burnham and Tatnall note that these yearly IWD celebrations helped to resurrect the day of celebration, providing "a platform for representatives of a broad range of organizations and movements that were working to improve women's status and conditions" (p. 46). Audiences learned about issues including the war in Vietnam and political prisoners Lolita Lebrón and Assata Shakur; according to Sharon Davenport:

They were celebrations - it was IWD after all. So there's celebrations, there's fun, there's music. and at the same time, you're getting an education, because there's speakers, there are people confronting racism and imperialism. Part of these celebrations was the anti-Vietnam war education that they were producing, and making it clear that this is a product of capitalism and militarization, not a product of something we need to be doing, going over to another country and supposedly defending them against Communism? But really these were imperialist aims, this was part of the whole colonial system in Vietnam.

³⁰⁴ "IWD Flyer, Dedicated to South Africa."

³⁰⁵ See Box 2 Folder 23 of TWWA archives.

I mean, they did that--they did that kind of education, with speakers, and people coming up, and veterans speaking at these organizations. . . . You not only got to celebrate and dance and listen to music and eat banana bread, or gumbo, but you also got an education from the speakers that were there. . . . They used International Women's Day as a celebration of women, and therefore, international women's rights, anti-imperialism.

This orientation to education--in a celebratory, fun environment, with information relevant to self-identified Third World people in the U.S., was understood as differing from the institutional education that people were receiving. A speech delivered at “An Evening of Third World Culture” situates the TWWA’s work in a historical lineage of movements for educational equity:

The creation of education, both in the home and in the schools, befitting the experiences of Third World people in this country is central to our children’s ability to carry on our traditions and our struggle. From Mary McCloud Bethune to the demands for equal education raised by the civil rights movement, from WEB DuBois to the Third World strikes on college campuses across the nation, we have demanded that education be accountable to what we are really capable of. Education, more than any other cultural aspect in America is the contemporary battleground where either our aspirations are smothered in our children or our desires to sharpen the responsibility of crystallizing the most important aspects of our past and using those lessons to formulate a living and vital vision of the future. The fact that we have been denied such an education compels us to struggle for an education worthy of us and the entire American people. **Education is both a reflection of and a form for nurturing the aspirations of Third World people. And therefore, it is a vital and integral part of our culture.**” (p. 3, emphasis added).³⁰⁶

³⁰⁶ “Third World Cultural Evening speech.”

This understanding of culture reflects the expansive definition offered by Miriam Ching Yoon Louie in our interview of culture as economic and political literacy. This literacy is deeply historical; performances were situated as “both a reflection and commemoration of our past and a celebration of our compelling desire to build a collective future in unity and dignity.”³⁰⁷ Through emphasizing cultural heritage and its rootedness in the history of the struggle “to produce the necessities of life and for freedom,” speeches at cultural events emphasized that Third World culture “is born out of concrete conditions here in the US” but represents only a small part of “the whole people’s culture which we include all the many richness of human thought, human production, and human struggle in the U.S. and around the world.”³⁰⁸

Thus, part of the TWWA’s historical, educational intervention was internationalism; cultural events invoked a common heritage that is dispersed across geographies but connected because of its location on American soil: “Our heritage, brought from many lands and tempered and polished in the crucibles of American history vibrates in each of us, stirring in us and in our children the aspirations and militant courage to carry on our traditions of heroic struggle to a final and victorious conclusion.”³⁰⁹ This quote, which invokes the “vibration” of Third World histories in the U.S. Third World scene, suggests a shared historical condition of possibility for alliance; one that is not homogenous (as it is rooted in “many lands”), but is oriented towards a unified challenge to racism, sexism, and imperialism. Culture is framed as a material resource: “Although today the fruits of our labor are temporarily in the wrong hands, especially monied

³⁰⁷ “Fundraising Committee Introduction (2nd draft).” This was used to introduce the cultural evening. Fundraising Committee members (According to a list of performers/organizations) included Phyllis Tonye, Dianne Yamashiro, Cheryl Johnson, Rahemah Amun, Marian Lim, and Pat Sumi (“List of Performers”).

³⁰⁸ “Draft: Political Purposes and Goals, Third World Cultural Evening.”

³⁰⁹ “Fundraising Committee Introduction (2nd draft),” p. 1.

interests, this cannot negate the fact that the richness of America stands as a monument to our collective ingenuity and strength.”³¹⁰ This strength is located in the history of exploited labor, reframed as skill and ingenuity (reframing the historical master narrative of American progress), by drawing together histories of colonization, enslavement, and war in the U.S. context. Rather than critique modernization, contemporary science and technology is re-situated as part of a long history of Third World ingenuity:

Our cultural life reflects our lives in America as working people transforming, learning the laws of nature so we could build the richness and vast industrial power we know in America today. From the time we were the first human beings in the American continent to the present day, our labor domesticated corn, beans, squash, and tomatoes. We raised cotton and tobacco. We brought forth abundant vegetables and fruits from the rich soil. Our ingenuity and sacrifice built the railroads, produced steel and built whole cities. These experiences in production, born of our sweat and blood, collected and systematized by scientists and engineers form a vast cultural accumulation from our labor which we pass on to each new generation to add to its own experience and creativity. American science and technology form an integral part of our culture.³¹¹

Participation on subcommittees such as the Cultural Committee was seen as integral to developing leadership within the organization. For example, in discussions of who would serve on the Coordinating Committee, meeting notes include the following:

We need CC representatives who have demonstrated through their work a concern not just for their particular committee but for the TWWA as a whole. This means sisters who

³¹⁰ “Fundraising Committee Introduction (2nd draft),” p. 1.

³¹¹ “Fundraising Committee Introduction (2nd draft),” p. 1.

have made an effort to attend and participate in general meetings, helping to resolve overall organizational issues. It also means sisters who have been willing to provide some input or actually take on tasks in the projects of other committees (e.g., IWD, chicken dinner, July 4, Project Survival, family picnic.)³¹²

In other words, the group's principles emphasized the participation of multiple women in all organizational processes and practices. It was not seen as enough to communicate principles via the cultural events; principles were embedded in every step of *making* cultural events.

The Embodied/Affective Value of Multiple Forms

Archived documents note a preoccupation with gauging the “unity” of the audience, and these histories are located in the bodies of both performers and audiences. Thus, this quote suggests an embodied, relational condition of possibility for identification with Third World anti-imperialist struggles. It also points to the possibility of mobilizing affect towards identification with political principles. This embodied/affective work was theorized by the TWWA as operative across multiple forms. As I explored in Chapter 3, the TWWA’s cultural committee saw multiple forms as crucial to its goal of moving audiences to political action. The cultural events included a wide variety of performers working across multiple forms and representing multiple national/cultural traditions.³¹³ In a speech delivered at one of the TWWA’s cultural

³¹² “Guidelines for CC Selection Process in Committees.”

³¹³ For example, the Third World Cultural Evening performers included Educational Opportunities Corp., Band & Choir; Union of Vietnamese, Song and Poetry; Native American Cultural Group, Song and Dance; Nicholas & Roger, Flute and Guitar Music; Da Da (means Sister in Swahili) Black Women’s Theatre and Dance Group; and Teatro Claridad (Latin Women’s Theatre and Song).# and notes that after the Fundraising Committee introduction, the following artists performed: Dada; Luan and Melissa Champlin – Vietnamese poetry; Third World Women’s Committee to Celebrate International Women’s Day Publicity Committee Presentation; Educational Opportunity Corporation Band & Choir; Drawing for Prizes; Teatro

events, the group notes the importance of artistic forms in situating Third World people as historical actors (this is in relation to Louie’s expansive definition of culture—art is but one component of Third World culture in the U.S.):

Part of our culture is given form in art. The nobility of us—the common people—shines out in the drawings, paintings and sculptures of the American people’s artists. Even though we have been robbed of the wealth we have created, our artists project us as we are and as we shall be. **If our strength built America and our courage will make America what it ought to be, our artists portray us as the makers of that history. . . .**

Such a vision has found many forms of expression. People’s singers and musicians from the slave fields to ghetto cabarets, from coal mines to anti-war demonstrations draw out these aspirations from our souls and send them soaring on the wings of music to new heights of inspiration.³¹⁴

Distinguishing “inspiration” from romanticization, and linking cultural forms to the materiality of daily life, the speech follows with: “Our art does not portray our heroic figures as larger than life, it portrays them as life itself – our life as Third World people in America. . . . poetic and literary forms express our demanding need to clarify the social realities of Third World people”³¹⁵ Interspersed with this speech, stage directions note breaks for slides, songs, and poetry readings that emphasized the group’s principles (for example, the poem “Profits Enslave the World”). The performances were then framed at the event itself in terms of the group’s political

Claridad; Los Hermanos; Native American Cultural Group; and Katipunan ng mga Demokratikong Pilipinos (KDP) (who, as we learned in the last chapter, had shaped the TWWA’s theory of culture). (“Third World Women’s Committee to Celebrate International Women’s Day: Riki”).

³¹⁴ “Third World Cultural Evening speech,” p. 2

³¹⁵ “Third World Cultural Evening speech,” p. 2., emphasis in original.

purposes: “Tonight, we will see the best of our experiences gathered together by people’s artists and elevated to a form that calls us to the great tasks confronting the American people.”³¹⁶

Cultural events, thus, offered a chance to “gather” and synthesize divergent Third World histories into a common Third World anti-imperialist politic.

To engage audiences and move them to action, cultural events maintained a celebratory environment, and made purposeful use of multiple forms to achieve this purpose. For example, in a cultural event planning document titled “Political Purposes and Goals,” TWWA members indicate that they hoped to build a “bridge between goals & purposes” by *reaffirming the dignity of the audience* through multiple forms including narration, examples, and display.³¹⁷ In visual art, they wanted to convey the development of American peoples art.³¹⁸

In her reflections on the TWWA’s IWD celebrations, Davenport emphasizes the holistic character of these events, and the air of celebration:

One of the things about IWD is they did plays . . . they had poetry, they used all that organizational culture to celebrate song and dance and food and the Black family for instance, the family of color . . . They were fabulous. It was like a little fair--and there was various tables, and it was very--very in the street, you know, and not fancy, at all. nothing fancy. Not like the street fairs you see now - I mean, really not fancy. And that's beautiful. . . . I don't know who it is--Emma Goldman--'if you can't dance, then there's no revolution'--yes! Dance, theatre, all of these things--food, family--these are all part of the

³¹⁶ “Third World Cultural Evening speech.”

³¹⁷ “Draft: Political Purposes and Goals, Third World Cultural Evening.” Media presentations were meant to provide concrete examples; slides offered an opportunity to showcase visual art and highlight TW people’s contributions; singing/music would function differently (in the draft it isn’t laid out yet how).

³¹⁸ “Draft: Political Purposes and Goals, Third World Cultural Evening.”

revolution, otherwise you only have half of a revolution, right? So-called 'women's work,' whatever that is, that demeans this unpaid labor that goes on every single day. Well there you go. Yes, it's only half a revolution if it's only about theory. . . . So, yeah--and I think that everybody could benefit from that, to see a community celebrating its whole community, you know, **not just the polemics of politics, but the polemics of the kitchen table.** (emphasis added)

Through multiple forms, including food,³¹⁹ dance, art, and performance the TWWA's IWD events thus imbued everyday embodied practices with a Third World anti-imperialist politic, and created a space for self-identified Third World audiences to access and shape these politics. These events were accessible to the whole family, and always included childcare. Davenport attended these events with her son, expressed appreciation that the TWWA always provided childcare at its events, and described how that experience influenced him:

I brought him to everything that I went to. Every kind of event. If there was childcare, that was good, he got to mix in with peoples of different cultures, and not just the kids at school, but kids from every place, from every location. He thanks me for that today . . . because it gave him an idea about diversity. . . . he expected women to be strong, to have ideas of their own, to have lives and careers - that was his expectation. His expectation wasn't that they would do the ironing. The expectation was that they would be equal partners in whatever endeavors. . . . he's a feminist man. There you go. . . . And when children participate in these community activities, then they have a chance to see, maybe their mothers are involved - to watch women organize. . . . they do have an organizational

³¹⁹ A potluck dinner was also held in preparation for IWD, with the stated purpose of expanding the workforce, recruiting TWWA members, and supporting the stated principles ("IWD meeting minutes").

ability that begins with something like, *do we have childcare? Is there food? Is there dancing?* If you're going to have a revolution, somebody's got to take care of the kids, cook the food, and do the marching, and all of that, everything. Otherwise, it's not equal, it's only half a revolution.

The affective and embodied implications of the TWWA's cultural work, then, must be understood as intergenerational, relational, multi-sensory, and occurring in a range of forms. In relation to the other chapters of this dissertation, the embodied/affective elements of cultural work further illustrate the blurring of embodied, local, and transnational literacies in the TWWA's work, mediated through a variety of forms, and contextualized in an understanding of intersecting U.S. Third World histories.

Conclusion

In a discussion of cultural work during our interview, Miriam Ching Yoon Louie remarked: "you need things that are going to sustain you for a lifetime of struggle in which you're vastly outnumbered by the pigs. So ... (laughs) How can you make a lifelong commitment and live it? You need sustenance to feed you and your community. Some will come from the creative arts." This chapter demonstrates that in addition to sustaining and heartening people, cultural events like IWD supported the TWWA's larger organizational growth, development, and goals. Events offered a chance to circulate histories and geopolitical analyses through multiple rhetorical forms; put past and present into concrete conversation; put principles into practice; build capacity among members as they worked to coordinate all the moving parts of a cultural event; conduct outreach and organization-development; and build an intergenerational space.

The TWWA would combine its focus on labor, racism, sexism, and culture outside of its cultural events through solidarity work with professional artists. For example, in 1975 the TWWA sent a letter of support to Elayne Jones, a timpanist with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra who was denied tenure despite her musicianship.³²⁰ The letter reads: “We believe that your case is one that many Blacks in America continually have to face. . . . Only through exposing the racist nature of your case, and continuing to fight vigorously can victory be accomplished.”³²¹ A flyer for a support rally and demonstration by the Elayne Jones Defense Committee demands “an end to institutional racism within the cultural establishment of San Francisco.”³²² An article about the case cites Jones as “the only black woman to be a principal player with any major symphony in the world,” describes her as “a nationally known, award winning timpanist,” and notes that the committee denying her tenure was “all-white, all-male,” posing questions that broaden Jones's specific case to resonate with the lives of readers: “How does this affect you? The case of Elayne Jones involves more than just discrimination against an individual. This case points up the institutional racism in the Cultural Establishment, and this affects all of us.”³²³ Citing the amount of tax money and public support the Symphony receives, the article poses the question: “how much financial assistance is given to support cultural activities of the ethnic communities[?]” describing this as discrimination in cultural institutions and broadening out to think about culture in relation to governmentality: “This is not a cultural democracy – it is institutional racism, and it affects us all.”³²⁴ This example is an instructive one to end with, as it illustrates the deep materiality of culture, its imbrication in racism and sexism,

³²⁰ Johnson “Letter to Elayne Jones.”

³²¹ Johnson, “Letter to Elayne Jones.”

³²² “Flyer for Elayne Jones Rally & Demonstration.”

³²³ “Democracy or Discrimination”

³²⁴ “Democracy or Discrimination”

and its resonance across multiple scales--qualities that animated the TWWA's theory and practice of cultural events.

In the next chapter, we see how the TWWA's archived documents are used today to put past and present into concrete conversation, engaging students in critical, affectively powerful research and offering them a chance to work alongside contemporary social justice movements.

CHAPTER 5

Curating, Remediating, and Teaching with the TWWA Archives

This chapter traces the ongoing influence of the TWWA via a study of the construction and use of the group's archives. Drawing on interviews with archivists and professors across disciplines, I trace the curation, institutionalization, and pedagogical use of the TWWA archives to teach history, women's and gender studies, and archival studies through critical research and writing assignments. This chapter situates qualitative research on the construction and use of archives as a method for tracing the relevance/resonance of past political formations like the TWWA, without overdetermining such groups' historical significance.

The TWWA archives are housed at the Sophia Smith Collection (SSC) at Smith College in Northampton, MA. Drawing on four qualitative interviews with archivists and professors, this chapter explores how and why the TWWA archives ended up housed at Smith, and how they are currently used by archivists, educators, and students. I focus on the processing, curation, and institutionalization of the TWWA archives; interdisciplinary approaches to teaching with the TWWA archives; and remediating/recontextualizing the TWWA archives. I identify several rhetorical techniques at play in how the TWWA archives are used today: 1) recontextualizing TWWA documents so they are in conversation with contemporary social movements; 2) using TWWA archives to teach the theory of intersectionality (primarily via the visual rhetoric of *Triple Jeopardy*); 3) using the TWWA archives to engage an increasingly-diverse Smith College student body in historical inquiry. I conclude the chapter by unpacking the implications of these themes for rhetorical historiography.

Exploring the use of the TWWA archives requires a temporal shift from 1970s Third Worldism to 21st-century neoliberal globalization and multiculturalism. During the nearly 40 years that have passed since the TWWA formally ended, the organization transformed into the Alliance Against Women's Oppression (AAWO) and then the Women of Color Resource Center (WCRC), which operated in Oakland, CA until 2011.³²⁵ In the early 1980s organizers applied for grant funding, rented an office, and eventually transformed into a nonprofit organization in order to sustain the organizing work. It was during its nonprofit status as the WCRC that Sharon Davenport used Smith College grant money to process the TWWA archives. This chapter focuses on the TWWA archives and not the archives of the AAWO or WCRC for two reasons. First, it is beyond the scope of this project; in the future, I hope to have the time and resources to travel to Smith to visit the AAWO and WCRC archives as well. Second, looking at the TWWA's invocations of history alongside contemporary invocations of the TWWA's history allows me to develop a method of thinking relationally about past/present and the rhetorical purposes to which memory is put (Enoch). Chapters 2, 3, and 4 demonstrate how the TWWA put memory to use in its alliance-building efforts; this chapter turns to contemporary invocations of the TWWA for various pedagogical/political purposes.

In order to understand the ongoing relevance of the TWWA, a contextual shift in location is also necessary, as the TWWA archives are located not in a community-based context, but on a college campus. This shift is not simple; institutions of higher education in the U.S. have been both integral sites of Third World Liberation Movement era activism (Kynard; Parks; Hoang) and leaders in empire-building on political, economic, and cultural fronts (Agathangelou et al.;

³²⁵ The SSC also houses the archives of the TWWA, AAWO, WCRC, as well as the papers of TWWA organizers Linda Burnham and Miriam Ching Yoon Louie.

Maira and Chaterjee; Giroux). In that sense, these institutions mirror the U.S. nation-state, which is both a global empire and the location of insurgent Third World anti-imperialist histories. As Maira and Piya Chaterjee indicate in their introduction to *The Imperial University: Academic Repression and Scholarly Dissent*, Dwight D. Eisenhower's famous "military-industrial-complex" speech was originally meant to discuss the "academic-military-industrial-complex," pointing to the active role that institutions of higher education have taken in weapons development and C.I.A./State Department ties--in other words, the forces that the TWWA worked to counter. A small liberal arts school, Smith College is far from the corporate-military ethos associated with the larger institutions like M.I.T. that inspired Eisenhower's original term. While Smith is still an elite, expensive school with a predominantly white student body³²⁶--contrary to the TWWA's multiracial, anti-capitalist ethos--this chapter demonstrates that just as the east/west and first/third world lines are blurry and co-constitutive, campus/community and academic/organizing binaries are as well. Archivists and educators use the TWWA archives to draw connections across time and space and educate students about ongoing struggles for social justice; additionally, archival and scholarly work on the TWWA is used by former TWWA organizers themselves to document the group's history. Thus, this chapter demonstrates the way archived histories mediate the relationships among time periods and geopolitical locations in relation to ongoing struggles for social justice.³²⁷

³²⁶ According to Collegedata.com, Smith College is 52.9% white.

³²⁷ As I explored in earlier chapters, social movements of the TWWA's time, such as the Third World Liberation Strike at San Francisco State University, were pushing for access to higher education and Third World curriculum within them. Looking at the TWWA archives represents another way of understanding how Third World social movements and institutions of higher education have historically interfaced. Other moments in the TWWA's history point to how the group interfaced with/shaped higher education; for example, a TWWA member's involvement in the SEEK program at Queens College (a program that Mina Shaughnessy worked with at City College of NY).

About the Interviewees

A qualitative study of the construction and use of archives is--of course--partial and subjective; all four women interviewed in this study have some connection to Smith College, and two of them are tenured professors. The accounts in this chapter should be understood as born out of my location as a researcher and graduate student. Before moving into accounts of the interviews, I briefly explain how I connected with these four women, and describe how they locate themselves institutionally and politically.

From the beginning of this project, I had been looking for a way to put the TWWA's history into conversation with contemporary pedagogical and political concerns. On a 2016 trip to the SSC archives to look through the TWWA materials, I requested Box 7, which contains copies of the group's newspaper *Triple Jeopardy: Racism Imperialism Sexism*. The accessioning archivist--whose name is Kathleen Banks Nutter--brought out the box, and remarked that this was one of SSC's most popular boxes, was used frequently by educators, and was often on hold. We got into a conversation about the various courses across disciplines that make use of the TWWA archives, and I grew excited about the ongoing pedagogical use of the archives as a concrete way that the memory of the TWWA lives on, years later. I asked Nutter if she would be willing to do an interview; she agreed, and suggested that I reach out to Smith professors, as well as the Smith graduate who had processed the TWWA archives and arranged for them to be housed in the SSC. I reached out to a list of people that Nutter recommended, and heard back from/interviewed four of them. I briefly introduce them here.

Nutter is an accessioning archivist for the SSC and U.S. Women's Labor Historian by training. As a researcher and teacher, she is interested in economic justice, and wrote a book

titled *The Necessity of Organization: Mary Kenney O'Sullivan and Trade Unionism for Women, 1892-1912*, about the first woman organizer for AFL, who went on to be a co-founder of the women's trade union league. She teaches courses including "Women at Work in 20th Century America," and "Class Matters: Organizing for Economic Justice," in the Smith archives concentration; these courses deal with welfare rights organizing and the shifting economic conditions in the U.S. during the 1965-95 period, spanning the rise of the Great Society programs through Clinton's Welfare Reform Act. Given her many years as part of the SSC staff, she is familiar with the range of ways that researchers and educators have used the TWWA papers to meet their scholarly and pedagogical goals. She also included the cover of the first issue of *Triple Jeopardy* in a pop-up exhibit on Smith's campus in 2017 titled "Activism in the Archives."

Carrie Baker teaches in the program for the study of women and gender at Smith. Her courses, which include "Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies," "Gender, Law, and Policy," and "Reproductive Justice," focus on women in social movements and law/legal change, primarily in the U.S. Baker's first book was on the women's movement against sexual harassment in the 70s (*The Women's Movement Against Sexual Harassment*), and she currently researches activism against youth involvement in the sex trade from the 1970s through today (her forthcoming book is titled *Fighting the US Youth Sex Trade: Gender, Race and Politics*). She has been the director of, and taught in, the archives concentration at Smith, which she describes as an applied minor similar to public history.³²⁸

³²⁸ Students in this concentration learn about archival research and share their work with a broader public via glass-case / digital exhibits.

Jennifer Guglielmo teaches in the History department at Smith, specifically late-19th/20th century U.S. history with a focus on working class women, women of color, and immigrant communities. Her courses include “The U.S. since 1877” and “Decolonizing Women’s History” (the latter is her reinterpretation of a standard U.S. women’s history course). She also teaches courses on immigration and labor history, and is currently involved in community partnership work between her history courses and domestic worker organizations. Through this partnership, one of her classes created a digital timeline on domestic worker organizing that includes two slides on the TWWA. Her scholarly work has focused on Italian women anarchist labor activism in the U.S. Recently, she has been engaged in a collaborative research project on Latina domestic worker organizing, specifically 17th, 18th, and 19th century domestic work in the southwest U.S.

Finally, Sharon Davenport is an archivist, librarian, and Smith College graduate who processed the TWWA archives and worked to have them placed in the SSC. She attended Smith College when she was in her 60s on a tuition scholarship. She had had experience in archival work previously at the community college she attended, Woodbury College, and worked at the SSC the entire time she was at Smith, which was three years. She grew up in the Bay area and attended the TWWA’s International Women’s Day cultural events there. Davenport was also a founding member of the Brick Hut Cafe, a worker-owned, lesbian-feminist owned and operated fixture in the Bay Area LGBT community (Davenport “LGBT Pride”). Davenport is a political activist and member of groups including the Bay Area Lesbian Archives.

Each of these women has a different relationship to the TWWA archives. Davenport processed them; Nutter oversees their usage at the SSC; and Baker and Guglielmo pull them for their classes. Two of them--Nutter and Guglielmo--have taken up and recontextualized specific

archival texts via the pop-up exhibit and digital timeline. Read together, these four interviews reveal the blurry lines among past/present, social movements, scholarly work, and institutions of higher education, and coalesce around the concept of *access*--to knowledge, history, and institutions.

The Curation and Institutionalization of the TWWA Archival Materials

In 2004, Davenport received a Praxis Grant from Smith to travel to Oakland, CA, where she had lived previously. She connected with Linda Burnham at the WCRC and was assigned to process the TWWA papers for the duration of her grant. Working in collaboration with Burnham, in conversation with her faculty mentor at Smith, and doing quite a bit of independent research,³²⁹ Davenport finished her 220 hours and stayed on even longer to finish processing “boxes and boxes and boxes and boxes of disorganized papers, pamphlets, posters, all kinds of stuff.” Davenport describes her time processing the papers as “mind altering,” “revelatory,” “life changing work” that gave her a glimpse into the TWWA’s “centrality to the development of the women’s liberation movement.” She describes being “blown away” by every piece of paper she encountered, and expressed a profound respect for the depth with which the organization engaged its theoretical and political questions:

They went deep. They weren't going for broad . . . they were going deep, they were questioning, they were self criticizing, they were putting out white papers . . . Their

³²⁹ Not much had been published on the TWWA at this point, but Kimberly Springer’s book *Living for the Revolution* proved useful to Davenport.

papers that expressed the belief that ordinary women could become leaders--wow! What a concept. . . . They believed in collective support of women of color to make change.

Davenport wanted to make sure that the archives were placed in a repository where they would be made available for use. Because of her familiarity with the SSC, and knowledge that archives at other institutions had large backlogs of unprocessed material, Davenport advocated that the TWWA archives be placed at the Smith.

Ultimately, SSC received the TWWA papers because they had the resources to make them available for public use. During the time that the TWWA papers were moved to the SSC, this archive --in collaboration with activist and professor Loretta Ross--was actively trying to reflect more histories of women-of-color political activism. Baker, Nutter, and Guglielmo pointed to the central role of Ross and the Voices of Feminism Oral History Project in pushing the archives in this direction.³³⁰ Because of this larger push, Davenport knew that SSC wanted the papers, would value them, and would make them available for researchers, students, “and anyone else.”³³¹ Upon receiving the papers, archivists at SSC rewrote the finding aid and introduction; because Davenport had processed the archives to Smith’s specifications, the “very tedious but honorable work” of processing the archives was not changed. Thus, the archives were made available for use very quickly. Davenport was particularly happy that at SSC, the archives would be used “by mostly young women whose education in [the TWWA’s] iterations of feminism, Black feminism, must be eye-opening to them.”

³³⁰ Baker noted, too, that students now have the chance to work one-on-one with political activists to process their archives.

³³¹ The SSC does not require affiliation with an educational institution in order to access the archives.

As Davenport was processing the TWWA papers, SSC was working to make its holdings more representative of diverse activist histories. Guglielmo noted that the SSC holdings have shifted since she started teaching there in 2003, when the archives were more centered on “white middle- and upper-class women's history, as it was reflective of the demographics of the college.” Both the archival holdings and the student demographics have shifted in the last twenty years; Guglielmo noted that a fifth of the incoming class is now first generation, and that the percentage of students of color increased from 20 to nearly 40 percent. To transform the archive, a team of archivists collected over 50 oral histories through the Voices of Feminism Oral History Project, which “documents the persistence and diversity of organizing for women in the United States in the latter half of the 20th century.”³³² The TWWA archives, then, serve an institutional rhetorical purpose of representing a broader range of history.

Materially, this rhetorical purpose has been achieved, due in part to the popularity of the TWWA archives. As she mentioned when we first spoke in the SSC, *Triple Jeopardy* has been the most popular element of the TWWA papers. Nutter has used *Triple Jeopardy* as a resource to help researchers studying different groups that worked with the TWWA, including the Black Panther Party. The newspaper has served her well as a summary of other movements and alliances of the era. For example, she recalled a phone call from a California-based graduate student writing a dissertation on Black-Palestinian solidarities, who asked whether *Triple Jeopardy* had covered these relationships. Nutter flipped through the archived issues of the newspaper, and “lo and behold, I found 8-9 articles, full page spreads, on what was happening in Palestine, how to support the PLF and the Black community . . . you can find anything in *Triple*

³³² “Introduction.” Guglielmo notes that doing oral histories with TWWA organizers like Linda Burnham helped open the door for the SSC to acquire the archives of the TWWA, AAWO, and WCRC.

Jeopardy! It's a fabulous resource that gets used in so many classes" The TWWA's newspaper thus serves as an important historical record of Third World Liberation movement-era collaborations and solidarities. As Nutter put it, "of the TWWA archives, [*Triple Jeopardy*] is the go-to because it's so visual. It really draws people in." People travel from all over the world, and drive hundreds of miles, to work with *Triple Jeopardy* (as I did, from four hours north in Syracuse).

Teaching with the TWWA Archives

Triple Jeopardy is also a central way that educators engage the history of the TWWA in their classrooms. A theme that emerged in the pedagogical use of the TWWA archives is the fact that the visual rhetoric of *Triple Jeopardy* is useful for teaching students about intersectionality. In addition, because Nutter, Baker, and Guglielmo each recounted their own, and their classes', excitement and enthusiasm for archival research, the TWWA archives offer a dynamic way for students to engage with the history of feminist thought and activism.³³³

For Baker, the TWWA archives support at least three pedagogical goals: teaching students about primary source research; women's activism in social context; and intersectionality. Baker describes intersectionality as the "center of gravity" for her women's studies curriculum, and finds the TWWA archives as particularly useful for bringing this concept to light with her students. She also uses the TWWA archives in her course on reproductive justice, because of the group's work around forced sterilization and high infant mortality in

³³³ Rawson and Morris point to the affective power of engagements with the past mediated through archives (p. 80).

communities of color. Baker also encourages students to think about the “different social locations women exist in, and how that influences their activism”; to support this goal, and encourage her students to critically engage archival materials, she pulls boxes of TWWA materials (along with materials from other organizations).

Baker’s introduction to women and gender studies course, which is co-taught with four faculty, includes a history unit focused on primary documents, which always includes *Triple Jeopardy*. The faculty bring students into the archives for an “open house” where they can see the documents that are being discussed in class, leading up to a final paper assignment that involves archival documents. Baker describes the goal of this trip to the archives as teaching students how to use, read, and interpret primary source documents:

We say, find a document, and answer these questions. They’re pretty simple – when was the document produced, who produced it, who was the audience, what was the purpose of the document – and then I usually have an open-ended question – *is there anything that surprises you about this document or that gives you a deeper understanding of this historical period based on having seen this document?*

In addition to using *Triple Jeopardy* to teach primary-source research, Baker uses cover and interior images from the newspaper, along with with its tagline (*Racism Imperialism Sexism*), in course slideshows in order to visually depict multiracial alliances and name the connections among socialism, feminism, and anti-racism. She notes that such images “represent intersectionality in a useful way . . . visually, as well as strategically.”

The use of TWWA materials to teach theories of intersectionality must be understood in the context of the group’s on-the-ground organizing, which developed intersectional analyses

without labeling them “intersectional.” Guglielmo noted that during a June 2017 meeting at Smith around domestic work, Burnham was recounting the story of the TWWA, and noted that the group had developed an understanding of intersectional oppression “before it had to be five syllables.” It is important to note that the scholars of intersectionality cited above are scholar/activists--they have not taken up the term in a way that is dissociated from ongoing political work. However, intersectionality has been broadly taken up in academic spaces, and as sociologist Sirma Bilge notes, it has been “whitened” in the process, dissociated from the Black feminist activism that gave rise to it.

Guglielmo pointed to this trend, posing the question, “which people stand in for the founders of these ideologies or practices?,” noting that “organizers are always marginalized.” This understanding of theory as located in social movements animates Guglielmo’s pedagogical practices, including the way she engages the TWWA archives. The TWWA archives for her, then, serve a clear pedagogical purpose in asking her students to see theory as located in social movement texts; she notes that the TWWA archives are “a way for [students] to understand women of color feminist theory and practice by going right to the source itself.”

The number of her students who are drawn to the TWWA primary source materials has grown over time, and that in the last iteration of Guglielmo’s U.S. Women’s History course, one-fifth of the class wanted to work with the TWWA archives. Like Baker, she primarily uses *Triple Jeopardy* to introduce the TWWA to her students, noting that the paper is “what draws students in.” In terms of assignments, Guglielmo has asked students to read a small selection of archival documents in the context of the larger archive; in upper-level courses, she has supervised more in-depth research projects using archival sources. When students engage with the TWWA

materials in the context of such assignments, Guglielmo notes that they are often surprised the organization existed, and inspired by it in multiple ways:

[students are] inspired by [the TWWA's] militancy, by its intersectionality, by its internationalism, by its multiethnic[ity]--that it's women of color from so many backgrounds who came together. I think for a lot of young folks it provides a model, for how to critique--what does it mean to critique racism? what does it mean to do so in a way that is critical of capitalism, of imperialism, of sexism? And then, print culture is also something that for this generation--there isn't a print culture like there was in the 70s. So I think it's exciting for them to see the kinds of materials that women were producing to generate their own knowledge and community.

Guglielmo's students have produced a range of research projects that engage the TWWA archives. Topics include sterilization abuse as it was taken on in *Triple Jeopardy*; the TWWA's anti-Vietnam war activism and anti-war activism from a women-of-color perspective; the history of domestic worker organizing in relation to welfare rights and the labor movement; and reading *Triple Jeopardy* as a body of theory, surfacing the theory that is produced through each issue. She also described a South Asian Hampshire College student who was an anti-racist/feminist campus organizer, and wrote a long year-end reflective essay on her "transformative" experience engaging with the TWWA archives.³³⁴ Guglielmo sees the TWWA archives as representative of a history that "unsettles what people thought they knew about feminism, what they know about theory . . . I think that's why students are drawn to it." Along with her analysis that the TWWA archives allow working-class students and/or students of color to write themselves into histories

³³⁴ Guglielmo suggested that I interview this student, and I hope to do so in the future.

of struggle, Guglielmo credits this range of projects to the TWWA's ability to act as a "bridge between so many different movements," echoing Nutter's use of *Triple Jeopardy* as a resource for helping researchers unearth historical alliances.

The pedagogical practices of these professors gesture towards an interdisciplinary ethic for rhetorically engaging archival materials in conversation with contemporary struggles for social justice, and to teach genealogies of theory emerging from these movements while rooting them in the on-the-ground work that developed the theory.

Remediating the TWWA Archives

Davenport pointed to the TWWA's collaboratively-produced CD-ROM/slideshow, *Paving the Way: A Teaching Guide to the Third World Women's Alliance*, as an important legacy of the group's work. In our interview about the TWWA's cultural work, former member and organizer Miriam Ching Yoon Louie also pointed to *Paving the Way* as an important resource, particularly because it was created by former TWWA members through the Women of Color Resource Center and, as she put it, represents the group's history on the group's own terms.³³⁵ The slideshow is broken into four parts, which cover the group's origins, political outlook and program, social political action, and lessons/legacy between 1968-80. On the acknowledgments page, Sharon Davenport is thanked for her "diligent and dedicated work collecting, organizing, cataloguing and archiving newspapers, meeting notes, flyers, photographs, posters and pamphlets." The writers also thank Maylei Blackwell, Kimberly Springer, and Stephen Ward for

³³⁵ In a follow-up, I plan to ask Miriam Ching Yoon Louie how, exactly, this CD-ROM/slideshow has been used.

their “insightful and useful” work, as well as “scholars who have made the TWWA and women-of-color activism their subject of inquiry.” This demonstrates the blurry lines among campus/community, as archivists and historians work across these two contexts and reflect back movement-based histories to the organizers themselves. The acknowledgments also recognize the labor of TWWA members, “who contributed their papers to the TWWA archive, and whose passion for social justice continues to resonate in contemporary movements.”

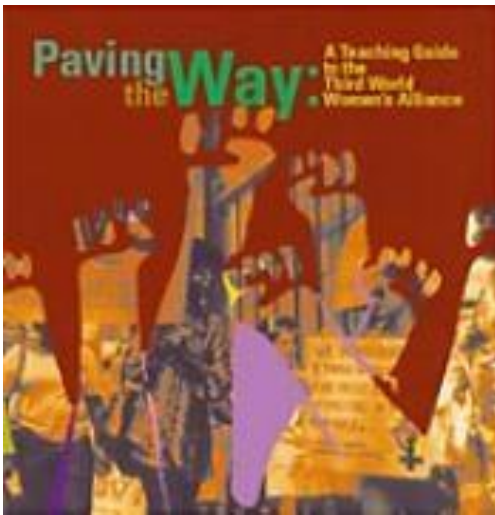


Figure 5: Cover slide from *Paving the Way: A Teaching Guide to the Third World Women's Alliance*.

The interviewees also put campus/community, and past/present, concretely into conversation via a range of compositions and assignments, including a pop-up exhibit and digital timeline. Nutter curated the pop-up exhibit in 2017 as an “intergenerational dialogue between feminist activists,” drawing on the SSC’s archived records of activism at Smith College and organizations including ARISE, the Prison Birth Project, and the TWWA.³³⁶ Nutter curated the exhibit by repurposing prior exhibits, including an opening of eight collections, exhibit, and

³³⁶ See “The Exhibition.”

conference from 2000 titled “Agents of Social Change,”³³⁷ and a 2007 conference titled “The Power of Women’s Voices: Selections from the Voices of Feminism Project.”³³⁸ Because the library kept exhibit books, Nutter was able to replicate pages: “sneaking color photocopies” in what she describes as “truly the spirit of pop up.”³³⁹ The exhibit highlighted student activism at Smith including 1930s anti-fascism; 1960s anti-war work; 1980s anti-apartheid work; into current work around trans* issues, mass incarceration, and immigration/deportation. Nutter explained that in addition to repurposing prior exhibits, this exhibit highlighted newer SSC materials, which were part of the the college’s push to reflect a greater diversity of women’s activism in its archives. When I went to see Nutter’s exhibit in the Smith College library, I found it was in an area heavily foot-trafficked by students, faculty, and library staff. A reference to the TWWA appeared in the last panel of the exhibit:

³³⁷ See “Agents.”

³³⁸ See “The Power.”

³³⁹ Nutter explained that the exhibit “was really well received, we left it up through the first reunion weekend and commencement, and we actually were able to save the panels as is – and the one blow-up . . . could be remounted, it could be reused, repurposed . . . it wasn’t what I would say unprofessional, but it was pop up. It really for me it highlighted what is the essence of the SSC, and what it really represented, and why people come from around the world to look at our stuff.” Contemporary scholarship in R/C has situated pop-up as public rhetoric, and recent conferences include pop-up exhibits (e.g., the installation at CRCon 2016).



Figure 6: TWWA image from pop-up exhibit.

Nutter juxtaposed the cover issue 1.2 of *Triple Jeopardy* with two texts: 1) a letter indicating that then-Senator Barack Obama would support legislation ending mass deportation in 2008, and 2) a letter from a child several years later asking then-President Obama to “stop deporting my family.” For Nutter, these two texts represented “the yin and yang of politics around immigration, which even for liberal democrats, shifts with the wind, I’d say.” She paired them with the image above because for her, it signifies the ongoing work resist intertwined oppressions via alliance: “to me, it was a fitting coda to the entire exhibit . . . in the end, this is how we stand [sic].” Nutter interpreted the gun as symbolic resistance, and identified herself as a pacifist.

Like Nutter’s pairing of *Triple Jeopardy* with texts on immigration and deportation, one of Guglielmo’s classes used TWWA archival materials to draw connections to ongoing struggles--in this case, via a digital timeline focused on the history of domestic worker organizing. In contrast to the pop-up’s primarily campus-based audience, the timeline is part of a partnership between Guglielmo’s seminar and a domestic worker community organization. It is

representative of Guglielmo's pedagogical commitment to public historical work, particularly via the production of histories that are of use to social movement organizers. This pedagogical commitment reflects the evolution of Guglielmo's research as well; she has shifted in recent years from her previous research focus on Italian women anarchists' labor organizing in the U.S. to researching and teaching the history of domestic worker organizing. She describes this shift as due to the fact that she was "feeling very inspired by current movements and wanting to be in service of them." In order to do so, she is currently researching 17th, 18th, and 19th century Latina domestic work in the U.S. southwest, "thinking about the role of domestic work in colonial relationships, and indigenous women's histories with domestic work as part of the whole process of colonization." In collaboration with Michelle Joffroy, a professor of Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin American studies, she is producing curriculum for the movement, "so they can see these documents and learn the histories themselves," and thinking towards a collaboratively-written book for a popular audience "to make these histories accessible and in another format."³⁴⁰ The curriculum will be used in trainings for organizers, so they understand themselves in a lineage of domestic worker organizing in the U.S.

In her class that produced the timeline, one student decided that the TWWA should be included in the genealogy of domestic worker organizing in the U.S., and created two slides representing the group's work. Guglielmo noted that the timeline is currently being translated into Spanish, and will be used for a staff training this fall in the community organization. The

³⁴⁰ Guglielmo wants to explore these histories in the Caribbean and Latin America as well, to learn how immigrant women "are bringing traditions of organizing, as domestic workers, with them, and how that is transforming the movements they're participating in in the U.S." She notes that while there has been sociological/anthropological studies on the globalization of the women's workforce, the available published history on domestic workers in the United States is very outdated.

timeline will also be made available via Wordpress (along with a bibliography), and will likely be disseminated through both the National Domestic Workers Alliance and SSC websites.



Figure 7: Title slide from timeline on domestic worker organizing by Jennifer Guglielmo’s students.



Third World Women's Alliance party, n.d.

Women of Color Resource Center

1970S-1980S

RADICAL WOMEN OF COLOR FEMINISM

THE THIRD WORLD WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

In 1970, the Black Women's Alliance joined forces with with Puerto Rican women activists to create the Third World Women's Alliance. The TWWA sought to unite women of color in a revolutionary organization. This was one of the earliest groups that took an intersectional approach to understanding social oppression. Intersectionality refers to the ways sexism, patriarchy, homophobia, classism, and racism are interconnected when examining oppression. As a result, TWWA paved the way for Black feminisms, Chicana feminisms, Asian American feminisms, and other radical women of color feminisms of the 1970s-1990s.

Linda Burnham, a leader in the TWWA, is now the National Research Director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance. She was raised in the community of the Black Left in New York City during the 1940s and 1950s, as both of her parents were radical activists in this milieu. For more info see www.shesbeautifulwhenshesangry...

Figure 8: First of two slides on the TWWA included in the timeline. This slide shows a photo of TWWA members from a party.



Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College
Archival image of the Third World Women's Alliance newspaper, *Triple Jeopardy*.

1970-1975

TRIPLE JEOPARDY

ANALYZING INTERSECTIONALITY

The Third World Women's Alliance (TWWA) built radical women of color feminist consciousness through their publication *Triple Jeopardy*, which circulated nationally from 1970 to 1975. A statement in the first issue proclaimed "the struggle against racism and imperialism must be waged simultaneously with the struggle for women's liberation" by "a strong independent socialist women's group." TWWA addressed a full range of issues pertaining to the oppression of women of color domestically and internationally, such as labor unions, affirmative action, forced sterilization, welfare rights, mass incarceration, and low-wage work.

In the issue titled "On the Job: Domestic Workers," TWWA interviewed organizers in the domestic work industry, including Dorothy Bolden, founder of the National Domestic Worker's Union of America: "I was the one who went to Washington to kick up some hell about women not getting the attention they deserved," Bolden recounted of her work as a domestic worker-activist who also served as an adviser to Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter. For more images and documents from TWWA see www.flickr.com/photos/27628370/.

Figure 9: Second of two slides on the TWWA from the timeline.

These slides demonstrate the way the TWWA's history is recontextualized to draw concrete connections to ongoing social movements that are active today. Read in the context of the larger timeline, these slides show how the domestic work movement interacted with the development of Third Worldism and intersectional feminism in the U.S., particularly because of the movement's emphasis on gendered labor both within and outside the U.S. The first slide situates the TWWA in lineages of radical women-of-color feminism, emphasizing the Black/Puerto Rican women's alliance that led to the formation of the TWWA; the TWWA's early development of intersectionality; its work to pave the way for Black, Chicana, Asian American, and other women-of-color feminisms between 1970-90; and Linda Burnham's political work. The second slide shows a cover image from *Triple Jeopardy*, and situates the newspaper as offering an analysis of intersectionality via discussion of domestic and international women's oppression (including "labor unions, affirmative action, forced sterilization, welfare rights, mass incarceration, and low-wage work"). The featured issue, titled "On the Job: Domestic Workers," includes interviews with Dorothy Bolden, who founded the National Domestic Worker's Union of America. For community-organizing training purposes, these slides situate the domestic work

movement in the U.S. within a Third World feminist framework. They also demonstrate how groups like the TWWA--which were not solely focused on domestic work--took it up because it was a site where self-identified Third World women living and working in the U.S. were oppressed and exploited, but also organizing for change.

Guglielmo sees public history work like this timeline as meaningful pedagogical work, because her classes produce “histories that they are meaningful to [organizers], that they can really work with,”³⁴¹ rather than reproducing what she sees as a pattern of “extractive” relationships between institutions of higher education and social movements:

I think especially the women's movement, there's so many organizations that are so deeply tied up with all the work they're doing, they just don't have the time to go into archives, to bring together histories, and for the Domestic Workers movement this is a movement that really has exploded in the last ten years. . . . So it's been a lot of fun to go back and put together these stories and make them accessible. . . . a big part of what I've been trying to do is--how do we work in a way with this collaboration that is *only* enjoyable to them? It's only good? It feels so generative and exciting that they want to do this work?³⁴²

The TWWA history, then, emerges to fulfill a movement-based exigency that has been taken up in a pedagogical context. This is consistent with Smith's archives concentration; Baker notes that it emphasizes collaboratively-produced public history, and that students are encouraged to “go

³⁴¹ After the timeline goes live (once permissions are cleared), I plan to follow up with Guglielmo to see how, exactly, it was used in domestic worker organizing training, and to ask her about the concrete, material consequences of making this history accessible. (citation)

³⁴² In addition to producing the histories, Guglielmo notes that she offers large honoraria to draw from the considerable resources of Smith College and channel them into domestic worker organizing.

public” with their work through what R/C scholars might term multimodal public rhetoric (glass-case exhibits; digital timelines). As part of her “Class Matters” course, Nutter’s students also produced a digital timeline in collaboration with Miriam Neptune, a librarian at Smith.³⁴³ The group’s deep critique of the raced, gendered nature of service economy work in the U.S., and its connections among various migration histories to the U.S., situates it as an important historical reference point for domestic worker organizing today.

Davenport pointed to this type of pedagogical engagement with the TWWA archives as an important contribution to contemporary struggles: “I’m so glad that these papers are being used, because we need that--we need to hear about these groups.” Remediation through sites like the pop-up exhibit and digital timeline is one way that people both on- and off-campus learn about the TWWA in both educational and community organizing contexts. This demonstrates the crossover between university/community contexts when classrooms respond to social movement exigencies, in what Mohanty has referred to as the “porous borders” of the university.³⁴⁴ Like the TWWA’s cultural work across mode and genre, it also demonstrates the utility of interactive, public rhetorical work like the pop-up exhibit, digital timeline, and slideshow for teaching marginalized histories.

Legacy of the TWWA: Theory, Method, and Documentation

³⁴³ See timeline at:

http://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?source=1OZwDqkkbp5_QqDZrAugJNBXF0LM97aCLLNy7qWdumQg&font=Default&lang=en&initial_zoom=2&height=650

³⁴⁴ *This Rhetorical Life* interview (forthcoming, 2018).

The concluding slide to *Paving the Way* states that the TWWA's legacy "continues to resonate in contemporary scholarship and activism"--specifically by its impact on the women's movement, feminist theory, the racial justice movement, international solidarity/anti-imperialism, organizational culture, and leadership development. As part of their discussions of the TWWA archives, Davenport, Nutter, Baker, and Guglielmo each commented on what they see as the concrete, ongoing legacy of the TWWA, and connected the TWWA's work to contemporary social movements. Their interpretation of the TWWA's legacy can be broadly classified into theory, method, and documentation--in other words, each interviewee recontextualized the TWWA in terms of the group's (and its archives') contributions to feminist theory, modeling of methods or organizing, and practices of documenting organizing work.

For Guglielmo, the TWWA expanded the use of the word "feminism," and contributed to a genealogy of radical, intersectional, internationalist feminism that directly influences movements today:

I think [the TWWA's] legacy is about the possibilities of radical feminism, and what it meant. To be able to study how women from so many different backgrounds were able to come together and forge a movement at that time, and what they set in motion--I feel like the women who were politicized in the 70s who came together and realized that radical women of color needed to create community, needed to create a movement together, they set in motion a feminist theory and a feminist practice that's still informing feminism today. . . . radical women of color had been organizing for generations, but many of them weren't using the word feminism. And so I feel like they took that word and made it their own, you know, and made it a feminism that was more radical, more intersectional--to

use that word--more global, that connected marginalized women's histories and experiences in a more profound way.

Because the TWWA was an organizing group, Guglielmo sees their work as part of a genealogy of theory-making drawn from lived experiences and collective struggles. Davenport also pointed to the TWWA's grounding in the lived experience of intersecting oppressions, as opposed to "intersectionality" as an abstracted theory divorced from the struggles that it emerged from. She argued that the TWWA pushed for a more intersectional understanding of women's liberation:

intersectionality and intersections get tossed around quite a bit, but we owe this idea, this concept, we owe it absolutely to Black women feminists. There is no doubt in my mind that that concept comes out of their triple oppressions. I think Shirley Chisholm said, 'when I walk out the door in the morning, I know that I'm black, and a woman, and living in an imperialist society.' . . . [T]he TWWA and other Black feminisms really pushed [the women's liberation movement] hard, challenged them hard, to get a line on anti-imperialism and anti-racism, and anti-institutional racism in the United States.

Davenport emphasized the class analysis and Marxist-Leninist theoretical influence of the TWWA as well, with appreciation for how the group developed leadership out of the lived experience of oppression rather than relying on educational/other professional qualifications for leadership.

Such a theory of leadership is directly tied to methods for organizing spaces. For Davenport, the TWWA offers a method for engaging political questions deeply through sustained debate and discussion (visible in the TWWA's meeting minutes) that centers the voices of working class women and women of color. For her, the TWWA is "a model" for grassroots

organizing, in part because of how the group developed analyses and actions out of the lived experiences of its membership. For example, TWWA organizers regularly composed and circulated internal documents that kept members informed about all discussions that were taking place on the steering committee and subcommittees. Guglielmo also connected the TWWA's work to contemporary social movements, but framed the TWWA's influence in terms of its contribution to internationalist, intersectional feminist genealogies of theory and action: "In some ways, the most important social movements right now, the immigrant rights movement, the labor movement, Black Lives Matter, all trace their genealogy to radical women of color feminism."

To name the TWWA as a "model" or theoretical influence is not to romanticize the group, which has been critiqued by writers including Springer for situating sexuality as a "lifestyle choice" rather than identifying heterosexism as a system of oppression (as Miriam Ching Yoon Louie noted in our interview, this shifted when the TWWA transformed into the AAWO). The women I interviewed expressed appreciation for the group's reflection and documentation on its struggles and limitations. Davenport pointed to the group's policy of engaging in criticism/self-criticism and carefully documenting its limitations and self-critiques,³⁴⁵ which has influenced the way she engages in organizing work today:

I belong to an organization right now called the Bay Area Lesbian Archives . . . my influence from the TWWA informs how I respond within this group of people about racism, anti-imperialism, and all of these things. . . . And so, we talk in depth; we do criticism/self criticism; [it's a] very important thing, to criticize yourself and others,

³⁴⁵ When the WCRC closed, a 30+ page critical reflection titled "Sharing Sorrow: Women of Color Resource Center's Downfall" was produced and published; Davenport links this to the TWWA's practice of criticism/self-criticism.

admit when you're wrong, and talk about it. . . . I think that the depth with which the TWWA looked at itself constantly--*what could we have done better?*--is so important to groups now trying to establish themselves as anti-imperialist, anti-racist.

Nutter similarly noted that the importance of the TWWA history is as much about its effective methods of organizing as it is about the group's limits and struggles:

If you're interested in community organizing around whatever issue - there's definitely several actions that they were engaged with that would provide great evidence of what works, what doesn't, what motivates people to stay involved – and then the overarching 'why did they implode' and morph into the AAWO is yet another part of the story – how do you keep an org together in tough times and how do you move forward?

For that reason, Nutter pointed to the TWWA's practice of thoroughly documenting its work (both positive and negative) as one of its greatest instructive lessons for contemporary movements. For example, the TWWA archives include minutes of difficult meetings discussing issues including sexuality; describe the way many lesbians left the group during those discussions; and document the gradually-developing critique of homophobia that the remaining members worked towards as a result. Nutter shared hope that contemporary movements will do the same:

. . . hopefully the Black Lives Matter movement is documenting itself or will be [and] saving stuff in a systematic way, because sadly, 50 years from now we will likely need that reminder that . . . *this happened – people stood up, they did this, they did that, some of it changed for the better, some of it not so much . . . this is how we can stand up, what we can do – this didn't work for them, this did--so how can we build on that? what can*

we learn from that? As I tell my “Class Matters” class, you have to know your history, have to know the past if you want to change the future, hopefully for the better.

Nutter thus points to archives as a site of knowledge that enables critical reflection on past struggles for social justice, and push people forward to engage in contemporary struggles. Archives, then--when they represent both the victories and the challenges that took place within organizations--can positively inform future work.

Personal Resonances

My conversations with Nutter, Guglielmo, and Davenport demonstrated the way each of us has put our own lived experiences into connection with the TWWA’s work. In conversation with Davenport (who identifies as biracial, of mixed Filipina/Scottish ancestry), we reflected on the fact that the TWWA is an important reference point to counter ongoing depictions of Asian Americans as model minorities to counter affirmative action policies. Model minorityist tropes not only serve to divide would-be multiracial coalitions; they erase insurgent Asian American struggles. As Davenport put it, “Asian Americans have been speaking truth to power since the immigration of Chinese and Japanese and South Asian people into the United States for work, primarily. And so there have been many many Asian American revolts against this system of oppression that left them working for a bowl of rice.”

Davenport was also struck by the archival evidence of the TWWA’s involvement in the United Farm Workers struggle, for example, their work to help build a the Agbayani retirement village for elderly farm workers.³⁴⁶ Davenport connected it to her father, demonstrating the

³⁴⁶ See “Agbayani Work Brigade, United Farm Workers,” for information on the TWWA’s involvement.

power of learning history that writes your body into histories of struggle: “. . . when I saw that, how closely they worked with the farm workers, the TWWA worked with farm workers and helped to establish the retirement village - yes, i went, *oh my god, I had no idea! I didn't know!* There was revelation after revelation. I was familiar with Filipino farm workers, my father was one during the summer and fall months . . . I knew that history, but I had no idea, how closely the TWWA worked with them. It's fantastic.”

Finally, Davenport connected the TWWA's white paper on “careerism” to her work with the Brick Hut Cafe. She noted that she and another working class woman were the only two people left at the end of the cafe's life, because others left to pursue careers and middle-class lives:

[The TWWA's white paper on careerism] spoke to me of how because of the necessity of earning a living, women often chose to leave revolutionary groups because they weren't making any money, or enough money to maybe have a lifestyle that they were seeking. At any rate, this was called careerism -- so they quit groups that were making a difference in the street, for women of color, in order to go and get a degree or maybe change directions and seek a career . . . So you have to ask yourself, *who has time to devote to revolution?* . . . Are you willing to give up all of the luxuries of a middle class life in order to further the revolution?

Both Guglielmo and Nutter also connected their discussion of the TWWA archives to their immigrant, working-class family backgrounds. For Guglielmo, her sense of outsider-status in institutions of higher education have led her to transform her pedagogy for students who might feel similarly alienated along axes of race and class:

Smith is a community that always felt very alienating to me. It felt like a very white feminist kind of space, and sometimes not even feminist, it felt kind of corporate, and extremely white--and when I say white, I mean White Anglo Saxon Protestant, and very middle and especially upper-middle class. I felt like an interloper and an outsider and it took me years to get over that, I mean, who knows if I really have. And what I realized early on is how the demographics of the student body is shifting dramatically. . . . as the demographics of the students changed, I felt that it was really critical pedagogically and otherwise to create spaces where students who are not familiar with these kinds of upper-class worlds not only felt like they belonged, but had enough space to reimagine these spaces too.

Guglielmo's work in public history, then, responded not only to her desire to connect her classroom work to social movements, but her desire to create pedagogical spaces that were accessible and engaging for working-class students and students of color. She sees archival records like the TWWA's as making feminism and feminist struggle accessible to these students as well, and offering students an opportunity to open up historical inquiries that connect to their home communities. When I shared with Guglielmo that it had taken me until my late 20s to identify as feminist, and cited women-of-color/Third World feminist texts as the writings that made feminism accessible to me, she noted that such theories were her "center of gravity" and teaching, and remarked:

I think [groups like the TWWA] created more space for young women like yourself to enter into the movement, to see themselves as part of a movement. . . . I think for students of color, for working class students, you can trace back into the communities that we grew up in, and so then you can see yourself connected to history, and part of the

movement, and part of the theoretical innovation . . . rather than that we're trying to learn something that is outside of us . . . It's not gonna be Susan B. Anthony that's gonna do that for a lot of us.³⁴⁷

In conversation, then, these interviewees connected the TWWA archives to their own lived experiences and family backgrounds, as well as their pedagogical inquiries into history. The TWWA archives function rhetorically to engage students in historical inquiry, and to demystify the social stratifications that shape both political and pedagogical contexts.

Conclusion and Implications

The construction of the TWWA's history via its archives, pedagogical use of the archives, and practices of remediating the archives across mode/genre (CD-ROM/slideshow, pop-up exhibit, digital timeline) bring into focus the blurry lines between past/present and campus/community. One important emergent theme in the interviews is *access to history*. Both analog and digital remediation practices have affordances for making history accessible. While all three remediated texts put past/present concretely into conversation, the ease of circulating digital histories renders them particularly useful for pedagogical use in both campus and community spaces. Because of space/genre constraints, the TWWA's work is most often captured via images of the cover of *Triple Jeopardy*; while this newspaper was a cornerstone of the group's work, such images become a synecdoche for the group's work as a whole. Because the image of three women standing together on the cover of *Triple Jeopardy* is used to

³⁴⁷ Susan B. Anthony famously remarked: "I will cut off this right arm of mine before I will ever work or demand the ballot for the Negro and not the woman."

rhetorically invoke the theory of intersectionality, the theory is defined in a particular (but partial) way: as multiracial alliance. In the history of the TWWA, intersectional analysis arose out of the particular struggles of Black women within SNCC, who formed two separate organizations for Black women before transforming into the TWWA. Thus, it is important to re-ground any discussion of intersectionality in the TWWA in the group's initial formation, or there is a risk of flattening the experiences of different women of color in the U.S. and erasing the particularity of Black women's experiences of racism and sexism.

The concurrent push to diversify Smith's campus and the SSC suggests a link between access to institutions for working class students/students of color, and access to histories like the TWWA's. For working class students/students of color, access to such histories is necessary to understand oneself as a historical actor and participant in struggles for social justice, both on- and off-campus, and dwelling in the blurry lines between the two. Additionally, the TWWA archives have particular affordances in demonstrating the development of theory out of lived experience and social movement organizing, and methodologies for engaging in critical reflection on the limitations of such work. For rhetorical historiography, this suggests that we must critically engage the questions, temporalities, and geographies that are embodied by researchers. Such an embodied orientation towards historiography and historical research is evident in the values and principles embedded in the TWWA's orientation towards history (explored in previous chapters) and the orientation towards history expressed by those who engage with the group's archives. This raises important questions about how R/C conceives of time and place in questions of historiography. What histories lead to rhetorical/material engagement with struggles for social justice? What historical materials and primary-source documents allow working class students/students of color to undertake embodied historical

research? What does the remediation of these sources indicate about the relationship between past and present social injustices and collective work to redress them?

These interviews also indicate that the TWWA archives open up critical questions across disciplines--in women's and gender studies, history, archival studies, and campus/community partnerships. This suggests that archives are an important site of writing in the disciplines, via a set of relationships that constellate around primary-source historical documents:

community/campus collaborations; deep relationships among students and histories that they have not had access to before; alliances among historical struggles such as those documented in *Triple Jeopardy*; and the labor of those who curate archival materials, pedagogically engage these materials, and work with students to remediate them. I am mindful here of Young's reference to concerns that U.S. Third Worldism, in the end, risked privileging justice in the U.S. over justice in what has been termed the "global south." The fact that the archives are housed in an institution of higher education requires a similar line of critical questioning. To what extent do the TWWA's archives serve the purposes of multicultural higher education over the purposes of anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-imperialist social movements in 2017? There is no easy answer to that question. However, these interviews demonstrate that campus and community contexts are not mutually exclusive or neatly divided. The blurry lines between campus and community are similar to the blurry lines between the first/third worlds, existing within the U.S. This is not to write campus as "first world" and community as "third world," but to think about how binarized locations are actually blurry and co-constitutive. Such blurry lines are also evident in the TWWA archives; their internal education program used a document on Asian women's history written by a student group at Antioch Ohio college; meeting minutes indicate that they often met on U.C.

Berkeley's campus; and a National Report indicates that a TWWA member had a job teaching Ethnic Studies.³⁴⁸

Finally, I want to touch on the affective theme in these interviews. Davenport spoke quite a bit about the revelatory excitement of processing the TWWA archives, and Guglielmo, Nutter, and Baker discussed their students' excitement and energy for archival research. I can personally relate to this, having felt deep excitement and wonder working my way through the TWWA archives, particularly as I started to unearth songs, scripts, and cultural event programs, alternating with a deep sense of despair at the racist, sexist, imperialist forces that the group was up against, and their similarities to newspaper articles I'd read that morning. This suggests a deep link between affective engagement, personal resonance, and historical inquiry using primary source documents--one that must be taken into account as a pedagogical resource, but which must also be critically engaged.

³⁴⁸ See "Dear Sisters" (8 September 1976) regarding an Evaluation meeting that would take place October 16, 1976 at the Women's Center Lounge at UC Berkeley. See also "Agenda for Coordinating Committee" regarding volleyball on campus, and UC Berkeley letterhead in Box 1, Folder 7 of the TWWA archives. For reference to TWWA member Leslie's job teaching Ethnic Studies, see "National report – LESLIE & TONI'S PARTICIPATION."

CONCLUSION

Ending as Beginning

I sit down to write the conclusion to this dissertation just after Barbara Smith, lifelong activist, educator, and founding member of the Combahee River Collective, visited Syracuse and gave two lectures. At both, she held up a copy of Jeanne Theoharis's recent book, *A More Beautiful and Terrible History: The Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History*, and cited it as a crucial book for political organizers today. In Smith's work with the Poor People's Campaign, she has put forth chapters of the book in internal political education as a way to develop a deeper understanding of the anti-imperialism of the initial Poor People's Campaign, led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Smith's own work, straddling the line between educator and political organizer, and her invocation of Theoharis' book, are touchstones for me as I reflect on this project, and the exigencies that shape historical work. I followed my own curiosity and experience into this project, and in documenting some of the Third World Women's Alliance's less-documented work (and the ongoing use of its archives), I hoped to distill insights that might be of use to others who are also inhabiting the contradictions of organizing/academic research. Smith's invocation of the book reminds us that history matters deeply to current movements and educational spaces. In this conclusion--which I see as a beginning, more than an ending--I want to think through the primary lessons I can distill from this project. Broadly, the TWWA's work asks us to think about intersectional approaches to the field that span subdisciplines--in this case, rhetorical history, rhetoric and geopolitics, and multimodal/multigenre composition. In the context of the U.S.

Third World Left, these three subdisciplines were intimately intertwined, through the relational literacies developed in publications, political education, and cultural work.

As I explored in the introduction to this dissertation, there is tension in rhetorical historiography about charges of “presentism”--when historical work is done with too much of a focus on the present. The TWWA’s historical work might be dismissed under such a rubric. When we center the organization's social movement work, we see that constructing and invoking histories was seen by TWWA members as a deep necessity--so people who are never written into the dominant narrative of U.S. history could understand themselves as makers of history, and work to change their conditions of life and work. As Miriam Ching Yoon Louie noted, the ultimate end was new principles and literacies for living and relating, and the group understood itself as engaged in the messy struggle towards these principles and literacies. The practices that the group developed during this struggle--which, as we see in Chapter 4, required dealing with drastically different takes on the success/failure of the organization's public work--offer a way of thinking about the development of theory in social movements. When we orient to the group's anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-imperialist principles, we are orienting towards the principles that shaped these practices; through practice, the principles were put into action and clarified. This was, of course, a process with tensions, contradictions, and ruptures; but it offers an on-the-ground account of how U.S. Third World, intersectional theories were hashed out through the everyday labor of social movement organizing. R/C theories and methods help us orient to the way that textual practices--such as composing across mode/genre both within and outside the organization; engaging in political education, publications, and cultural work; coordinating linked campaigns; and skills-building for leadership development--play a role in the development of relational, intersectional, geopolitical analyses.

The notion of a "U.S. Third World" scene for rhetoric and writing--or, as the Alliance put it, the notion of living *in the belly of the monster* of U.S. imperialism--asks us to think deeply about the difficult rhetorical work of linking histories, and the embodied exigencies for doing so. The rhetoric of the U.S. Third World Left more broadly asks us to toggle back and forth among the scales of the body, locality, and transnationality, and to consider how each is constitutive of the other. In other words, it asks the discipline to develop relational literacies to understand the rhetorical interactions among body, locality, and transnationality, and to think relationally about what are termed "U.S. ethnic rhetorical histories." In order to understand the TWWA's organizing work, and the ways in which the group invoked, constructed, and connected histories, we need to orient to the necessity of anti-oppression work along intersecting axes that include--but are not limited to--race, class, gender, and empire. R/C concepts like *relational literacies*, and an intersectional understanding of rhetoric, in turn, allow for a comprehensive understanding of the rhetorical work of social movements that spans histories, geopolitics, and forms, and puts these areas into conversation with one another.

Engaging closely with the TWWA's work over the past two and a half years has often left me with the nagging feeling of how to understand their intersectional anti-imperialist politics in relation to the issues that I feel, in a deeply embodied sense, as shaping my own historical inquiry. It is clear to me from the interviews for this project, and from the excitement with which politically-active friends have responded to the TWWA's archival materials here in Syracuse, that their work continues to deeply resonate today. In the introduction, I wrote about the questions that first brought me into contact with the rhetorical genealogies of the U.S. Third World Left, particularly women's organizing; the spate of hate crimes targeting Hindu Indians in the U.S. As I think about returning to this line of research, the TWWA's work reminds me that

my work must center the literacies and analyses of those who are doing the labor of social movement organizing, connecting race, class, gender, caste, immigration status, sexuality, language, and ability in these hate crimes. The TWWA's work also asks me, methodologically, to think about anti-Hindu racism as always-in-relation to imperialist violence both within and outside the U.S. targeting people of color, and operating in relation to U.S. settler colonialism, anti-Blackness, labor exploitation, Islamophobia, and the borders of nation-state. To develop an intersectional framework for engaging with state violence in 2018, in other words, I can take a lead from the relational literacies that the TWWA built in its work.

As I think towards my new position as an assistant professor this fall--work that will, after the first year, be focused on writing across the curriculum and writing in the disciplines--I am also left thinking about all the administrative documents that informed the archival work in this dissertation. In Kendall Leon's work, she reflects that the administrative documents located in Chicana feminist organizing have important implications for professional writing studies. The TWWA's documents similarly serve as an example of how genres and practices that are framed as "professional writing" also operate in community organizing work: memos, reports, synthesized interviews, meeting reminders, training materials, etc. In the future, I hope to foreground social movement documents in classrooms focused on disciplinary writing, as a way to think about genre and a social justice orientation across contexts. As Kynard writes in *Vernacular Insurrections*, academic literacies and protest movements are not mutually exclusive; students gain "protest literacies" through organizing work that inform and enrich their work as students.

This is the positive, generative part of the analysis--how I see the TWWA's work and disciplinary concepts dynamically engaging each other. There are tensions and contradictions in

this research, too, and of course I'm left thinking about those. Now that U.S. Third World and Third World feminisms have been widely and deeply theorized, historical work on a group like the TWWA (and its uptake today) must deal with the tensions and contradictions among Third World, U.S. Third World, Black, Latinx, Chicanx, Indigenous, Arab, and Asian feminisms as they manifest in a U.S. context. Scholarship in R/C--which centers the importance of scene, the relationship between scene and body, and the geopolitical contours of scene (outlined in the Introduction), as well as the composing practices that constitute and are constituted by scene--offers a framework for critically reading the TWWA's history in relation to these other genealogies. For example, when we think relationally not only about the histories forged within the TWWA, but also across organizations, we might critically engage the group's theory of culture for drawing on Asian and U.S. Leftist cultural theories, but less so from Black and Latinx work. While the process of developing the cultural theory demonstrates the principles, practices of writing and rhetoric, and intersecting geopolitics that shaped the group's theory of culture, panning out to think more broadly about the "U.S. Third World" scene demonstrates the limitations of the specific groups the TWWA interviewed. I cite this not as a broad critique of the TWWA, but as a way of demonstrating how an intersectional, historical understanding of geopolitical scenes makes-visible relationalities that are not accounted for, and tensions between principles and practice in self-defined anti-imperialist work located in the U.S.

We can also critically reflect on the uses of the TWWA's history through the lens of intersecting histories, geopolitics, and forms. For example, while the visual rhetoric of *Triple Jeopardy*--particularly the arresting image of three women of different races holding guns--serves educators in invoking intersectionality for students today, this invocation of intersectionality might be deepened and extended by accounting not only for multiracial

coalition, but also for the specific concerns of Black women that led to the formation of the TWWA; the intersecting geopolitical histories that comprise that multiracial coalition; the intersecting histories that are brought together in such an image; and the intersecting rhetorical forms that communicate and circulate these histories and geopolitical analyses (beyond the newspaper). In the Introduction, I noted some of the ways intersectionality has been taken up in the field that reduce it to race + gender; engaging with the pedagogical uses of the TWWA makes me think about how difficult it is to communicate such a complex theoretical framework to students in the constraints of a class, but reinforces the necessity of accounting for that complexity. With some time and space away from this project, I hope to reflect more critically on the history written in these pages, and to think more explicitly about the pedagogical implications of this history.

Looking forward, I'm excited to engage students in these contradictions and histories, and in the embodied historical research that Davenport, Guglielmo, and others described in Chapter 5. As I think about our work in classrooms, the TWWA--and the cultural work of the U.S. Third World Left more broadly--offers a genealogy of multimodal, multigenre composition that cannot be disconnected from history, geopolitics, or embodied exigencies. Engaging with professors who work with the Alliance's archives demonstrates that the group's work is also being taken up and recontextualized across mode and genre as a way of reaching new audiences and making meaningful, material connections to contemporary social justice movements. The TWWA, and the rhetorical genealogies of the U.S. Third World Left, offer a framework for thinking relationally across history, geopolitics, and form. In other words, by studying the TWWA's relational literacies for engaging history, geopolitics, and form, the discipline of R/C develops relational literacies for thinking across these three areas of the field. The organization's archived

administrative documents remind us to be attentive to conditions of living, and struggles for justice and dignity, that shape the uses of history.

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VITA

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EDUCATION

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Certificate of Advanced Study in Women's & Gender Studies

Dissertation: "The Third World Women's Alliance: History, Geopolitics, and Form"

Committee: Lois P. Agnew (director), Eileen E. Schell, Gwendolyn D. Pough, Aja Y. Martinez,
Chandra Talpade Mohanty (Women's and Gender Studies)

MA, English, Rhetoric and Composition, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO | 2014

BA, Anthropology/Music, Barnard College, New York, NY | 2005

Semester Abroad: School for International Training, Jaipur, India

TEACHING & WRITING CENTER CONSULTATION

- 2017** **Syracuse University, University College**
Practices of Academic Writing: Rhetoric, Writing & the Body (WRT 105). Higher Education Opportunities Program
Introduction to College Level Writing: Digital Narratives (WRT 104). Summer Start Program
- 2015–16** **Syracuse University, Dept. of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition**
Advanced Writing Studio: Multi-Genre Research & Writing (WRT 303)
Critical Research & Writing: Local Histories (WRT 205)
Practices of Academic Writing: Inquiry to Literacy (WRT 105)
Writing Center Consultant & Writing Enrichment (WRT 120)
- 2012–14** **Colorado State University Department of English**
College Composition: Ethics in Higher Education (CO 150)
College Composition: Internet & Social Media (CO 150)
- 2013** **Boulder Writing Studio (Boulder, CO)**
Creative Writing, Teen Writers and Young Authors Summer Programs
- 2002–5** **Barnard College Writing Center**

Writing Fellow, Higher Education Opportunities Program
Writing Fellow, Introduction to Music and Introduction to American Literature

TEACHER TRAINING, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT & ASSESSMENT

- 2017** **Syracuse University, Dept. of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition**
Teaching Mentor, TA Orientation for WRT 105: Practices of Academic Writing
- 2016** **Syracuse University, Dept. of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition**
Portfolio Scorer, Assessment for WRT 205: Critical Research & Writing
- 2013** **Boulder Writing Studio (Boulder, CO)**
Curriculum Design, Teen Writers Summer Creative Writing Program
Curriculum Design, Young Authors Summer Creative Writing Program
- 2013** **Colorado State University Department of English**
Content Developer, *Ethics in Higher Education* First-Year Composition textbook
(Fountainhead Press, 2013)

PUBLICATIONS

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Kannan, Vani. "The *Mahamantra*, Kirtan Performance, and the Embodied Circulation of Cultural Rhetoric." *Enculturation: A Journal of Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture* vol. 2, 2016. Web. *Special issue on cultural rhetorics.*

Canzonetta, Jordan & **Vani Kannan**. "Globalizing Plagiarism & Writing Assessment: A Case Study of Turnitin." *Journal of Writing Assessment* vol. 9, no. 2, 2016. Web.

Kannan, Vani, Ben Kuebrich & Yanira Rodríguez. "Unmasking Corporate-Military Infrastructure: Four Theses." *Community Literacy Journal* vol. 11, no. 1, 2016, pp. 76–89. Print. *Special issue from the inaugural Conference on Community Writing.*

Smith, Cherish & **Vani Kannan**. "'At Risk' of What? Rewriting a Prescribed Relationship in a Community Literacy Nonprofit Organization. A Dialogue." *Reflections: Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, and Service Learning* vol. 14, issue 2, 2015, pp. 51–77. Print.

Kannan, Vani, Joe Schicke & Sue Doe. "Performing Horizontal Activism: Expanding Academic Labor Advocacy Throughout and Beyond a Three-Step Process." *Literacy in Composition Studies* vol. 3, no. 1, 2015, pp. 89–100. Web. *Special issue: "The New Activism."*

Soto, Karriann & **Vani Kannan**. "Social Media & the Politics of Collegiality: An Interview with Steven Salaita." *Journal of Academic Freedom* vol. 6, 2015, pp. 1–11. Web.

Kannan, Vani. “‘Model Minority’ or Potential Terrorist? Affective Economies, Rhetorics of Silence & the Murder of Sunando Sen.” *Studies on Asia* vol. 4, issue 1, 2014, pp. 7–43. Web. *Special issue on the model minority stereotype*.

IN PROGRESS

Review of *South Asian in the Mid-South: Migrations of Literacies* by Iswari P. Pandey. Invited review for *Enculturation* special issue, “Trans/Formations of Asian/Asian American Rhetoric.” Includes a digital interview with the author. (forthcoming, 2018)

“Legibility, Failure & Political Turning.” Invited chapter, *The Political Turn in the Trump Era: Writing, Democracy, Activism*. (Draft submitted)

“An Interview with Chandra Talpade Mohanty” (with Karriann Soto). *This Rhetorical Life*. Podcast. Web. (Forthcoming, 2018)

OTHER SELECT PUBLICATIONS

“Memorializing ‘Deportees.’” *Woody Guthrie Annual* 1(2015): 83–100. Web.

“SATSA, ‘The New Global Threat’ & the Professionalization of War on Campus.” *Peace Newsletter*. Syracuse Peace Council, Sept. 2015. Print/Web.

“Conversations about Academic Labor, Academic Freedom, and Palestine” (with Karriann Soto). *This Rhetorical Life*, 2014. Podcast. Web.

“What an Education Looks Like: The Sit-In at Syracuse University” (with Ben Kuebrich & Yanira Rodríguez). *Peace Newsletter*. Syracuse Peace Council, 2014. Print/Web.

“Student Sit-In at Syracuse Draws International Inspiration” (with Yanira Rodríguez). *The Progressive*, 2014. Print/Web.

“Holder’s Legacy: The Constitutional Rights Implications of *Al-Aulaqi v. Panetta*.” *Peace Newsletter*. Syracuse Peace Council, 2014. Print/Web.

“Speakout! Journals as Adult Literacy Learning Tools.” *Changing Lives through Literature*, 2013. Web.

“The Art of the Square.” (collaboratively-authored). In *Occupying Wall Street: The Inside Story of an Action that Changed America*. Writers for the 99%: OR Books/Haymarket Books, 2011. Print.

“As Real.” *Mobius: The Journal of Social Change* 22.3(2011). Web.

“Midnight Walk” and “Novelties.” *Alba: A Journal of Short Poetry* 22(2011). Web.

EDITORIAL WORK & PROFESSIONAL WRITING

- 2016–17** Liason to the Editorial Board, Studies in Writing and Rhetoric Book Series.
- 2015–16** Associate Editor, Studies in Writing and Rhetoric Book Series.
- 2016** Freelance Copyeditor, Working and Writing for Change, Parlor Press.
- 2013–14** Freelance Developmental Editor and Copyeditor, zenner ink (Boulder, CO).
- 2005–12** Freelance Copyeditor, Norton Professional Books, W. W. Norton.
- 2009–12** Associate Managing Editor, Norton Professional Books, W. W. Norton.
- 2005–9** Assistant Editor/Editorial Assistant, Norton Professional Books, W. W. Norton.

PRESENTATIONS

NATIONAL CONFERENCE PANELS, ROUNDTABLES & WORKSHOPS

2018

“An Absent Presence in Rhetorical Studies: (Re)Inventing Asian/American Rhetoric.” Roundtable with Morris Young, LuMing Mao, Terese Monberg, Jo Hsu, Sharon Yam, Kate Firestone, and Florianne Jimenez. *Rhetoric Society of America Conference*, Minneapolis, MN.

“The Labor of Alliance-Building: Writing against Racism, Sexism, and Imperialism.” Panel with Tamara Issak and Benesemon Simmons. *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, Kansas City, MO.

“Anti-Imperialist Methodologies for Intersectional Alliance-Building.” Feminist Workshop, *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, Kansas City, MO.

2017

“Multi-Genre Writing & Social Justice: Contesting Colorism in an Era of Colorblind Racism.” Panel with Coreen Mason and Nuhami Mandefro, *SUNY Conference on Writing*, Onondaga Community College, Syracuse, NY.

“U.S.--Third World as Metaphor & Methodology: Archival Lessons for Alliance-Building.” *National Women’s Studies Association Conference*, Baltimore, MD.

“Academic Labor as Embodied Performance: Popular Theatre as a Coalitional Pedagogy.” Panel presentation with Sue Doe, Sarah Austin, and Lydia Page. *Conference on Community Writing*, University of Colorado at Boulder, CO.

“Policing the Campus ‘Community.’” Panel presentation with Ben Kuebrich and Yanira Rodríguez. *Conference on Community Writing*, University of Colorado at Boulder, CO.

“Intersectional Education as Capacity Building: Lessons from U.S.–Third World Feminist Archives.” Panel presentation, “Pedagogy, Place & Public Memory: Cultivating Feminist, Hiphop & Queer Archival Research Methodologies,” with Becca Hayes and Victor Del Hierro. *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, Portland, OR.

2016

“Intersectional Education in the Third World Women’s Alliance.” *National Women’s Studies Association Conference*, Montréal, Québec.

“Embodied Resonance: The Third World Women’s Alliance & Coalitional Metaphors.” *Cultural Rhetorics Conference*, Michigan State University.

“#ModelMinorityMutiny: Writing ‘Asian America’ in Solidarity with Movements for Racial Justice.” Asian/Asian–American Caucus sponsored roundtable, “New Directions in Transnational Asian/Asian American Rhetoric and Composition: Issues for Historiography, Digital Rhetoric, Racial Justice, and Writing Center Research.” *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, Houston, TX.

2015

“Assessing Activist Performance: What Happens when the Play is Over?” Panel presentation, “Conversations on Labor: Report on a Cross-Campus/Regional Organizing Approach Using Participatory Theatre,” with Sue Doe, Sarah Austin, and Lydia Page. *Conference on Community Writing*, Boulder, CO.

“Community Writing against the Rhetoric of the Corporate University.” Workshop co-chair with Ben Kuebrich and Yanira Rodríguez. *Conference on Community Writing*, Boulder, CO.

“The Other Side of the Pond.” Panel participant, “The Political Turn,” with Jacqueline Jones Royster, Nancy Welch, Wendy Hesford, Ralph Cintron, Paul Feigenbaum, and Laurie Grobman. *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, Tampa, FL.

“Writing Democracy: Invisibility and Visibility.” Workshop co-chair with Steve Parks, Deborah Mutnick, Shannon Carter, and Ben Kuebrich. *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, Tampa, FL.

2014

“Pedagogies of Song & Rhetorics of Complicity.” Panel with Karrieann Soto. *Cultural Rhetorics Conference*, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

“Storytelling as Activism: Building Student–GTA Alliances.” Roundtable with Lisa Langstraat, Sue Doe, Nancy Henke, and Emily Morgan. *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, Indianapolis, IN.

2013

“Contesting the Pedagogical Division of Labor.” Qualitative Research Network Forum, *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, Las Vegas, NV.

LOCAL CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS

2016

Introduction and Facilitation, “Inquiries and Intersections in Composition and Cultural Rhetoric: Theory, Method/ology, Pedagogy.” Composition and Cultural Rhetoric Graduate Circle Spring Symposium/Writing Retreat, Syracuse University.

“Intersectional Feminism, Coalitional Rhetoric, and Archival Methods.” Articulation: Illumination, a RSA Ignite Research Colloquium, Syracuse University.

2015

“Moves to Innocence & Moves to Futurity.” Jeannette K. Watson Graduate Symposium, Syracuse University.

2014

“Strategies for Negotiating GTA Labor Status in the FYC Classroom.” Brownbag lunch presentation, Department of English, Colorado State University.

2013

“Austerity Education” (with Brian Pickett). *Colorado State University Women’s Conference*.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

2017

“Multi-Genre Writing Pedagogy & Social Justice in a ‘Post-Truth’ Era.” Fall Conference, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition, Syracuse University.

“Naming Pedagogical Values.” Teaching Assistant Training, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition, Syracuse University.

2016

“Division.” Best of Student Nonfiction Series, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric and Composition, Syracuse University.

“Synthesizing Research Interests.” Composition and Cultural Rhetoric Visiting Days, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition, Syracuse University.

2015

“Taking Collective Risks.” Composition and Cultural Rhetoric Community Day: Phases and Passages, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition, Syracuse University.

2014

“Strategies for MA Thesis-Writing.” Colorado State University Rhetoric and Composition Colloquium.

HONORS & AWARDS

Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, Syracuse University (2018).

CCCC Chairs’ Memorial Scholarship (2018)

Graduate Fellowship, College of Arts & Sciences, Syracuse University (2014–18)

Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Advanced Collaboratory (HASTAC) Scholar, MacArthur Foundation/Duke University (2016–18)

Toni Taverone Women’s Studies Graduate Paper Prize, Department of Women’s and Gender Studies, Syracuse University (2015)

Composition and Cultural Rhetoric Summer Research Grant, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition, Syracuse University (2015)

MA thesis defense, passed with distinction, Colorado State University (2014)

Outstanding Writing Award in Composition, Rhetoric, and Literacy, Department of English, Colorado State University (2014)

Cross-Cultural Understanding Scholarship, Department of English, Colorado State University (2013)

Outstanding Writing Award in Composition, Rhetoric, and Literacy, Department of English, Colorado State University (2013)

SERVICE

NATIONAL

2017–

Reviewer, *Reflections: Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, and Service Learning*.

Reviewer, *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry*.

2016–17

Member, Awards Committee, Conference on Community Writing.

2015

Reviewer, Asian/Asian-American Caucus sponsored panel submissions, Conference on College Composition and Communication.

UNIVERSITY

2015

Member, Faculty Senate Committee on Women's Concerns, Syracuse University.

University Senator, Graduate Student Organization, Syracuse University.

2013–14

President, Finding Racial & Economic Equality, Colorado State University.

2012–14

Member, Organization of Graduate Student Writers, Colorado State University.

DEPARTMENT

2017

Curriculum Planner, Fall Teaching Conference, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition, Syracuse University.

2016

Reviewer, Best Student Essay, *Intertext* student publication, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric and Composition, Syracuse University

2015–16

Graduate Student Representative, Cultural Rhetorics Faculty Search Committee, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric and Composition, Syracuse University.

Chair, Composition and Cultural Rhetoric Graduate Circle, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric and Composition, Syracuse University.

Member, Composition and Cultural Rhetoric Graduate Circle Writing Retreat Subcommittee, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric and Composition, Syracuse University.

2014–15

Member, Composition and Cultural Rhetoric Graduate Circle Writing Retreat Subcommittee, Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric and Composition, Syracuse University.

2012–14

Graduate Student Representative, Department of English Graduate Committee, Colorado State University.

COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION WORK

Curriculum design and facilitation for creative writing, adult literacy, and ESL courses for several organizations, including the Colorado State University Community Literacy Center and Brooklyn Public Library.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2016–18

Future Professoriate Program, Syracuse University.

2017

Rhetoric Society of America Summer Institute Workshop with Darrel Wanzer-Serrano and Aimee Carrillo Rowe, “Decolonizing Rhetoric for the 21st Century.” Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.

2012–14

Professional Internship in English Program & Certificate, Colorado State University.

2012

“Writing for Social Justice” Inquiry to Action Group, New York Collective of Radical Educators, New York, NY.

2011

Brooklyn Public Library Adult Literacy Tutor Training.

2007

Fundamentals of Copyediting. NYU School of Continuing Education.

MEMBERSHIP

CCCC Asian/Asian American Caucus
Cultural Rhetorics Consortium
National Council of Teachers of English
National Women's Studies Association
Rhetoric Society of America