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"The Care and Feeding of Power Structures": Reconceptualizing Geospatial Intelligence through the Countermapping Efforts of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

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This article advances three interrelated arguments. First, by focusing on the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's (SNCC) Research Department, an undertheorized chapter in the civil rights movement, we advance an expressly spatialized understanding of the African American freedom struggle. Second, by focusing on an SNCC-produced pamphlet titled *The Care and Feeding of Power Structures*, we advance a larger historical geography of geospatial agency and countermapping of racial capital within black civil rights struggles. SNCC's research praxis, which we argue constitutes a radical geospatial intelligence project, recognizes that geographical methods, information, and analytical insights are not just the purview of experts but are a set of political tools and processes deployed by a wide range of groups. Our article develops a deeper understanding of the rich spatial practices underlying black geographies and the role of geospatial intelligence in a democratic society outside the military–industrial–academic complex. *Key Words: black geographies, civil rights, countermapping, geospatial intelligence, SNCC.*

本文推进三大相关主张。首先，通过聚焦学生非暴力协作委员会（SNCC）的研究部门——一个公民权运动中未经授权的支会——我们推进对非裔美国人自由斗争的显著空间化理解。再者，通过聚焦 SNCC 所生产的标题为"权力结构的关照与喂养"之小册子，我们推进地理空间施为的广泛历史地理学，以及黑人公民权斗争中对种族资本的反抗製图。我们主张，SNCC 的研究实践，构成了一个激进的地理空间智能计画，认识到地理学方法、信息与分析洞见，并非仅是专家的权限，而是由广泛的团体所部署的一组政治工具与过程。我们的文章，对支撑黑色地理学的丰富空间实践，以及地理空间智能在军工学术复合体之外的民主社会中所扮演的角色，建立更为深刻的理解。*关键词：黑色地理学，公民权，反抗製图，地理空间智能，SNCC。*

Este artículo adelanta tres argumentos interrelacionados. Primero, orientando nuestro interés hacia el Departamento de Investigaciones del Comité Coordinador del Estudiante No Violento (SNCC), un capítulo poco teorizado del movimiento de los derechos civiles, promovemos un entendimiento expresamente espacializado de la lucha por la libertad afroamericana. Segundo, enfocándonos en un panfleto producido por el SNCC titulado "El cuidado social y las estructuras del poder en el programa de alimentos", impulsamos una geografía histórica más amplia de la agencia geoespacial y del contramapeo del capital social dentro de la lucha por los derechos civiles negros. La praxis investigativa del SNCC, que a nuestro modo de ver constituye un radical proyecto de inteligencia geoespacial, reconoce que la metodología, información y perspicacias analíticas geográficas no caen solamente dentro del ámbito de expertos, sino que son un conjunto de herramientas y procesos políticos desplegados por una amplia gama de grupos. Nuestro artículo desarrolla un entendimiento más profundo de las ricas prácticas espaciales que subrayan las geografías negras, y del papel de la inteligencia geoespacial en una sociedad democrática por fuera del complejo militar–industrial–académico. *Palabras clave: contramapeo, derechos civiles, geografías negras, inteligencia geoespacial, SNCC.*

The purpose of this article is threefold. First, by focusing on the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's (SNCC) Research Department, an undertheorized chapter in the civil rights movement, we advance an expressly spatialized understanding of the African American freedom struggle. Neglected within the still nascent geographic literature on the civil rights movement (e.g., Wilson 2000; Tyner 2006a, 2006b; Dwyer and Alderman 2008; Heynen 2009; Inwood 2009;

McCutcheon 2013) is a focus on the SNCC and in particular its activism as geospatial work. Because these grassroots campaigns do not have as prominent a place in a U.S. national popular memory dominated by images of charismatic civil rights leaders and top-down organizations, we run the risk of oversimplifying the sophisticated intellectual work and strategic planning of everyday activism. We suggest that a critical rereading of SNCC activism can shed light on the fundamental role geography played in the civil rights movement, explode the narrow range of activities and practices that traditionally count for geographic knowledge (Inwood 2017), and support ongoing efforts to decolonize the discipline and how we understand geography as a social practice (Bryan and Wood 2015; Radcliffe 2017).

Our second purpose is to focus specifically on the production of a pamphlet entitled *The Care and Feeding of Power Structures* (Minnis 1965b) as part of a larger historical geography of geospatial agency and activism within black civil rights struggles. What appears on the surface as a modest, ten-page pamphlet instead is a virtual instruction guide for training and inspiring activists to expose, track, and visualize the ownership stake that powerful institutions, corporations, and individuals had in upholding white supremacy. SNCC hoped to map the broader geographies of racial capital at work in the communities they were organizing, identifying connections that powerful actors had with each other and with broader social networks at varying spatial scales. By rendering a countermapping of the power structure in the U.S. Deep South, SNCC sought to make visible the flows of profit and webs of interdependence that supported racial discrimination. SNCC encouraged its field secretaries to leverage this knowledge to identify "pressure points" that could be exploited by activists to confront and challenge white supremacy.

SNCC's geographic praxis recognizes that geographical methods, information, and analytical insights are not just the purview of experts but are a set of political tools and processes deployed by a wide range of groups. Importantly, we argue that SNCC's research praxis constituted what we call a radical geospatial intelligence project that, among many other things, encouraged activists to gather and transform data and map the relations of capitalism and community power for the strategic and insurgent purposes of challenging racial inequality. These resistant intelligence efforts existed at the very same moment that hostile local, state, and federal governments were surveilling and tracking major groups, leaders, and campaigns of the civil rights movement. The countermapping of community power that *The Care and Feeding* prescribed was just one part of a broader subaltern and sometimes covert geospatial intelligence (GI) effort on the part of the SNCC to mine, appropriate, and use publicly available social and spatial data and collect and create their own data, oral testimony, and photographic evidence to carry out what SNCC advisor Ella Baker called the "spade work" of organizing mostly rural black communities.

In addition to pamphlets such as *The Care and Feeding of Power Structures*, this radical GI resulted in a host of state reports, freedom curriculum, political mobilization cartoons, newsletters, and detailed documentation of racialized discrimination and violence. Importantly, we interpret these instances of SNCC research explicitly as "intelligence" to capture the gravity of the often life-and-death battle the civil rights organization waged against white supremacy and the strategic and actionable value that geographic knowledge had to that struggle. Through interviews with SNCC veterans, one of the imperatives that drove the intelligence effort was the very real belief that many of the organizers would be killed and there needed to be a written record to drive the organization forward should something happen to its leadership or its field organizers. All opposition research was created and deployed with the hopes, sometimes realized but sometimes not, of expanding the political consciousness and sense of empowerment, education and training, communication capabilities, and decision-making processes and social mobilization of oppressed communities in the Deep South.

The idea of the civil rights movement creating, deploying, and depending on radical geographical intelligence opens up a much-needed conversation about the role of GI in a democratic society outside the context of the military–industrial–academic complex and how we as a discipline come to understand the progressive potential of geographical knowledge within public arenas and struggles. Such a conversation is not intended to equate SNCC's research praxis to the well-funded, officially sanctioned GI projects of today. Rather than a formal tradecraft or a set of technologies and techniques, the geographic intelligence process of SNCC was a nonprofessionalized, creative resistance process. The intelligence

products of SNCC do not necessarily conform to traditional geographic conventions about what constitutes maps, spatial data, and analysis, but they render legible geographic knowledge about the power structures operating in communities in the southeastern United States.

By more centrally acknowledging SNCC's radical geospatial activism, our third major purpose in this article is to develop a deeper understanding of the rich, spatial practices underlying black geographies, an intellectual and political movement that is gaining critical traction within and outside the discipline of geography. One of the foundations of black geographies is recognition of the resistant agency of African Americans in creating and using geographic knowledge production within and against white supremacy and articulating alternative visions of how society might be organized more justly (Bledsoe, Eaves, and Williams 2017; Eaves 2017; Allen, Lawhon, and Pierce 2018; Brand 2018). Black geographies is precisely about giving recognition and legitimacy to these neglected knowledge-creating practices, to understand how the "unknown reconfigure knowledge, suggesting that places, experiences, histories, and people that no one know do exist, *within our present geographic order*" (McKittrick and Woods 2007, 4, italics in original). Revisiting and spatially rereading SNCC's work in the Deep South offers us rich opportunities to understand the ways in which black people sought to make antiracist space and meaning in the face of racial capitalism and white supremacy. The organic intellectualism behind SNCC's conceptualization and knowledge of community, economic geographies of capital and power, and relational mapping in the 1960s was far ahead of academic geographic scholarship at the time.

Of importance to the wider geographical community, the SNCC research office and its projects challenge normative assumptions about GI, how we define mapping and GI work as embodied political practices, and the role of black agency in the making of knowledge systems that constitute and structure our present and taken-for-granted lived geographies. These present systems of knowing are undergirded by deeply exploitative structures that continue to expose minorities to "the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death" (Gilmore 2007, 28). SNCC's research praxis and other activism were important interventions in their own right,

but they are just one step in a broader movement that seeks to expose not only how the making of space is wrapped up in and through white supremacy but how black geographies are also "central and necessary element[s] in the construction of new institutions and new regional realities" that can open up new ways of knowing and remaking the world (Woods 1998, 290).

To make the arguments just outlined, we engage a growing literature that pays close attention to the role of countermapping, subaltern cartographic practice, and participatory geographic information systems (GIS) as avenues for marginalized groups to produce alternative knowledges and subjectivities, claim authority over place and the power to define political agendas, and make interventions in struggles over social and environmental justice (Peluso 1995; Elwood 2006; Dando 2010; Radcliffe 2011; Radil and Anderson 2018). Despite the growing volume of this scholarship, there has been a neglect of the place of countermapping and in particular radical GI work within the historical geography of the African American freedom struggle (but see Hanna 2012; Dando 2018)—a lacuna that our article addresses.

We then offer a brief historical background into SNCC and situate the organization's radical GI within its political vision and goals. We suggest that SNCC's conversion of social and spatial data into actionable intelligence was not a mere informational exercise but core to their own ideas about knowing and acting on, in a highly place-sensitive way, the conditions and needs of African American communities and penetrating what Sherrod (n.d.) called the "black box" of racial inequality within those oppressed communities. Detail is provided about the SNCC Research Department, how and why it was formed, and the type of data resources and innovations it sought to leverage for activists.

Our final major section before concluding returns to *The Care and Feeding* and other examples of SNCC radical geographical intelligence, delving deeper into those efforts as attempts to expose, map, and resist racial capitalism. A number of evocative examples illustrate that SNCC's gathering and mapping of intelligence represented an effort to raise consciousness and educate and to assist in exploiting the vulnerabilities and contradictions of racial capitalism and race connected practices that enveloped and threatened people of color in these communities.

Toward a Radical Geographical Intelligence

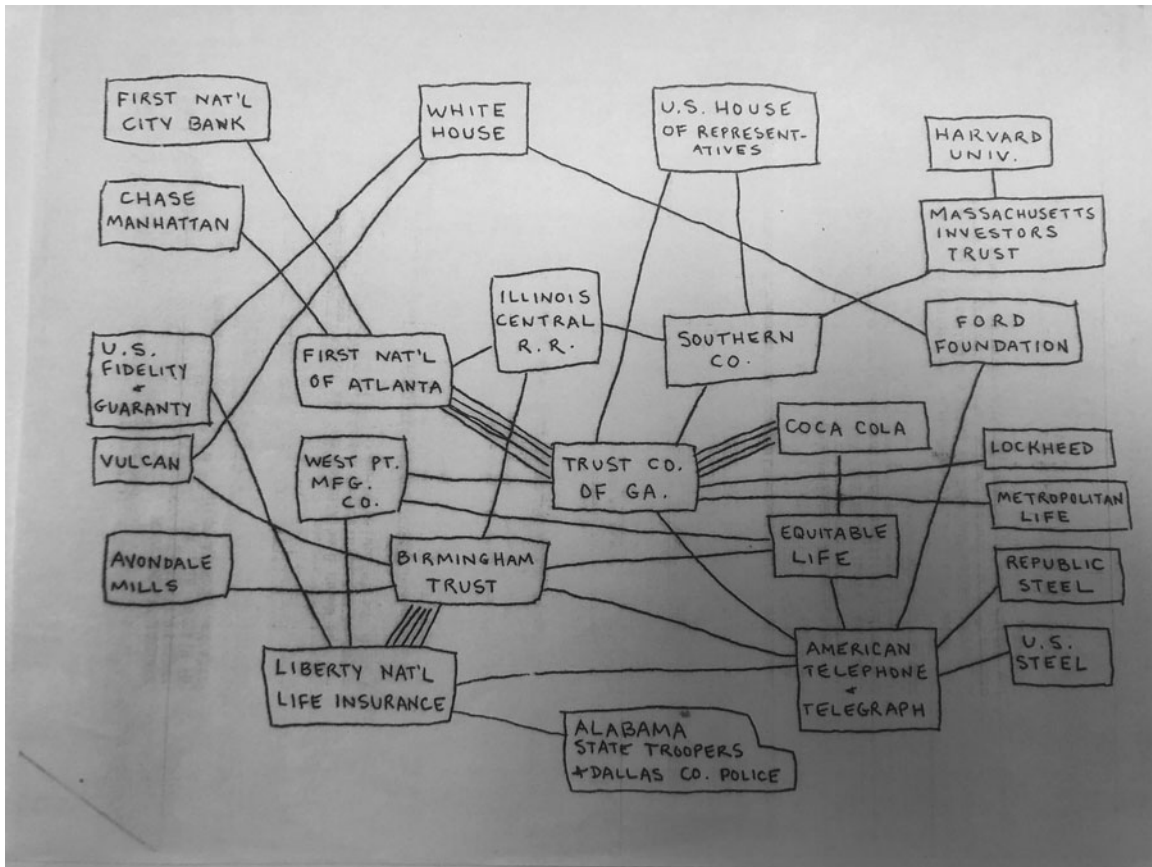### Critical Cartography from Below

To understand how SNCC developed and deployed resistant practices of GI gathering requires a broader exploration of the power-laden nature of geographic knowledge production. Our research draws on scholarship in "critical cartography" (Crampton and Krygier 2006), which offers a rethinking of what the map is, how and for whom it functions politically, and who ultimately counts as a mapmaker. For Wood (1992, 2010), maps are fundamentally about "work." Maps are "engines that convert social energy to social work," and the map plays a crucial intermediary role in the work of creating social orders, spaces, and knowledges (Wood 2010, 1). The ideological and political work done by maps is accomplished because they have the often-unquestioned authority of being "statements that affirm or deny the existence of something" (Wood 2010, 41), and these propositions take "the form of linkages among conditions, states, processes, and behaviors conjoined in the territory that the map brings into being" (Wood 2010, 52).

More recently, there has been a growing recognition that it is necessary to incorporate a more expansive definition of what cartography means and who puts it into service and for what political purposes (Crampton 2009). Building on the growth of critical cartography and critiques of GIS, Crampton and Krygier (2006) noted how the politics of mapping and imaginative practices have worked to "undiscipline cartography" and cause mapmaking praxis to slip from the "control of powerful elites that have exercised dominion over it for several hundred years" (12). Sletto (2009) noted that maps are not only implicated in place making but are "tools of power" (445). Geographic knowledge not only underwrites "hegemonic, symbolic and material practices" but there is a long history of marginalized groups drawing "on the rhetorical power of maps to present alternative worldviews and futures" (Sletto 2009, 445). These challenges broadly conceptualize how the making of geography is not only a political act but illustrates how geographic knowledge serves the interests of those in power and the way marginalized groups actively seize the power of mapmaking to stake claims to space and place (Wainwright and Bryan 2009).

Scholars often depict critical cartography as a relatively recent development, and to some large degree it is because of the latest expansion of public, nonexpert access to spatial data and open source collaborative tools. Yet, SNCC's geospatial work, which emerged over three decades before the formal rise of critical cartographic studies within geography, prompts a broader consideration of how radical mapping practices—despite being seemingly "discovered" by university scholars—were informed by longer and more sustained activist traditions. To realize fully SNCC as an early chapter in critical cartography requires that we undiscipline and expand the definitions of the map itself. Reiz, O'Lear, and Tuininga (2018) suggested that if you take the definition of cartography—to write the earth—literally and fully, there are a range of ways to understand how maps and other geographic representations are made, used, and understood. They argued that central to critical cartography is the effort to map networks of power and sets of relationships that exist and reveal dominant relationships.

SNCC's visualization of social and spatial data was decidedly about tracing the effects and relational dimensions of white power and racial capital. The organization believed that this racialized control could be challenged through a resistant use of information, communication, and education, as well as political mobilization. SNCC workers would seldom (if ever) refer to themselves as mapmakers or cartographers, but they recognized that building and mobilizing a geographic knowledge of communities as structures of power was part of an organic intellectualism of rewriting a vision of the Earth in which African Americans were full and equal citizens.

Importantly, geographers as well as the general public have traditionally relied on essentialized ideas of what constitutes a map, but it is necessary to destabilize these fixed ideas and recognize that mapping, as a political practice, is not confined to conventional cartographic definitions. Although SNCC field activists created and used conventional maps, such as in mapping income disparities as part of documenting the effects of racism within the states of Mississippi and Alabama, they moved beyond standard maps to identify other creative ways of rendering where and with whom power came to be concentrated, interconnected, and interdependent. This highlights a significant if heretofore understudied role of geography in the civil rights struggle

Figure 1. Map of the economic and political connections between Liberty Life Insurance Company and the Alabama State Police. This is an example of the "Power Structure" work that the Southern Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Research Department undertook.

and points to how expansive definitions of cartography and mapmaking can explode staid understandings of what the map is. To briefly move away from the *The Care and Feeding* pamphlet, take, for example, the schematic that SNCC researchers created to document the economic and political connections between Liberty Life Insurance Company and the Alabama State Police, both institutions that exercised a vested interest in supporting white supremacy, racial capitalism, and black subordination (see Figure 1).

The schematic might not look like a map, but it nevertheless does the work of a map by allowing civil rights activists to represent, realize, and resist the patterns of interaction and interdependence that made up a racist political economy. We argue that it is necessary to understand SNCC's research work within the broader role of cartographic knowledge production that is deployed in a range of everyday practices and methods for understanding the broader workings of power within a U.S. context (Crampton 2009). As we suggest, reconceptualizing SNCC's

resistant geospatial work offers an opportunity to radicalize the concept of GI in ways that expand the terrain of what we think about when it comes to critical cartographic praxis.

Radicalizing Geospatial Intelligence

Nothing illustrates the capacity of maps and other geographic data representations to do social work and the politicized labor of geospatial work than the growth and use of GI. Closely identified with the use of geographic information and technologies by elite state and corporate actors for purposes of defense, national security, and commercial interests (Rivest et al. 2005; Sullivan 2005; Bacastow and Bellafiore 2009; Bryan and Wood 2015), GI is a significant tool of war making and representative of the critical but often unaddressed ethical and violent implications that accompany the strategic use of geospatial technologies, data, and analysis (N. Smith 1992; Pickles 1997; Schuurman 2000; Crampton and Krygier 2006; Bryan and Wood 2015). The political

implications of GI have heightened with the ever-expanding collection and exploitation of social media information and locational data by corporations and governments (Stefanidis, Crooks, and Radzikowski 2013), as well as the growth of drones and the use of uncrewed aerial vehicles for surveillance and targeted killings (Birtchnell 2017).

GI is so closely identified with defense, national security, and capitalist agendas that it has become difficult for geographers and other scholars—many of whom are knowingly or unknowingly complicit in supporting these structures of power—to conceive of GI in an alternative, counterhegemonic way. In an early and important call to intervene in the ethics of the geospatial field, Kwan (2007) emphasized "the need for researchers, developers, and users … to contest the dominant meanings and uses of GT [geospatial technologies], and to participate in struggles against the oppressive or violent effects of these technologies" (23). Kwan asserted that we should pay attention to the qualities of geospatial practices and resist the prevailing tendency to see these techniques and technologies as the disembodied, objective science behind manipulating lines and dots on maps rather than the lives and deaths enacted through that mapping. Such a conceptualization recognizes how geographical knowledge production affects people's bodies as well as the crucial idea that behind the development and use of GI is the bodily work of practitioners and their feelings, values, and ethics—all of which shape their "decisions to adopt particular research agendas and engage with particular issues" and ignore others (Kwan 2007, 24). Similarly, we suggest that a more critical reconceptualization of GI is one that is sensitive to the affective, embodied, and politically laden dimensions of strategic mapping and geographical knowledge and the potential to "destabilize the fixed meanings of … [geospatial practices] that have precluded their use in novel and creative [and resistant] ways" (Kwan 2007, 28).

To focus solely on how GI is put into service of corporate or state-centered goals misses the capacity of geographic knowledge that is created and used by individuals and groups whose interests diverge from the state. Missing from much of the research thus far on GI is a critical exploration of GI as a subaltern project that uses geographic information gathering and analysis to expose and resist injustice. Importantly, in characterizing specific geographic information collection, analysis, and visualization practices as GI or not, we emphasize geospatial work that has strategic and actionable value to the self-expression, decision-making processes, and social mobilization of marginalized groups. Although the value of this geospatial work—as reflected in SNCC's research pamphlets and other projects—certainly lies in guiding the internal planning and educating of movements, it is also vital in telling stories that counter dominant accounts that exclude and minimize the experiences of the oppressed. There is a publicness to some subaltern GI missing from military and corporate applications fixated on maintaining security, secrecy, and limited access.

We argue that the moment is ripe to carry out a broader conversation that reinterprets and radicalizes GI. We say *radicalize* in a general sense to advocate for a watershed move beyond just industry, government, and academic understandings of GI and a recognition of the broad range of people who create, use, and embody geographic information and practices in strategic and actionable ways. We also use the word *radicalize* more pointedly to call for scholarship that explores GI as an activist tool, raising consideration not only of the role of geography in antiracism struggles—among others—but how we as a discipline come to understand a more progressive and radical potential of geographic knowledge within public arenas.

The *The Care and Feeding* pamphlet produced by the SNCC Research Department represented an effort to train activists to create a graphic depiction of the political economy of white supremacy, thus creating a social mapping that was essential to the strategic enactment of a radical GI program. This ties into work by Dalton and Stallmann (2018), who noted that critical cartography contributes to broader efforts in critical data science that not only problematize conventional data science but uses data in ways that can help realize new social relations. Recognizing the value that critical cartography places on using maps and data to enact social change, we argue that SNCC's antiracist mapping of power relations and structures represented a crucial moment in trying to understand and make an intervention in what Sherrod (n.d.) described as the "black box" of communities. We discuss the idea of the black box of communities more fully later in the article. To appreciate the significance of what SNCC sought to do, it is necessary to contextualize

their intelligence gathering and analysis within broader understandings of countermapping and the role of geospatial work in the African American freedom struggle and the rise of black geographies—which the next two sections address, respectively.

Countermapping for and by the Marginalized

The explosion of public participatory GIS and critical mapping collectives—as one example—underscores the creative and subversive use of geographic information and mapmaking (Dalton and Mason-Deese 2012; Caquard 2014). Closely related to these subversive geospatial practices is the wider concept of countermapping, which would be just one component of a radical GI concerned with not only visualizing power structures but also surveilling or tracking them and identifying their vulnerabilities or what SNCC called their "pressure points." Hodgson and Schroeder (2002) defined countermapping as "mapping against dominant power structures" (79). Countermapping recognizes the importance of democratizing knowledge production and decision making, and these initiatives emphasize how local communities and political movements, especially those led by indigenous and other oppressed groups, use conventional and unconventional mapping techniques and, in some instances, new geospatial technologies (Rundstrom 2009). Countermapping is an inherently "political act" of creating and employing maps as community activism and building tools to contest dominant knowledge framings and exclusionary statist mapmaking and to give visibility and legitimacy to previously ignored or misrepresented identities, histories, and claims to place as part of exercising self-sovereignty and challenging exploitative government and private interests (Maharawal and McElroy 2018).

Many academic treatments of countermapping are set in the contemporary period, in a public participatory or collaborative model that emphasizes local communities and activist organizations partnering with professional cartographers, academicians, scholar-artists, or government agencies to develop geospatial data and skills that will assist in their empowerment (e.g., Mitchell and Elwood 2016; D. A. Smith, Ibáñez, and Herrera 2017). Louis, Johnson, and Pramono (2012) noted, however, that tensions arise when the geographic knowledge systems of indigenous and other historically marginalized groups are forced to fit

established cartographic standards and practices. Moreover, Radil and Anderson (2018) noted the frequent failure of public participatory GIS to enhance the political engagement of oppressed people because it involves them "by working within established frameworks of institutionalized governance in particular places" and hence reproduces rather than challenges the "very conditions of socio-economic inequality it strives to ameliorate" (195). According to Radil and Anderson (2018), for counterhegemonic mapping and other geospatial practices to contribute significantly to progressive movements, there must be greater emphasis placed on disrupting, rather than participating with, the political-economic order.

To realize the emancipatory potential of countermapping—and by extension GI—requires a deep understanding of the historical geography of radical geospatial praxis and centering it within the embodied experiences of disenfranchised people rather than just experts or officials. Largely absent from the literature is a discussion of the geographic knowledge production within the historical geography of everyday activism and resistance, long before most academic geographers and professional cartographers had defined or sought to facilitate countermapping. A noted exception is Dando (2018), who explored how women created and used maps and geographic information as part of their political activism and struggle to expand legal rights during the U.S. Progressive Era (1890–1920). Dando (2018) highlighted the subaltern public cartographies created and employed by women during the suffrage movement and the push for antilynching legislation. She saw this oppositional geospatial work as a challenge to the masculine, imperialist history of much state-based mapping as well as a reminder that "[g]eography and mapping are not confined to government and academia; all people have their own practice of geography and cartography," even if those maps look, feel, and function differently from what has become professional convention (10).

Because of the situated nature of grassroots, bottom-up political struggles and needs, Dalton and Stallmann (2018) noted difficulty in narrowing countermapping down to a single, comprehensive definition or standard—which supports our contention that SNCC's resistant cartographic praxis and radical GI does not easily fit in conventional academic conceptions of cartography. The significance of countermapping lies not just in the creation of a

subaltern cartographic product but in the performance of data collection, mapping, and analysis practices that can serve to open up strategic conversations about the formation of social oppression and generate alternatives to the status quo (Dalton and Stallmann 2018). Dando (2018) added that we should consider the processes and artifacts of mapping and "the affinity networks and locations" where activists "practiced and shared their information" as they encouraged others to create geographic knowledge and effect social change. Recognition of the wider assemblage of actors, places, and networks of practices that constitute radical geospatial work resonates in the case of SNCC, which saw participatory democracy and community building as the backbone of its politics of resistance. The power of SNCC's radical GI came not only from the production of oppositional pamphlets, maps, and statistical reports but also from how these creations and the ideas and practices behind them circulated and gained social currency within communities. Essential to any effort to conceptualize radical geospatial work is to move beyond the binary of production versus consumption. As Del Casino and Hanna (2006) argued, the use of maps is not a passive process but a moment in which people creatively rework the meaning and efficacy of geographical knowledge.

Black Geographies and Geospatial Work of Civil Rights

SNCC's engagement with radical GI and its countermapping of (and against) the relational underpinnings of a white supremacist political economy were not the first and only time that African Americans engaged in a nuanced and highly complex production and use of geographic knowledge to combat discrimination and advocate for civil rights and self-determination. The "black sense of place" that McKittrick (2011) discussed has always been about carrying out strategic and creative geospatial work, such as "reading, navigating, and exploiting racialized landscapes, developing subaltern way-finding and transport [and migration] systems, creating counter public spaces that offered social refuge and economic freedom, and mapping the social effects and spatial networks [and boundaries] that undergirded white supremacy" (Alderman and Inwood 2016, 184).

Critical cartographic approaches are central to the freedom aspirations of African Americans, and the full weight of SNCC's radical GI is grounded in a history of resistant geographic knowledge production and use. Escaping slaves relied on subaltern forms of spatial wayfinding and environmental cognition, eluding capture by taking advantage of a "system of paths, places, and rhythms" created by the slave community "as an alternative, often as a refuge, to the landscape systems of planters and other Whites" (Ginsburg 2007, 37). Informing the greater African American struggle for geographic mobility and opportunity—from the Great Migration out of the South to driving on hostile Jim Crow highways—was the compilation and dissemination of an alternative spatial knowledge about the location of opportunities, navigational resources, and safe spaces central to survival within the broader sociospatial context of white supremacy (Inwood 2014; Alderman and Inwood 2016).

Although much of the countermapping and GI generated by African Americans took unconventional if not sometimes hidden forms, there were moments when traditional cartographic practices were transformed into a tool of resistance. The public has recently rediscovered the mapping efforts of black sociologist and civil rights leader W. E. B. DuBois, who worked with Booker T. Washington and a team of students to produce series of "infographics" for display at the 1900 Paris Exposition. Conventional maps were an important part of this exhibit, which sought to use data visualization to expose international audiences to the context of African Americans since slavery. As Dando (2018) reported, later in the early twentieth century, the Tuskegee Institute and the NAACP regularly produced and published maps showing the pervasiveness of white mob violence against African Americans as part the campaign for federal antilynching legislation. In both instances, cartographic praxis and the collection and analysis of data were not simply about expanding public knowledge about black life but expressly for the purposes of leveraging that geographic knowledge to effect social change.

Through a close look at SNCC's radical geospatial activism we not only have an opportunity to come to a deeper understanding of the way the civil rights movement engaged with and used geography in its struggle for liberation from oppression. These

visions and spaces of black liberation, according to Bledsoe and Wright (2018), do not conform to a single, monolithic black spatial and political imaginary but are characterized by different movements, different distinctions within movements, and plural means of resistance. Importantly, the varied nature of black spatial politics includes not only well-known practices of protest such as sit-ins, marches, and boycotts but also a wider range of spectacular and everyday tactics—including, we would argue, radical GI.

Interestingly, although those studying black geographies have found great value in studying nontraditional geographic sources and expressions of the black experience—largely music, fiction, art, and film (Allen, Lawhon, and Pierce 2018)—there has been little investigation of the resistant cartographic cultures and geospatial practices as they focus on black life and agency. Yet, recent theorizing of black geographies by Allen, Lawhon, and Pierce (2018) allows room for our examination of the opposition research carried out by SNCC. Allen and his colleagues (2018) argued for "relational place-making" as a viable theoretical lens, one that recognizes the need for a plurality of methodologies and data sources for analyzing and making sense of the experiences and sociopolitical goals of people of color. Even more important, a relational placemaking prompts us to consider how these experiences are set within and shaped by networks of power relations and how symbolic and material elements—including objects—become bundled together to project and hopefully materialize alternative black visions of place. In this respect, *The Care and Feeding* is more than simply a pamphlet representative of and produced through black freedom struggles. It is an important nonhuman actant or agent in the making and potential remaking of an antiracist place because it seeks to instruct civil rights workers in how the networks underpinning racial capitalism operate within their communities. The SNCC pamphlet, in addition to expanding our appreciation for the use of countermapping and the production of a radical GI within the African American freedom struggle, provides an important moment to advance the larger intellectual and political project of uncovering the complex place assemblages, spatial political imaginaries, and geographic knowledge productions that have long defined black geographies.

Toward a Geography of SNCC Research Praxis

Centrality of Place in SNCC Organizing

One of the central aims of this article is to advance a greater understanding and appreciation for SNCC among geographers and, in particular, to retheorize the importance that their understudied Research Department played in the production of geographic knowledge to challenge white supremacy. It is impossible to adequately capture the history of SNCC in a single article, and our discussion is a selective narration of a civil rights organization that had an amazingly varied trajectory from its creation in 1960 to its falling off in 1967. SNCC was on the front lines of the most significant civil rights protests of that era—beginning with its involvement in the student sit-ins and freedom rides, maturing into a large, interracial organization that helped lead the March on Washington (1963), the Selma Campaigns (1965), Freedom Summer, and other nonviolent campaigns for voting rights, desegregation, and economic justice and finally evolving into a more militant, all-black Lowndes County Freedom Organization, later known as the Black Panther Party. In addition to SNCC undergoing significant organizational and political transformations in its relatively short history, the organization had a varied geographic footprint, as it carried a style of grassroots, direct action organizing that was especially sensitive to the place-specific conditions, needs, and power structures of communities rather than simply carrying out a top-down monolithic model of protest.

Founded in 1960, SNCC formed between student organizers and Ella Baker, a longtime civil rights activist. The everyday labor and activism of women and youth played a key role in sustaining the struggle against racial oppression (Payne 2007; Dwyer and Alderman 2008), even though much of this work is forgotten in many contemporary celebrations of the civil rights movement. Baker herself was familiar with this tension, having worked for a short time in the offices of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the organization founded by Martin Luther King, Jr., to fight racial oppression. It was her connection with SCLC that gave her access to the initial funds to sponsor a conference that brought student activists to Shaw University that led to the birth of the SNCC (Payne 2007). She became disillusioned with SCLC,

however, and frustrated over the patriarchy and sexism that marginalized women in favor of a hierarchical structure more closely aligned with the black church and male pastors. It was partially these experiences that drove her to work with students who were organizing themselves to fight segregation. These realities also created opportunities for women within SNCC to assume prominent leadership roles. Indeed, in the early stages of SNCC's development, it proved to be not only the most racially integrated civil rights organization but arguably the most diverse in terms of gender and the central role played by women in the black freedom struggle.

Early in the development of SNCC there was a keen realization that activists would be working in some of the most dangerous and inhospitable places in the United States, and violence was an ever-present reality. As a result, SNCC activists made a strategic decision to create a less hierarchical and more diffuse leadership style suited to the local, social- and geographic-specific conditions confronting civil rights struggles in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. In addition, SNCC created its Research Department and kept a meticulous informational footprint partly because James Forman, a prominent SNCC leader, felt that if anything should happen to the leadership team, there needed to be records so that a new cadre of leadership could step in and continue the organization's work. Because SNCC was willing to engage in rural communities that had endemic corruption, racist power structures, and a high likelihood for violence, this also presented opportunities to organize in spaces and places that had mostly been left out of civil rights and political organizing at that time. It was this profound and long-standing commitment to those places that gave SNCC its distinctive organizing character. Bob Mosses, SNCC leader and activist, explained in an interview:

> While we were doing voter registration, we had so to speak the field to ourself because people could not just come in and organize politically. … We had space then to create some kind of political organization which we felt would be responsible to the people that we were working for. … We had actual access to the people that other people were not willing to do the game because of the risks involved. (Washington University St. Louis 1986)

SNCC was focused on empowering locals and concerned about educating student activists to navigate and interact with the harsh and hostile Deep South.

In this sense, SNCC was forcing mostly white volunteers from the North to confront their positionality and the limits of their political development before being able to go into the field to organize. To achieve this, SNCC developed a range of materials—including course syllabi, instructional pamphlets, and other teaching aids—to educate student volunteers about underlying racist power structures in the United States. Rather than seeing the civil rights movement as series of campaigns planned by just a few national leaders, a notion that has come to dominate U.S. white popular memory, the history of SNCC speaks to the labor of everyday men and women and the work that went into creating the political conditions necessary to take on white supremacy. As alluded to in the Introduction, this work was hard and was often referred to as "spade work" by Baker and SNCC activists.

"Spade Work" and Unpacking the "Black Box of Community"

Through her decades of organizing work, Baker cultivated an approach within SNCC focused on community empowerment and the cultivation of everyday forms of resistance. Baker had a fundamental commitment to participatory democracy and a belief in local movements tailored to the social and spatial conditions within communities. She was committed to taking the lived experiences of the oppressed and using those experiences to empower a movement that would smash white supremacy. Baker referred to this kind of labor as spade work, highlighting how it was hard, dirty, and went on far below the more spectacular, publicized direct actions of the civil rights movement (Payne 2007). The spade work done by African Americans to interrogate and challenge the geography of white social power and, in particular, the geographic knowledge developed and produced through that work, have for too long gone unnoticed or underanalyzed by geographers. This neglect not only contributes to the erasure of black geographies but obscures the ways in which these practices have reconfigured our present knowledges and understandings of how geographies of place and power are understood within the broader geographic tradition.

Given the nature of the kind of difficult work that SNCC was attempting and the kind of on-the-ground organizing being carried out, it was

imperative for its activists to know the lay of the land of white supremacy with specific locations in the Deep South along with the spatial and social dimensions and interconnections of segregation and racism running through those places. Such an approach to organizing required the development of complex and multifaceted understandings of how local geographies connect to broader social and geographic structures of white supremacy and inequality. In other words, important to the spade work of helping communities mobilize to take on their oppression is getting to know and engage with people as they are in the specific social and geographic context of their lives.

Another key voice in the founding of SNCC, Charles Sherrod, articulated and defined perhaps most clearly and powerfully the mandate facing activists as they worked to understand and challenge what he called the black box of communities. Sherrod was SNCC project director for southwest Georgia and has worked for over a half-century in Albany organizing and teaching for social justice. Sherrod pushed his colleagues in SNCC to understand the broader community conditions and power relations that drove the operation of racism and how knowing the community was essential to nonviolent mobilization. In a document contained in the archives at the University of California at Berkeley, Sherrod argued that within every community there existed a "personal box" of racial inequality and to organize effectively required SNCC workers to understand these communities. By understanding how individuals were positioned within the community, SNCC workers would be able to cultivate the ability to "break away from the box and let the [black] man [sic] see himself as he really is and then as he can be" (Sherrod n.d., 2).

Fundamental for Sherrod was how the SNCC needed to understand the broader social, psychological, and geographic context of the oppressed communities in which they worked. According to Sherrod, to mobilize oppressed communities required that the "atmosphere [of racism] in the box must be known." For him it was central to develop a chart or a form of relational map of community leaders and to understand the interconnected way the economics of communities operated across time and space. This would provide SNCC with an understanding of the power structure and racialized nature of economic development and poverty creation. For Sherrod,

SNCC workers needed to document and trace "economic and occupational groups such as landlords, tenants, businessmen or various income groups" (Sherrod n.d., 3). For Sherrod and others in SNCC, there emerged a key realization of a broader intellectual and political project that had to situate any meaningful empowerment of oppressed communities with a production of social and geographic knowledge of that community.

SNCC saw research and the generation of social and geographic knowledge about communities as not just background material but part of the political spade work of mobilizing against and within the black box of white supremacist power within communities. It was within this intellectual and political environment that the leaders of the civil rights organization realized the need for establishing a Research Department and the value of producing oppositional research tools such as *The Care and Feeding of Power Structures*. The Research Department came to life in late 1962 or early 1963 when James Forman—then SNCC executive secretary and later a leader in the Black Panther Party and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers—commissioned Jack Minnis to help organize and direct the department for the purposes of providing information—often geographic in nature—to activists in the field about the communities that SNCC was seeking to organize. The research process was not that top down, though, based on Dorothy Zellner's (personal communication 2019) experiences working with Minnis and Forman. In charge of collecting field reports over the phone, she remembers two-way flows of information and knowledge production and use between activists in the field and the research office (see also Seidman 2017).

Interviews with former SNCC members and leadership reveal a critical theme: Before entering any of the communities that SNCC sought to mobilize and hopefully transform, organizers would be armed with a plethora of public and private information, statistical data, and current news about the local economy, the population, and the connections between the local landscape and broader regional, national, and even global economies. Julian Bond, another famed SNCC leader, praised the level of social and spatial data resources provided to activists by the Research Department:

> [SNCC] had the best research arm of any civil rights organization before or since. Field secretaries entered

the rural, small-town South armed with evidence of who controlled and owned what, and who, in turn, owned them. "Power structure" was no abstract phrase for SNCC's band of brothers and sisters, but a real list with real people's names and addresses and descriptions of assets and interlocking directorships. Knowledge of who owned what was crucial to SNCC's strategies. From it, we knew that Southern peonage was no accident, but rather the deliberate result of economic policies determined thousands of miles away from the cotton field. (As cited in Seidman 2017)

As Bond's comments on the power structure reveal, SNCC was wrestling to understand what Wilson (2002) described as "race connected practices." Resulting from the negative attitudes that groups of people hold about another race, race-connected practices connect to and result from longer histories of racial capital exploitation and, as a result, these practices are grounded in a historical–geographical context (Wilson 2002). Within the deep southeastern United States, race-connected practices necessarily connected to what Woods (1998) described as the "plantation bloc." The plantation bloc had a monopoly on agricultural production, manufacturing, banking, and access to land and natural resources in the region. This supremacy exerted unquestioned authority over its majority African American population in conditions not far removed from those existing before the legal end of slavery in the 1860s. Thus, collecting social and spatial data for the purposes of exposing, tracking, and charting the race-connected practices at work in the white supremacist legacies of plantation control required a strategic response in the form of the SNCC Research Department.

SNCC Research Department

The Research Department was located in Atlanta, Georgia, staffed by Minnis and other researchers and clerks who worked closely with SNCC leadership and field directors or secretaries by providing information to and holding workshops with those field offices as well as receiving periodic reports and collected data from those offices. A white progressive, Minnis was well-schooled in civil rights organizing, having worked for the Southern Regional Council (SRC) for several years before formally joining SNCC. The SRC was an organization formed after World War I dedicated to civil rights and social justice work in the U.S. South. Minnis became acquainted with SNCC when SRC asked him to

review SNCC's 1962 voter education project, which SRC helped fund. At some point, Minnis became disillusioned with SRC and left the organization. It was at this time that Forman asked Minnis to join SNCC and organize and direct a research department. The idea of the department was a direct extension of Forman's informational praxis, his belief in the strategic political value of collecting, analyzing, and communicating information and data to assist in the struggle against racism.

Minnis became a trusted ally for activists, taking on the mantle of "foot soldier," and was committed to serving "the young black women and men who were in leadership" (B. Zellner, personal communication 2019). Even as SNCC pursued a policy of excluding white liberals from its ranks, he continued to work for the civil rights organization. At the request of famed SNCC leader Stokley Carmichael (later Kwame Ture), Minnis and the SNCC Research Department identified a provision within the Alabama Code of Laws that allowed for the formation of the Black Panther Party of Lowndes County (Alabama) Freedom Organization (Richardson 2010). In a memo prepared in 1965 and titled "At Last, The Paper You All Have Been Waiting For: What Is the SNCC Research Department," Minnis and his staff detailed the programs that the Research Department was keen to support and the social and spatial data they used to compile their reports.

The memo began by outlining the various data sources used and analyzed by SNCC researchers. This included subscriptions to all of the major national newspapers as well as many smaller newspapers throughout the South. SNCC researchers also received the *Congressional Record* and *Congressional Quarterly* and were on the mailing lists of several dozen government agencies who produced quarterly and annual reports about various economic, social, and political conditions throughout the United States. Perhaps most important, the memo details a list of economic and legal publications, including publications related to Wall Street and finance and a complete set of U.S. Census Bureau publications for each of the Black Belt states. The memo then outlines four projects supported by the SNCC research office over the past year. This included supplying "needed facts and figures" to Freedom Schools in Mississippi to help develop their curricula on basic economics in the Delta region.

The Research Department's memo drew attention, in particular, to an example of an SNCC worker in Mississippi needing information on the credit facilities available in his area for local farmers feeling the pain of poverty and inequality endemic to that region. The memo stated, "Regardless of the practical application of such information [on credit facilities], this worker probably learned something important about the workings of the banking system. At the very least, we were able to help him expand his view of a narrow problem" (Minnis 1965a). It is this last comment that is critical for understanding the importance of what SNCC's research arm was trying to accomplish. It sought to situate the most local and seeming practical realities within a broader understanding of institutions and structures that determine who is (or who is not) allowed, racially speaking, to succeed and survive along with transforming what appeared as just facts and figures into a cutting political arithmetic about capitalism and possibly actionable knowledge and intelligence.

The Work of Tracking, Mapping, and Resisting Racial Capital

SNCC workers involved themselves within the black box of community and worked to cultivate local leadership and institutions that could take on entrenched white supremacy. SNCC's community empowerment approach and the legacies of this civil rights activism have attracted significant attention from historians and other scholars (e.g., Carson 1981; Moses et al. 1989; Perlstein 1990; Frost 2001) while also informing more contemporary movements. Important, if at times unexamined, are the efforts of SNCC activists and researchers to understand racial capital and the broader race connected practices that exerted influence on the lives and fortunes of black people in the Deep South. Moreover, researchers have paid little attention (if any) to the organization's geospatial work to identify, visualize, and track this discriminatory political economy.

Building on Pulido's (2016) definition of racial capitalism, we see "racism as a constituent logic of capitalism" that is predicated on "differential human value and is embedded in the global landscape" (7). Perhaps most central to our arguments and the way in which we conceptualize SNCC's activism is how "[r]acial difference, similar to gender inequality, creates a variegated landscape that cultures and capital can exploit

to create enhanced power and profits" (Pulido 2016, 7). SNCC researchers and field activists were engaged in a struggle to understand this landscape and, as we demonstrate, the organization sought to use the contradictions inherent in racial capitalism to exploit weaknesses in the system to push forward their civil rights agenda.

Because racial capitalism creates a landscape of differentiated human value in which certain groups and people are not only exploitable but disposable, it was incumbent on SNCC organizers to understand the nature of community that animated what Sherrod referred to as the black box. Because the power structure created by racial capitalism is able to work in and through the concept of race, gender, and a range of other socially constructed positionalities, these positions and identities are important to the exploitation that creates and enhances profit (Woods 2007) and thus constitute what Wilson (2002) called race-connected practices. Judy Richardson noted in a recounting of women in SNCC:

> With Jack's [Minnis] research, SNCC folks went into new communities armed with U.S. Census data and other information indicating the number of black registered voters, poverty, the discrepancy between federal funding of African Americans. (As cited in Seidman 2017)

The comments by Richardson point to the ways in which race connected practices took place. As Melamed (2015) observed, the "antinomies of accumulation require loss, disposability, and the unequal differentiation of human value and racism enshrines the inequalities that capitalism requires" (77). Yet, the dominance of accumulation is never complete, and it creates opportunities to expose and exploit the differentiated ways in which race comes to be geographically grounded. Just as racial capitalism creates an uneven terrain of race-connected practices that take place and control place in different geographic contexts and at a multiplicity of scales, that same terrain means that there are gaps and holes in racial segregation and white supremacy as well. By exposing and mapping how power structures in communities were organized and operated through race-connected practices, SNCC hoped to craft political strategies that could take advantage of weaknesses, contradictions, and gaps in how white supremacy and racial capital worked.

SNCC's Research Department was instrumental in gathering and analyzing strategic data for training

leadership and workers to recognize exploitable cracks in a community's political economy. That training happened at SNCC conferences attended by hundreds of activists, when the Research Department held workshops out in the field or in its Atlanta offices, and in the very pages of the *Student Voice*, a newspaper produced by SNCC and distributed to SNCC members and interested community members. In an article from the June 1965 edition titled "Who Runs Southwest, Georgia?" SNCC research is deployed to outline the ownership stakes that several powerful men in Americus had in upholding racism. The article noted that "Businessmen [*sic*] themselves occupy many of the most critical positions in state and local government, from presidency to mayor," and it is important for local people to understand the power structure that existed within the community.

The *Student Voice* article in question drew attention to Americus entrepreneur Charles Wheatley. As the article details, Wheatley was one of the most powerful men in southwest Georgia, noting that he owned four of the five grocery stores in town, owned the land on which the hospital was built, and had ownership stakes in the town's largest factory. Wheatley also owned more than two dozen run-down houses that he rented to the town's African American community. Moreover, he also ran a construction company in town while also serving as the city engineer who "decides which company will get city construction contracts!" ("Who Runs Southwest, Georgia?" 1965, 2). The piece went on to document several other prominent businessmen in southwest Georgia and their vested interest in a racialized political economy. The article concludes by arguing, "If you want to change things, you have to look at who owns what, for businessmen are the ones who really swing the billy clubs" ("Who Runs Southwest, Georgia?" 1965, 4).

This theme of exposing, tracking, and challenging racial capital is evident in a number of *Student Voice* articles published in 1965, no doubt paralleling if not responding to the SNCC Research Department's emphasis on gathering intelligence about place-specific power structures within mobilizing communities. *The Care and Feeding of Power Structures* is a powerful expression of that radical GI, and it is possible that it might have directly guided studies and critiques such as this one about Americus, Georgia. Not coincidentally, *The Mississippi Power Structure* (Minnis n.d.), an essay and lesson included in the antiracist curriculum developed for African American

children attending SNCC's Freedom Schools, bears a strong resemblance to the countermapping methodology detailed in *The Care and Feeding*. Yet, the analytical value of the pamphlet, curriculum, and news articles is not just that they are products of a subaltern cartography or intelligence; rather, they are windows into SNCC's broader efforts to fashion a new way of knowing and hence resisting the social and spatial relations underlying racial capital. The embodied practice of questioning, researching, and mapping where and with whom these unjust relations originated and spread constitutes radical GI.

In the pages of *The Care and Feeding*, Minnis narrated specific cases in which activists had converted data on the where and who of community power into a resistant intelligence used to exploit the vulnerabilities of racial capital for the sake of advancing civil rights. The pamphlet summarized the logic of SNCC activists' identifying and mapping regional and national economic geographies: "The basic assumption of the piece [the pamphlet] was that those who control the economy of the nation are the only ones who have the power to change things for the benefit of black people" (Minnis 1965b, 1, emphasis in original). The geographical work prescribed in *The Care and Feeding of Power Structures* called on activists to uncover and chart out the intricate connections of power running within and beyond the borders of oppressed communities and to leverage this social and spatial knowledge to bring pressure on a range of economic actors whose ties extended from the Delta throughout the United States and internationally. To illustrate, the pamphlet begins with the story of how a nineteen-year-old African American volunteer from Savannah, Georgia, led a protest against one of the largest banks in New York City, a bank owned by David Rockefeller. The story begins with this student discovering through public records that Chase Manhattan Bank was financing municipal bonds in Savannah and that those bonds were used in part to create separate and unequal segregated facilities in the city. Traveling to New York City, he was able to confront one of the bank's vice presidents about the issue, indicating that SNCC was preparing to lead a protest movement within twenty-four hours if the bank did not outline a policy about the use of bank funds to finance segregation in multiple U.S. cities. Within twenty-four hours, SNCC began protesting the bank.

In outlining why the African American student targeted Chase Manhattan, Minnis described SNCC's research process. He noted that the student began by looking at Moody's Manual of Municipal Bonds to find out what banks were working to float the bond issue in Savannah. The student discovered that three important banks from New York City were involved, but SNCC only had the resources to go after one of the banks. As Minnis (1965a) explained:

> So he [the student] selected the one which was strategically vulnerable because of its connection with a politician [Nelson Rockefeller] who avows distaste for racial discrimination. He documented this connection by checking the *Chain Banking Study* published in 1962 by the Select Committee on Small Business of the U.S. House of Representatives. (3)

Central to the strategy just outlined is the SNCC activist engaging in what we would characterize as a countermapping of the social and spatial structure of communities with the express intent of challenging the power relations that made racial inequality possible.

SNCC was a grassroots organization focused on empowering community activism; a critical piece of the organizing strategy was to create a cadre of local peoples who could engage in the kind of work that the civil rights organization was working to undertake. Bob Zellner (personal communication 2019), who worked closely with Minnis in the Research Department and who also served as field secretary, explained during our interview:

> In order to take on the long-term community based organizing we had to train and leave some educated leadership in place. [Our goal] in SNCC [was] always [to] work ourselves out of a job. [R]esearch was very important for training the local people to run their own organization, to do the research themselves, to do press outreach, all of the things an organization needs to do, a lot of that had to be built from the ground up in our grassroots organizing.

Zellner's comments help to place *The Care and Feeding* into a broader context of political organizing and education. Part of what the pamphlet does is to leave behind a guide to assist local people with collecting and using publicly available data to engage in the kind of research and activism that SNCC was trying to accomplish in the Deep South. The pamphlet is a primer in how to engage in activist

research praxis and its power, beyond what specific protest strategies it might have informed and inspired, laid in how it sought to institutionalize radical intelligence practices and skills within the leadership fabric of oppressed communities.

Zellner also shed important light on how *The Care and Feeding* and other forms of SNCC intelligence work were directly situated within knowledge production meant to expose and understand the variegated landscape of race connected practices and inequalities. As Wilson (2002) explained, race-connected practices "are not only historically specific, but geographically or place specific" as well (37). As a result, understanding regional differences and connections between places is central to "understanding critically race-connected practices" (Wilson 2002, 37). As noted earlier, at the heart of SNCC's activist epistemology and research praxis was a theory that racism inherently had its own geographic differentiation and that radical GI work was about actively developing the ability to understand and politically act on a set of interrelated geographic conditions that underpinned racial oppression. Bob Zellner explained,

> One of the early requirements of every project, whenever we went into a new area, was to do a power structure analysis of that area: who owned what, which companies were there, what was the history of the place from the frequency of lynching and castration, [and was] … it a really tough place to register to vote. All of those things were part of the power structure analysis and what Minnis was so good at was interlocking directories. He'd say, "Look at the companies in that region and look at the office holders and see what relationship they have with those companies." He was always doing corporate research and how it related to politics on the ground level.

It is the ability to take local and on-the-ground conditions, the deep history of a place, and then to be able to place that information into a broader structural analysis that suggests that the political efficacy of this radical GI came from how it allowed activists to understand how racial capital operated with and cut across multiple scales as it maintained white supremacy. Such a perspective engages with processes that geographers have long identified as "jumping" or "bridging" scales (Merk 2009). The term *jumping scales* traditionally refer to "social struggles that take place at different scales, ranging from spaces of production (encompassing workplaces,

industrial zones, and nations) to spaces of consumption, where sweatshop practices of global brands and retailers are contested" (Merk 2009, 600).

SNCC researchers similarly recognized, well outside the context of academic geography, the broader capital relationships that existed between local plantations, manufacturing sectors, and economic relationships found in communities in the Deep South and the national and global centers of finance capital. In explaining the importance of the SNCC Research Department, Stokely Carmichael pointed to its work in "uncover[ing] the complex network of ownership of the plantations of the Deep South. One was owned by the corporation supplying electricity to Boston Massachusetts. The majority stockholder of another was Her Majesty, the Queen of England" (Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee Digital Archive 2018).

To return to the case described in *The Care and Feeding*, protesting conditions only within Savannah, Georgia, had limited social purchase. Threatening and targeting an international bank and drawing attention to the connections that Chase Manhattan had with segregation jeopardized the political fortunes and reputation of Nelson Rockefeller and thus SNCC could take their protest to a geographic space and scale with more potential to enact social change. SNCC's geospatial work of collecting and exploiting data in this context is indicative of how it engaged in a radical GI project that used information as an activist tool. In other words, by focusing on the black box of community within Savannah—how segregation was institutionalized and financed—SNCC was able to understand a broad array of economic relationships that existed within and outside the community and was then able to leverage that information in a strategic way to bring pressure on the city to change its segregated policies.

Significance

For at least the last decade, interest in countermapping, public participatory GIS, and other forms of alternative cartographic praxis has driven interest in what Cidell (2008) described as the important ways everyday people engage in their own "critical cartographies" (1203). An important but understudied piece of alternative cartographic praxis is the role of mapping and geographic knowledge production in the African American freedom struggle,

including the nonspectacular spade work of challenging white supremacy. SNCC created and engaged in a tradition of gathering social and spatial data on power structures and countermapping their sphere of influence and control, inventorying the political economy of regions and communities, and formulating radical geographic pedagogy that predated much of the "critical" turn in human geography. This fact in turn prompts a consideration of the organic intellectualism and grounded and resistant knowledge practices of public groups often missing within the academic or industrial debates (Wright 2018).

The SNCC's historical and geographic experience, although clearly important to students of the movement and black geographies, is also an important reminder of the need to expand and in fact radicalize our conception of the who, when, where, and so what of GI. By asserting that SNCC's Research Department relied on, created, and operationalized a radical GI to carry out strategic decisions and political actions important to the efficacy of civil rights organizing, we point toward the ways in which we might expand our understanding of GI beyond national security, the expansion of corporate capitalism, and the expert-driven "tradecraft" relationships characterizing the military–academic–industrial complex. A more critical, if not radical, understanding of GI recognizes it less as a profession or industry and more as a broad set of embodied, affective, and politically laden practices in which people create, use, and employ sophisticated geographic understandings and knowledge to make complex decisions—whether those support dominant social and political interests or not. Such a reading of GI necessarily draws attention to the ways in which geography is not only complicit with the military–industrial–academic complex and the violent implications of those relationships, but it also opens space for a broader exploration of the ways in which geography can be put into service to undermine, destabilize, and challenge the hetero–patriarchal–racist foundations of modern capitalism.

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