

Putting the Black Ink Back into Print: Black Newark/Black New Ark

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This essay makes the case for the 1968 community newspaper Black Newark as an archival site that provides an alternative account of the growth of the Black Power movement in the city of Newark. The issues written about in this radical publication are an abundant resource for historians and researchers of New Jersey culture and Black cultural production in the United States. This essay contests the fact that no books devoted to the history of the Black press in the United States or surveys of African American newspapers make mention of Black Newark. It is the aim of this essay to examine both the 1968 edition of Black Newark and the later 1972–1974 edition of Black New Ark with the express goal of including the publications in the archive of both the history of Newark, New Jersey, and the Black press in the United States.

Introduction

In 1968, Newark, New Jersey, like many other cities across the United States, was enthralled in the civil rights movement, fueled by public displays of protest, legal proceedings, and community organizing advocating for the rights of the most disenfranchised citizens. Mourning the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the Committee for a Unified Newark (CFUN), under the leadership of Amiri Baraka, began publishing *Black Newark*, a radical newspaper that was one of the many voices of the Black Power movement in the city. It advocated for better public education, adequate housing, cultural pride in African and African American traditions, and an end to police violence. One of its most important contributions to the history of New Jersey is that it showed the Black Power movement's emphasis on both national issues facing all Black Americans and a transnational call for solidarity with oppressed people across the world. This

essay seeks to make a case for how *Black Newark* provides a wealth of resources for future research. Particularly, this publication requires a place in the archive of Newark's history because it shows how the city was an important place for the international struggle of the Black Power movement.

In large bold letters and serified font, the headline "Carmichael to Lead Soul Session Here" appeared right above the name of the first issue of a local New Jersey newspaper from 1968. Following the uprisings in Newark, New Jersey, in the previous year, the publication *Black Newark* (1968) reported on significant figures of the Black Power movement. The stories that appeared within its news columns are a printed artifact that addressed issues of poverty, police brutality, and voter participation in the city of Newark. Inclusion of this press in the history of Black print culture further connects to the history of the Black Power movement in Newark during that time. In addition, the paper connected Newark readers to the larger Pan-African movement and global postcolonial resistances. The paper would later be renamed *Black New Ark* (1972–1974) and produce a more militant focus on news coverage.¹ As noted in Komozi Woodard's chapter on the Black Power movement in Newark, the publication was created by members of CFUN under the leadership of Amiri Baraka, which would later produce the transnational newspaper *Unity & Struggle*, among their other communications.²

Black Newark is a rich source for any survey list or guides of African American or Black presses in the United States. The Newark paper *Afro-American* is consistently the only publication cited from New Jersey. It was as if *Black Newark* did not exist in the larger history of the Black

¹ *Black Newark* only ran for one year in 1968. Then, in 1972, the publication resumed printing under the slightly altered title, *Black New Ark* (1972–1974).

² Komozi Woodard, "Message from the Grassroots: The Black Power Experiment in Newark, New Jersey" in *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America*, ed. Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York: New York University Press, 2005).

Press. *Black Newark* is an archival site that provides an alternative account of the growth of the Black Power movement in the city of Newark. The issues written about in this radical publication are an archival tool for historians and researchers of New Jersey culture and Black cultural production in the United States. *Black Newark* covered African American–centered cultural events, national struggles against white supremacy, and international resistances against imperialist forces throughout Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Black Newark had a short run, but its task was large. It amplified the transnational solidarity of the African American community in Newark, empowered the youth, and connected marginalized peoples across place and space. Its mission statement read:

The purpose of BLACK NEWARK is to reflect the thinking and actions of the Black Communities as they relate to the world . . . We endeavor to fill the need for a diversity of opinion from the “new” Black Community . . . Varying points of views from brothers and sisters who are subjects of colonial rule will also serve to keep the Black Community an informed one, especially as it regards our aspirations and progress.³

Clearly, the Black community was the center of its focus. Newspapers are cultural reflections of a community’s “collective consciousness.”⁴ *Black Newark* echoed the discontent that African Americans in the city had with local government, and with the United States as a whole. The publication also participated in the larger “cultural nationalism” of the Black Power movement in Newark.⁵ Like other Black Power publications, they did not always incorporate an intersectional analysis of issues specific to Black women. Nevertheless, even in its sometimes limited vision, Black nationalism is still valuable to historians and researchers studying New Jersey, and Black print culture more broadly.

³ Abu Ansar, editor, *Black Newark*, July 1968, Vol. 1, No. 2, 3.

⁴ Jennifer Ware, “News as a Cultural Mirror: Historically Black Newspapers Reflecting Public Views of Loving v. Virginia (1967),” *Social Issues* 71, No. 4 (2015), 693–711.

⁵ Woodard, *A Nation within a Nation*, Chapel Hill (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 115.

The leaders of CFUN, in addition to producing this independent newspaper, were a guiding force in the Black Power movement in Newark at the time, putting forth “their own political and community priorities.”⁶ *Black Newark* is the cultural product of their effort. Newark, like many other major urban cities with a growing African American population, was looking for relief from poverty, police brutality, and a failing electoral system. Looking at the alternative Black press in Newark places the city and its citizens as active members of the larger Black Power movement of the time.

A Newspaper for Civil Rights

Black Newark, and later *Black New Ark*, contributed directly to the civil rights movement and the Black Power movement happening in Newark at the time. The paper published its first issue the same month as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination. The front-page article covered the aftermath of King’s murder, and offered both solace and guidance to subscribers: “Remember; You never fight an enemy unprepared, or when he expects it.”⁷ *Black Newark* had a specific agenda, one set on preparing its readers for what was to come. The growing discontent in Newark, which was plagued by the police department’s “intensifying militancy,” among other oppressive practices, made fertile “an environment” for “black nationalism.”⁸ The early marches and demonstrations of the 1960s were held at City Hall and throughout the city, protesting the actions of an all-white police force.⁹ Filtered through this light, the newspaper was a substantial part of the active resistance to white supremacy in the history of 1960s–1970s Newark. The publication

⁶ Woodard, “Message from the Grassroots,” 80.

⁷ *Black Newark*, April 1968, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1, Box 1, Folder 10, Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives Collection of Civil Rights, New York University, New York, New York, and Dana Library City of Newark Special Collection, HX92 .N6B53, Rutgers University-Newark, Newark, New Jersey.

⁸ Zenzele Isoke, *Urban Black Women and the Politics of Resistance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

⁹ Jennifer Frost, “Redefining Goals.” *Interracial Movement of the Poor: Community Organizing and the New Left in the 1960s* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 135.

was a cultural product of the Black Power movement in the city, since the press was part of a “fusion of grassroots community residents, student activists and progressive intellectuals.”¹⁰

Black Newark worked as a counternarrative that offered a reimagining of Newark in the early 1960s and 1970s. Historically, Black presses transmitted Black intellectual thought as a means to set “an alternative imaginary in motion.”¹¹ The small publication reflected the community values of the city, often promoting culturally engaged activities, and including the newspaper in the historiography of New Jersey contributes to a view of a major African American city that exercised democratic agency. Their mission was evident in the editorials, such as one on voter registration: “VOTE BLACK: Elect Pinckney, Ewing, Tucker Nov. 5.”¹² The pages of the small radical newspaper showed a Newark that was filled with communities that sought to represent all its people in government.

Black Newark worked within a framework of resistance. As Woodard observed, “black grassroots assemblies took the initiative in their own hands to determine the issues they felt were most important.”¹³ A prime example is when the paper covered the “Black Soul, Black Culture Affair,” taking place in Newark. Pictures appeared of individuals dressed in both Western attire and traditional West African clothing. One woman danced, while other individuals gave speeches. The caption read: “In the top flick BABA OSERJIMAN, KATACHER, and OYAYEMI lay down some boss African American sounds.”¹⁴ The images illustrated a vision of the African American people of Newark practicing cultural traditions in positions of authority. From the spelling of months to language used in articles, the writers privileged AAVE (African American Vernacular

¹⁰ Woodard, “Message from the Grassroots,” 77.

¹¹ Fraser, “Emancipatory Cosmology,” 281.

¹² *Black Newark*, November 1968, Vol. 1, No. 3, front page.

¹³ Woodard, “Message from the Grassroots,” 80.

¹⁴ *Black Newark*, April 1968, Vol. 1, No. 1, 3.

English) over standard English, which was the traditional usage practiced in other newspapers. *Black Newark* established pride in Black culture and did so by promoting the agency of its community in Newark by “speaking in their own language.”¹⁵

Black Newark kept its readers informed citizens, often providing safeguards to police misconduct. There were many articles over the years dedicated to reporting incidents of police brutality. An article by Leroi Jones (aka Amiri Baraka) identified the car and badge number of a police unit that “beat up two boys on Sussex Ave.”¹⁶ The brief article concluded by asking readers: “What will you do about this violence?” Just as Black newspapers of the past “functioned as an advocate for [their] readers,” *Black Newark* contributed to the community struggle for institutional reform.¹⁷ The publication pointed out systematic police violence and, in doing so, demanded direct action to remedy the problem. By reporting on individual police misconduct and indicting the larger system of the carceral state, *Black Newark* as a small press participated in the history of establishing police accountability in Newark. The newspaper was one of the first steps to the creation of a civilian review board. However, *Black Newark* is missing from archival materials in studies on police accountability in Newark, which only draw from the *New Jersey Star-Ledger* and the *New York Times*.¹⁸ Pages from the 1968 issues of *Black Newark* were included in the 2016 exhibit *From Rebellion to Review Board* at the Newark Public Library, which presented the history of a civilian review board in New Jersey.¹⁹ Its inclusion in the exhibit signifies the need to recognize the history of Black Intellectualism in New Jersey.

¹⁵ Woodard, “Message from the Grassroots,” 80.

¹⁶ *December 1973, Vol. 2, No. 14, 6.*

¹⁷ Ware, “News as a Cultural Mirror,” 696.

¹⁸ Alicia McGregor, “Politics, Police Accountability and Public Health: Civilian Review in Newark, New Jersey,” *Journal of Urban Health* 93, (2016): 141–153.

¹⁹ “From Rebellion to Review Board” exhibit, December 2016, <https://blogs.libraries.rutgers.edu/rebellion2reviewboard/exhibits/show/r2r/introduction>.

A significant contribution to the formation of a police review board in Newark is that, according to *Black New Ark*, a civilian review board had been established at the end of 1973. In the January/February issue of *Black New Ark*, the article “Police Review Board Holds First Meeting” reads: “On Desemba [sic] 17, 1973 the Interim Committee For a Civilian Complaint review Board held its first public hearing dealing with the increasing number of police brutality, harassment and corruption incidents in the NewArk community.”²⁰ *Black New Ark*’s coverage of the 1973 review board shows how the community used civil processes to hold the police department accountable. The newspaper would be a valuable inclusion in the historical archive of New Jersey, which contextualizes the development of a Civilian Complaint Review Board in 2015.

Black Newark began circulation in April 1968 in the midst of the murder of Dr. King, and in the aftermath of the Newark rebellion of 1967. It continued the focus on civil rights in *Black New Ark*. Their “man on the street” section inquired about Newarkers’ feelings of community oversight of the police department. All six people interviewed, overwhelmingly, said yes: that a community police review board was needed.²¹ These sentiments reflected a community fed up with the misconduct of a government institution, which instead of protecting them had been terrorizing them. How did *Black Newark/New Ark* and organizations like CFUN respond to a lack of police accountability? While the new decade ushered in a Black mayor, activists and community members expected the Gibson Administration to tackle police reform.²² They did not wait for

²⁰ *Black New Ark*, January/February 1974, Vol. 3 No. 1, 3, Box 1, Folder 11-13, Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives Collection of Civil Rights, New York University, New York, New York, and Dana Library City of Newark Special Collection, HX92 .N6B53, Rutgers University-Newark, Newark, New Jersey. A digitized version of the newspaper can be found online at Rise Up North Newark, <https://riseupnewark.com/media-tag/newspaper/>.

²¹ *Black New Ark*, November 1973, Vol. 2, No. 13, 4.

²² McGregor, “Politics, Police Accountability and Public Health,” 144.

institutional action. When disputes broke out in the city, instead of calling the Newark police, residents would rely on members of the United Brothers and CFUN to reconcile local problems.²³

In 1968 *Black Newark* would continue the legacy of the Black press that began with *Freedom's Journal* (1827–1829) and the *Rights of All* (1829), which were the first two African American newspapers produced in the United States.²⁴ These publications “offered an alternative to a fixed, hierarchical politics” and were a model for “emancipatory black politics.”²⁵ *Black Newark* utilized a similar advocacy framework,²⁶ in that it explicitly reported on issues from the perspective of Black Newarkers, and offered solutions to community problems of police misconduct, lack of employment, and housing insecurity. An article in the first issue of the paper, entitled “Newark drunk after King’s murder: United Black Brothers maintain peace,” called on the residents to remain strong in the wake of King’s death; they addressed anti-Black racism and vehemently claimed: “but one thing the crisis did prove is that it is Black People who should run Newark.”²⁷ The publication pushed for political reform and a shift in governmental control.

During the 1960s, community groups led by Amiri Baraka worked to harness the voting power of both the African American and Puerto Rican communities in Newark. The July 1968 issue of *Black Newark* was filled with promotional ads for benefit shows that aimed to increase voter turnout and registration.²⁸ The grassroots political movement in Newark was gearing up for the 1970 mayoral election. Kenneth Gibson, a resident of the Central Ward, began to garner support from both the Black and Puerto Rican communities.²⁹ Solidarity between the two groups

²³ Woodard, “Message from the Grassroots,” 85.

²⁴ Gordon Fraser, “Emancipatory Cosmology: Freedom’s Journal, the Rights of All, and the Revolutionary Movements of Black Print Culture,” *American Quarterly* 68, No. 2 (2016): 263–286.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 273.

²⁶ While an informational frame is considered a more “neutral frame,” the advocacy frame “reports one side of an issue, often providing solutions or purporting to represent a public consensus about a particular problem.” *Ibid.*, 697.

²⁷ *Black Newark*, July 1968, Vol. 1, No. 2, front page.

²⁸ *Black Newark*, July 1968, Vol. 1, No. 2, front page, 4.

²⁹ Robert Curvin, *Inside Newark* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2014), 135.

would form over time in other ways as well. The newest edition of the paper, *Black New Ark* (1972), published the article “Puerto Rican Leader Victimized by Police.”³⁰ Photos of Young Lords Party organizer Roman Rivera, his face and feet injured by a police attack, accompanied the two-column article. It referred to Rivera (founder of La Casa don Pedro in Newark) as “Brother Rivera” in a clear sign of camaraderie.³¹ As Woodard asserts, “At the foundation of Newark’s Black Power movement was an African American and Puerto Rican alliance.”³² The editors and writers of *Black New Ark* used the publication as a tool of resistance, reporting on issues faced by Puerto Ricans in the community and cultivating the shared goals between African Americans and Puerto Ricans living in the city in a “mutual defense pact . . . against white terror.”³³

National Movements

Black Newark/New Ark will provide significant material to better shape the narrative of current-day police reform in Newark and would contextualize current civil rights movements, like Black Lives Matter, that have a national focus. Community organizations in Newark, like in New York, supported civil rights for a safer Black public sphere by providing alternative community services. The newspaper provided evidence to support citizens’ desire for a reformed police department, as well as connections to other Black struggles in New York City. In an article, “N.Y. Blacks Fight Against Police Brutality,” Carolyn Johnson reports: “At the center of this activity is the Alliance for Survival, a coalition of community groups formed as a part of the Black response to the Clifford Glover killing.”³⁴ The article reported on the efforts of New York City Black organizations moving from individual reporting to examining a larger pattern of behavior.

³⁰ *Black New Ark*, November 1972, Vol. 1, No. 9, 8.

³¹ *Black New Ark*, November 1972, Vol. 1, No. 9, 8.

³² Woodard, “Message from the Grassroots,” 82.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Black New Ark*, July 1973, Vol. 2, No. 7, 4.

Labor and the right to work has always been an important issue for CFUN and the Black Power movement in Newark. The editors of *Black Newark/New Ark* knew that labor issues crossed racial and ethnic lines, and were important to cross-cultural solidarity. They often raised awareness of the consciousness of other workers' efforts across the country, in particular, the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC) under Cesar Chavez. The article "Racist Teamsters Attack Mexicans Too!!" reported on the renewed grape boycott and the damaging effect caused by the Teamsters.³⁵ The tension between farmworkers and the unions, as cited by Enair Mohn, director of the western Conference of the Teamsters, is attributed to the majority of farmworkers being Mexican.³⁶ While other historians of Newark and its Black Power movement focus on the Black and Puerto Rican coalition, *Black New Ark* showed the racial tension in the larger labor movement,³⁷ such as by offering solidarity with Chicano workers in their renewed efforts for better working conditions and pay. Bringing light to the historical utility of these two local newspapers provides a deep connection between Black nationalists in Newark and the Chicano labor movement.³⁸ By recognizing the national solidarity emphasized by the newspaper, these papers induct the city of Newark into the active national struggle for equality in the 1960s and 1970s.

Pan-Africanism

Published at the beginning of the 1970s, *Black New Ark* invoked more of a militant praxis and the rhetoric of the Black Power movement. The new mission statement addressed this shift: "At the outset, this is the newest edition of BLACK NEW ARK. It is the evolution of a communications medium which will join the fragments of a disunified [*sic*] Black community into

³⁵ *Black New Ark*, July 1973, Vol. 2, No. 7, 5.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ See Theoharis and Woodard, *Groundwork: Local Black Freedom Movements in America*, 91, and Curvin *Inside Newark*, 133, among others.

³⁸ Black nationalists in the 1960s believed that the liberation movements were tied to the struggles in the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and Latin American. See Woodard "Message from the Grassroots," 91.

one-whole body/family of Black people.”³⁹ The Newark Black Power movement radicalized the way that Black citizens related to one another and their city, building many community institutions and demanding more representation in the city government.⁴⁰ The newspaper acknowledged that the Black community in Newark, and the diaspora, had been divided, and argued that a solution to the problem would be a unified Pan-African community. This was a community formation that transcended place and space, and recognized African and African American heritage, knowledge, and traditions as worth preserving and defending.

The newspaper contributed to the development of a pro-Black consciousness in the city, and in the world at large. The Pan-African movement of the time sought to reclaim the cultural knowledge and traditions of Afro-descended people. CFUN provided a host of cultural programming and alternative education.⁴¹ For example, one cover page article proclaims: “Black Education-No Liberation Without It!”⁴² In addition, their focus on food was among many of the other traditional practices advocated by the paper. *Black Newark* included quotidian aspects of African American life in their cooking section. The recipe for “West African Stew” listed the ingredients: smoked tongue, onions, spinach, tomato sauce, and “very hot” dried pepper, and the instructions suggested pairing the dish with “mock fufu,” a substitute for real fufu—an African side dish made from cassava.⁴³ While it is common for newspapers and magazines to include recipes for readers to try out, what is significant about the West African Stew recipe and cassava dish is the invocation of African culinary roots.⁴⁴ These recipes were indicative of the paper’s move toward transnationalism. The columns of the newspaper privileged African American

³⁹ *Black New Ark*, April 1972, Vol. 1, No. 5, 4.

⁴⁰ Woodard, “Message from the Grassroots,” 93.

⁴¹ Woodard, “Message from the Grassroots,” 92.

⁴² *Black New Ark*, September 1972, Vol. 1, No. 9, 8.

⁴³ *Black Newark*, April 1968, Vol. 1, No. 1, 5.

⁴⁴ Those who are not familiar with cassava, which is a tuberous root vegetable, may not get my pun.

recipes, like alternative educational institutions, which is one reason why *Black Newark* as a historical document would be an important addition to larger historical studies.

The newspaper tasked the Black community in Newark to be aware of the oppression happening overseas, and in reporting on international struggles made clear the Black Power community in Newark's mission toward transnational solidarity. References throughout the publication to "colonial rule" alluded to other marginalized ethno-racial groups in the United States (Puerto Ricans and American Indians), as well as extended to other postcolonial peoples (Vietnam and much of the Global South). The editors and writers allied with communities of color, both in the United States and "the Third World," in a global struggle for the right to self-govern. The 1973 Novemba [sic] cover page of *Black New Ark* proclaims: "CAP Support for Arab National Liberation." (CAP stood for Congress of Afrikan People.⁴⁵) In the article, they "protest American aid to finance Zionist Israeli ex-pansionism and annexation policies." When compared to their previous objections to "the spending of American tax dollars to support the bloody regimes" in various African and South American countries, it becomes clear that the Black Power movement in Newark had a broader vision of transnational struggle against subjugation.⁴⁶ Ultimately, the emphasis was on collective inter- and intra-community matters, via a Pan-Africanist ideology, because it called for solidarity across social movements.

Heteropatriarchy in Print

Not unlike other Black Power-based newspapers of the time, *Black Newark* was often male-centric and depicted Black womanhood in limited terms. Unfortunately, like other Black presses, the newspaper would include patriarchal and sexist biases in some of its news copy.⁴⁷ The

⁴⁵ *Black New Ark*, November 1973, Vol. 2, No. 12, 1.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ The *Panther* newspaper run by the Black Panthers at the beginning relied on a rhetoric that reinforced strict gender roles, which forced African American women to perform a servile role in the party. See more in Linda

article “Sword and Shield: Illegitimacy, Welfare and Birth Control,” written by Abu Ansar (the editor), critiques the white medical community’s treatment of Black women. While keeping in mind the history of medical experimentation on and violence against Black women since the days when Africans were held in bondage, the piece takes a more paternalistic tone: “Black Women who are already without husbands will work to find them or will enter into some type of communal agreement where they can best work out their diet, medical, housing, and day-care needs.”⁴⁸ Ansar assumes Black women existed only to be married in heterosexual unions and were reliant on Black men for their needs. In her essay “Scratching the Surface,” Audre Lorde writes, “Yet women-identified women—those who sought their own destinies and attempted to execute them in the absence of male support—have been around in all of our communities for a long time.”⁴⁹ The idea of Black womanhood as possibly encompassing independence outside of Black men has been characteristic of the Black heteropatriarchy in Newark.⁵⁰ The politics practiced by the Black Power movement were heavily influenced by white patriarchy, homophobia, and neoliberalism that depended on a masculine ideal of Black masculinity as caretaker and protector, as palpably reflected in the phallic symbolism in the “Shield and Sword” article.⁵¹

The issue of reproductive rights was specifically important to Black women and in the struggle for the type of liberation striven for by *Black Newark/New Ark*. Birth control for African American women has been overshadowed by the fear of forced sterilization by white doctors—based on centuries of medical experimentation on Black women before and after emancipation—and so it became “almost impossible for them to think of birth control in the same way as middle-

Lumsden, “Good Mothers with Guns: Framing Black Womanhood in the *Black Panther*, 1968–1980,” *J&MC Quarterly* 6, No. 4, (2009), 900–922.

⁴⁸ *Black Newark*, July 1968, Vol. 1, No. 1, 8.

⁴⁹ Audre Lorde, “Scratching the Surface: Some Notes on Barriers to Women and Loving,” *Sister Outsider* (New York: Crossing Press), 1984, 2007, 49.

⁵⁰ Isoke, *Urban Black Women and the Politics of Resistance*.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

class white women.”⁵² The “Shield and Sword” article warned the women of the African American community to be wary of birth control and white medicine: “If Black Women were to be natural they would fortunately outpopulate [*sic*] the miserable cracker majority that now exists in this land.”⁵³ In both cases, a lack of an intersectional analysis of reproductive health fails Black women. In critiquing the white supremacy prevalent in reproductive rights of Black women, *Black Newark* relied on the sexual stereotypes that placed Black women as biological reproducers. It is evident that the newspaper has an absence of an intersectional approach⁵⁴ to oppression that does not recognize the “multiple axes of differentiation that produce black women as political subject.”⁵⁵ The voices of African American Women or Black feminists are missing from a Black heteropatriarchal engagement with medical white supremacy. The newspaper echoed the greater issue within the Black radical tradition that ignored the wishes of its women participants. Similarly, the *Panther* newspaper, early on, advocated against birth control, despite women in the party wanting reproductive health choices.⁵⁶

Conclusion

A seemingly small African American newspaper, *Black Newark/New Ark* existed for a humble amount of time, ending in 1974.⁵⁷ Yet it is an archival resource for historians of New Jersey during the civil unrest of the 1960s and 1970s, as well as for researchers interested in the larger history of Black print culture. When this publication is placed more prominently in the archive of Newark’s history, it will foreground New Jersey as a significant place within the

⁵² Lumsden, “Good Mothers with Guns,” 904.

⁵³ *Black Newark*, July 1968, No. 1, Vol. 2, 8.

⁵⁴ Although the term *intersectionality* was not coined until 1993 by Kimberlé Crenshaw, the idea of intersecting oppressions in regard to Black womanhood has been articulated since Sojourner Truth’s speech “Ar’nt I a Woman?” in 1851.

⁵⁵ Isoke, *Urban Black Women and the Politics of Resistance*, 21.

⁵⁶ Lumsden, “Good Mothers with Guns.”

⁵⁷ Although CFUN would continue to publish under the new name *Unity and Struggle* (1974–1979).

national and international struggle for Black liberation. The efforts made by community organizations fighting for a better Newark were present in its bylines, editorials, and articles, which had a lasting impact. Some of those efforts called for both national connection to other Black communities throughout the United States and a transnational solidarity among other oppressed populations around the world. Its recovery provides contextualization of the African American community's relationship to domestic and international groups fighting for equality and change.⁵⁸ This is similar to our present-day situation, where the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation was created after the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter, which was used to protest police violence against Black people in the United States.⁵⁹ The organization describes itself as "a global organization in the US, UK, and Canada, whose mission is to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence incited on Black communities by the state and vigilantes."⁶⁰ The hashtag for BLM was started on Twitter in 2013. Social media is currently a communication tool that allows for the distribution of information and collective organizing. Recovering *Black Newark*, which is another communication tool (print media), allows us to broaden our understanding of contemporary Black organizing.

While the paper was limited in its analysis of Black women's issues, like access to birth control, it still remains a significant resource worth recovering in the archive because it functions as a pedagogical tool for other Black organizing. There is a need to include perspectives of queer Black women. This lesson is present in the Black Lives Matter organization in one of the ways in which they define themselves: "We affirm the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks,

⁵⁸ Recently, the website <http://riseupnewark.com/>, which has created a digital archive of the Black Power Movement in Newark, has published PDFs of *Black New Ark* online.

⁵⁹ "About," Black Lives Matter website, accessed March 5, 2021, <https://blacklivesmatter.com/about/>.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

undocumented folks, folks with records, women, and all Black lives along the gender spectrum.”⁶¹ In comparing the newspaper to the current-day movement, historians and scholars can map out the development of Black organizing in print and social media. The small independent newspaper that was *Black Newark/New Ark* is a rich archive of Black resistance. Its mission was wide-ranging. The press reported on issues faced by the Puerto Rican community in Newark as well as covered global human rights issues in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Historians and researchers of Newark and Black print culture have a wealth of community-centered archives to draw from.

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⁶¹ “About,” Black Lives Matter website.