The Place of Art in Black Panther Party Revolutionary Thought and Practice: From Revolution to Reform, A Content Analysis

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THE PLACE OF ART IN BLACK PANTHER PARTY REVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT AND PRACTICE: FROM REVOLUTION TO REFORM, A CONTENT ANALYSIS

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Michael Macaluso
The Black Panther Intercommunal News Services (BPINS) was one of the most powerful black presses and a mechanism to build an imagined political community. Unfortunately, the scholarly and sociological literature examining the artwork of the Black Panther Party published in BPINS has been inadequate. Most work to date focuses solely on one artist, Emory Douglas, the Party’s Minister of Culture and primary editor of their press. Many other artists contributed to the collective endeavor of art and organization at large. The artwork of the Black Panther Party was a communal enterprise geared toward the promotion of political consciousness through visual literacy. This dissertation is a content analysis of that artwork published in BPINS over its 13-year publication. Using systematic sampling, 313 images were collected and analyzed focusing on four historical transitions of the Black Panther Party and how artwork shifted from a Black Nationalist revolutionary stance to a reformative intercommunal focus.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The 1960s is, arguably, the start of the contemporary Black Power Movement (BPM) and the Black Arts Movement (BAM), but to date, research of the BAM is marginal (Smethurst 2005). According to Smethurst (2005) and Widener (2010), Social Movement Organizations (SMOs) like the Black Panther Party (BPP) contributed meaningfully to the BAM. The BPP’s contribution was, in part, through their weekly newspaper publication, the Black Panther Intercommunal News Service (BPINS) where artwork was frequently published. Given the significance of the association between BAM, BPP, and BPINS it is astonishing that the scholarly work focused on BPP artwork is minimal. To date, there has been little empirical examination primarily focused on the hundreds of works of art published within the annals of BPINS. According to the BPP, BPINS was the primary source for information regarding the Party's ideological foundation. Secondly, it was considered one of the most significant independent black newspapers of its era 1967 – 1980 (Brown 2007; Heath 1976a). Finally, it was a sounding board for the voices of the people that let many articulate themselves through writings, poetry, and (revolutionary) art (Hilliard 2007).

The artwork of the BPP has been recognized by many (see for example Durant 2007; Gaiter 2012; Gaiter 2007) as an essential resource in framing Party ideology. Within that body of literature there are three primary tendencies and patterns of discussion:
Almost all the research to date focuses primarily on Emory Douglas – one of the numerous artists who published art in *BPINS* (see Doss 1999, Duncan 2016; Durant 2007; Gaiter 2012).

The art examined within the literature principally focuses on the early to mid-years of the party (1967 – 1973) (see Coulter 2012; Courtwright 1974; Doss 1999; Duncan 2016).

Frequently the main focuses within the literature reference gender politics (see Duncan 2016; Hughey 2009).

With the numerous claims about the importance of BPP artwork, it is perplexing as to why research is limited. Former party members, BAM scholars, and other social scientists all express how vital this artwork has been; yet detailed analysis of the work has gone unexplored. The significance of this dissertation is examination of the moral, political, social, and historical intersections positioned in the cultural transmission of the visual art. BPP artists were agents of social change through contributions to the BAM and their construction of an imagined political community. The artwork was a visual and historical record of the BPP and their ideologies that were framed within *The 10 Point Platform and Program* (Appendix A and B).

**Statement of the Problem**

From a broader sociological lens, there is an overall absence of scholarly literature regarding African American visual art, and more specifically the artwork of the BPP published within *BPINS* (paintings, drawings, chalk, political cartoons, etc.) from 1967 through 1980. There has been some research examining *BPINS*, but research regarding BPP art is limited. Some scholars have deliberated on the significance of the BAM in more general terms (see Collins and Crawford 2008; Smethurst 2005), but research is marginal regarding the BPP's contribution to the BAM and their artwork within *BPINS* (see Coulter...
The traditional framing by the media of the BPP has left many people in the United States with the certainty that they were a hyper-masculine black militant and nationalist movement bent on revolution (Newton 2009). While certainly self-defense and revolution was part of their philosophy, the BPP was more complex ideologically. BPINS was the countering voice of the BPP and the BPM, framing the social issues facing African American communities through writings, poetry, art, and news. Consequently, there is a need for more sociological investigation of the BAM, the BPP and artwork within the annals of BPINS. The focus of this research is the qualitative content analysis of Panther philosophy within the art of BPINS guided by the following questions:

1) Did the artwork promote a revolutionary and/or reformative stance?
2) Did the artwork follow the historical transitions of the party from early militant ideologies (1966- March 1972) to more a more community focused social movement (March 1972-1980)?
3) Did the artwork following the foundations of the 1967 10 Point Platform and Program and was there a historical shift in the art when the program was changed in 1972?

Background of the Party

Early 20th-century history in the United States exposes the toll many African Americans faced in the fight against marginalization, discrimination, prejudice, institutional racism, and individual racism. Often, African Americans attempted to expose these troubles through organized peaceful protests such as marches or sit-ins. Unfortunately, to their detriment, these demonstrations were regularly met with systematized institutional violence by ordinary citizens, law enforcement, and the State (e.g., 1965 Selma to Montgomery AL march). As a marginalized group of people, it limited their voices within
numerous black revolutionaries emerged throughout the 1960s.

The 1960s Civil Rights Movement in the United States encouraged many people (e.g., Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King) to stand firm against institutional inequalities. As previously mentioned, within many areas of the country peaceful resistance was met with violence and other forms of oppression. This impasse in the Civil Rights Movement led people like Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale to the belief that self-defense or "picking up the gun" was the only solution against vehement subjugation and state-sanctioned violence (Seale 1970).

In October of 1966, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale formed the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense in Oakland California. This grassroots movement would propagate into a national movement by 1968, and soon the BPP was deemed the number one internal terrorist threat in the United States (Brown 2009; Churchill 2001; Seale 1970). The Panthers formed armed community Police-alert Patrols where Party members would follow Oakland police officers and observe their interactions with African Americans. This approach instantaneously generated a tense relationship between the BPP and law enforcement (Seale 1970).

Newton and Seale thought it was time for transformative action through self-defense and armed struggle; the BPP would serve the people through Revolutionary Nationalism (Harris 2001; Seale 1970). The BPP formed to educate the people about their social condition, their oppression, and to build community institutions (McCartney 1992). Co-founder Huey P. Newton believed true revolutionaries served the people and they must

---

1 This name would soon be changed and shortened to the Black Panther Party
be prepared to die for the people (Brown 2009; Newton 2009). The BPP’s emphasis was framed out in their 1966 10 Point Platform and Program (Appendix A) and would then be restructured in March of 1972 (Appendix B). The militancy of the BPP movement is renown among those familiar with social movements of the 1960s and 1970s.

Dejected by the ideological and tactical failures of the Civil Rights Movement, co-founders Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale sought real change through social action in Oakland, CA. There was a need for a philosophical shift and emancipation from the State. It was through participation in various civil rights and nationalist groups, Newton became despondent, believing transformation could not happen through intellectual discourse on college campuses or similar settings. A change could only come through community organization, action, and resistance of the lumpen (i.e., the underclass or forgotten people at the bottom of society) (Hilliard and Weise 2002; Rhodes 2007; Seale 1970).

Newton and Seale were discouraged by previous non-violent methods employed by African American civil rights groups which often faced state-sanctioned violence. Coinciding with these violent attacks was the assassinations of Malcolm X, and continued individual and institutional racism from police departments (Newton 1970). According to Cleaver (2007) the level of police violence, brutality, and murder of young black men across the nation were fueling the call for Black Power. As racial and class injustices continued to plague African American communities the ideas of self-defense and revolution became the initial foundation for the BPP. It was through Malcolm X’s vision of collective self-determination, self-reliance, and self-defense that activists and SMOs such as BPP formed under the BPM (Newton 1970; Seale 1970).
Initially, through Revolutionary Nationalism, the BPP was determined to combat what they believed to be State tyranny and domination that black Americans faced, militantly if necessary, in an attempt to alter the course of their history as an oppressed people (Foner 1995; Seale 1970). The initial months of this grassroots movement were centrally focused on recruiting black male youth within the Oakland California area. Soon, however, this recruitment became more extensive and national (Tyner 2005). Within a four year span, it would become an international movement (i.e., imagined community) that sought to change the global oppression for people of color (Clemons and Jones 2001).

The Party garnered national media attention early in 1967 at the California State Legislature when the BPP showed up to protest a bill proposing the ban of openly carrying firearms (Cleaver 2007; Jeffries 2004). This bill was a direct response to the BPP’s community Police-alert Patrols in Oakland.

The media image and frame of the BPP was a male-centered militant organization; the press’s construction of the Party was one of fear (Matthews 1998). As this movement grew and was reported on by the national press, misguided and uninformed beliefs surfaced that framed the BPP as a group of hyper-masculine revolutionary African Americans armed with guns, they were “terrorists” (Lumsden 2009; Seale 1970). However, that was only one role or representation of the Panthers. This myopic media framing of the Party detracted from the breadth of ideologies and representations of the BPP. The purpose of the BPP would go well beyond the militarization of inner-city African American men (Katsiaficas 2001). It should also be noted that this sensationalized militant image portrayed by the media to the public, was in part, a construction of Huey P. Newton.
Newton alleged this image would intimidate mainstream Americans while drawing recruits into the rank and file of the BPP (Foner 1995; Newton 2002a).

While the initial framework and ideology of the party was self-defense, in the early 1970s the party shifted focus from a belief of armed self-defense and revolution to community programs and coalition building (Brown 2009). Secondly, there was a shift from the framework of Black Nationalism to revolutionary internationalism, to then intercommunalism (Austin 2006). Along with this transformation came the restoration of the 10 Point Platform and Program (Appendix B) that followed the new framework of the Party.

The preliminary recruitment for the BPP started in Oakland, California. Seale (1970) explains the early focus of the Party (i.e., 1966 – 1967) was "brothers off the block," these were the disenfranchised young African Americans within the community. Before long, the BPP’s emphasis on recruitment extended to the lumpenproletariat (i.e., the disenfranchised such as pimps, prostitutes, criminals, etc.) and into college campuses (Seale 1970). The BPP enticed many young urban blacks who believed in the ideas of revolutionary action and self-defense. There was a willingness among BPP members to confront state violence and institutional racism (Knapper 1996). Josephs (2009) explains that Newton and Seale set out to challenge the mainstream ideology and counter the political narrative that black men were deficient and of low moral character. These were the stereotypes that were often framed by the conventional media and government.² One approach to counter these frames was the publication of BPINS and the cultivation of an imagined community.

² For example, the 1965 Moynihan report and culture of poverty hypothesis suggesting a cultural inferiority of African American men.
By 1968, the BPP was a national organization with chapters forming throughout the US and international chapters forming within the next two years. Heath (1976b) claims that 1968 was the year that membership peaked and there were 25 chapters throughout the United States. Between 1966 and 1971, Heath (1976b) estimates that the BPP operated within 26 states with over 60 chapters nationally.

The BPP had a lifespan of 15 years and throughout most of that era (1967 – 1980) the publication of BPINS would be the voice of the party. BPINS was the primary mechanism for spreading party ideology, and a means to counter how mainstream press and the government framed the SMO. BPINS conveyed the Party's philosophy and ethos through various means of writing, poetry, and artwork. BPINS would have the territorial and social reach that extended nationally and internationally.

While the articles and writing of BPINS were of the utmost importance, so was the artwork. It was through the BPP's Minister of Culture, Emory Douglas, that black (often revolutionary) art rose to prominence in the Party's endeavor to frame their political identity through BPINS (Durant 2007). Many artists contributed meaningfully through symbolic language and visual imagery. The focus of this dissertation is to look beyond the contributions of Emory Douglas examining the work of the numerous other artists.

Secondly, the examination of art will focus on the entirety of the 13-year publication run of BPINS. This research will add to the body of literature that intersects the BAM and BPM.

BPINS, Political Symbolism and the BPP

BPINS was one of the most visible and unswerving symbols of the BPP (Rhodes 2001). In African American communities, it was a tool for people to illuminate and speak out (Brown 2007). BPINS first issue was April 25, 1967, with 6000 papers circulating the
Bay Area of Oakland California (Rhodes 2001; Rhodes 1999). *BPINS* would eventually become the principal forum for the BPP and one of the most potent black independent newspapers of the era chronicling the black freedom struggle (Brown 2007; Heath 1976a). It was a communal effort circulated weekly through September of 1980 publishing 537 issues totaling over 12,000 pages (Abu-Jamal 2004; Hughey 2009; Rhodes 2001). At its peak publication in the early 1970s, 200,000 copies of *BPINS* were produced weekly. Press distribution would eventually become international with sales in Cuba, China, Western Europe, Africa, Scandinavia, and the Middle East (Hilliard 2007). Within all of those early publications artwork, often revolutionary, was a consistent part of the paper format.

The *BPINS* was the constant symbol of the party and a propaganda tool initially fashioned by Newton and Seale for member recruitment and political education (Rhodes 2001). In addition to the symbolic importance, the BPP knew from the onset that the creation of *BPINS* would play a significant role in furthering Panther’s agenda and raise political consciousness among our [sic] people as their oppressed state, to rebut government lies, to tell the truth, to urge change, to use pen alongside sword … In those early, heady days, the focus of our work, besides patrolling the streets to urge resistance to the rampant police brutality in the black community, was to produce and distribute a newspaper (Hilliard 2007: vii).

It was the voice of those alienated from the mainstream.

*BPINS* was central in the creation "of an imagined community of black revolutionaries across the USA, and eventually across the globe" (Rhodes 2001: 152). Eldridge Cleaver would be the first editor of *BPINS* and Emory Douglas was the first and only Minister of Culture. Douglas was a crucial component in the visual content of *BPINS* and used the term ‘revolutionary art’ to delineate the visual politics in *BPINS* (Rhodes 2001; Rhodes 1999). Douglas was responsible for *BPINS* format, layout, art, and
production. Through *BPINS*, the BPP started a visual movement that facilitated the transformation of black consciousness through the publishing of hundreds of images of artwork (Gaiter 2012).

Rhodes (2001) explains in her discussion that *BPINS* served many purposes: it was a steady source of income, a process of community building (i.e., imagined communities), it deployed symbolism, it constructed heroes and martyrs, it defined the party’s culture, and it was instructional. It “was the most important tool for the party’s efforts of self-representation directed at multiple audiences. It was, particularly in those early years, the only medium completely under their control” (Rhodes 2001: 156). Rice (2007) explains *BPINS* within African American communities was read and passed around, never thrown away. *BPINS* was a successful format the BPP used to frame and incite political action through discourse and art. Additionally, the artwork was often taken out of *BPINS* and posted throughout the community.

**Researching the BPP and BPINS**

Research that has focused primarily on *BPINS* has principally been performed by Rhodes (2007; 2001; 1999). Also, the bulk of publications and research focused on the revolutionary art of *BPINS* primarily discusses Emory Douglas and issues of gender politics (Coulter 2012; Courtwright 1974; Doss 1998; Duncan 2016; Durant 2007; Hughey 2009; LeBlanc-Ernest 1998; Lumsden 2009). Within that previously mentioned literature, the scope of inquiry is generally framed in the BPP’s early years. There have been two published books, one of them specifically about *BPINS* (Hilliard 2007), and one is specifically about the art of Emory Douglas (Durant 2007). The remaining literature includes, but is not limited to interviews, first-hand accounts, autobiographies,
historiographies, and memoirs. Cleaver (2007) offers a couple of reasons for the lack of scholarship. Those who were involved in the BPP had no time for recording the party's factual history during their ongoing struggle. Secondly, many writings have been less than scholarly and more sensationalized which hindered real scholarship.

The BAM and the BPM had an interdependent relationship; there are several notable published studies. Smethurst’s (2005) book, *The Black Arts Movement: Literally Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s* illustrates the significance the BAM had on the Civil Rights Movement. Smethurst’s (2005) comprehensive discussion about the BAM situates it within the broader BPM. Smethurst (2005) offers no empirical analysis of data, but the historical discussion indicates how vital the 1960s and 1970s eras were for the BAM in regard to community building.

Smethurst’s (2005) writing helped frame the future theoretical discussion for guiding the analysis of revolutionary art within *BPINS*. Specifically, his work complements the theoretical ideas of Howard Becker’s (1976) conception that art is a communal endeavor and Benedict Anderson’s (1991) idea of an "imagined community." Smethurst (2005) demonstrates the historical importance that Black Arts had on fostering and framing social movement ideologies such as the Revolutionary Nationalism of the BPP.

Next, Collins and Crawford’s (2008) *New Thoughts on the Black Arts Movement* is a 17 essay collection that analyzes the BAM from 1965 through 1976. Their work demonstrates the importance of collaborative efforts within the movement. Collins and Crawford (2008) express the need for a more critical discourse of the BAM. This analysis offers depth and breadth of the BAM demonstrating how important the movement was
culturally and politically throughout the United States. Some essential discussion points by various authors within this edited text are relevant.

First, Jones (2008: 45) explains the historical importance that BPP had on the BAM "for black culture and life, insisting on its visibility, its place as human and equal, and its viable contribution to the existence and history of the United States.” Secondly, Lennon (2008) illuminates a previous discussion point mentioned regarding Newton and Seale, the need for political action versus rhetoric and discourse in the pursuit of social justice. Finally, Collins and Crawford (2008) demonstrate a gap within the literature regarding the BPP’s contribution to the BAM. There are many other historical narratives and texts with similar discussion points (see Bowen 2008; Donaldson 1998; High 1997). This is not to suggest the BAM has not been written about and/or researched, but the focal point has often been other forms of “art” such as theatre, dance or literature versus visual imagery.

One of the more recent studies published by Charles Seguin (2016) illustrates a principal goal of SMOs is media attention and how media bias influences reporting. The media acts as a filter that translates information into the news through gatekeepers (i.e., editors and journalists) who select newsworthy events. According to Seguin (2016: 999), four factors influence media attention, "the scope of the conflict, resources, frames, and tactics." The scope of the conflict refers to allies and opponents drawn into the action. More relevant actors garner media attention leading to more resources. Ideologies are framed to resonate and foster recruitment. Finally, some tactics are more likely to draw media reporting. Seguin’s (2016) research and findings demonstrate that positive media feedback aided the BPP rise to prominence in their early revolutionary years.
The scholar who has performed the most research regarding media and the BPP is Jane Rhodes (2007; 2001; 1999). Her most recent research focuses on the intricate history of the BPM and the rise of black power icons such as the BPP. In addition, she examined the BPP’s relationship with the media (newspapers, magazine, and television), and the Party’s influence on American culture through language framing and resistance (Rhodes 2007). Her work examines the collective memory and the Party’s upsurge through the media’s culture industry (Rhodes 2007). As a whole, the media framed the party as a permanent fixture in American culture (Rhodes 2007). While Rhodes (2007) does indicate the importance of the art within BPINS, it is not a focus of her book. She does recognize that language, discourse, and images are the constitutive elements of representations. Theoretically, Rhodes (2007; 2001; 1999) demonstrates the importance of framing SMOs both by the press and the SMO itself. BPINS “was the most visible and consistent representation of the organization” (Rhodes 2001: 151).

Some of the more empirical studies performed analysis of BPP literature and rhetoric in BPINS (Courtwright 1974; Hughey 2009; Lumsden 2009). Hughey (2009) examined representations of black masculinity in BPINS through a historical qualitative interpretive analysis (Hughey 2009). Hughey (2009) posits that representations of black masculinity are historically framed by the dominant discourses of mainstream society (i.e., media) and culture, and the BPP challenged these assumptions through the creation and production of BPINS. BPINS provided a vestibule into the construction of aesthetic and rhetorical strategies. Hughey's (2009) research is relevant because it offers insight into the framing of African American men by the mainstream press and the counter-hegemonic
gaze framed within *BPINS*. While a direct bearing to this study is marginal, it supports the theoretical orientation of this research regarding the media’s framing of SMOs.

Another study that examined Panther rhetoric was by Courtwright (1974) through a content analysis of *BPINS* to investigate if there was a change or modification regarding the ideology of “picking up the gun.” Courtwright’s (1974) findings were that there was indeed less militaristic rhetoric in *BPINS* after 1970. This claim fits into the research questions regarding revolutionary art; if there were less rhetoric in the writings, it would suggest there was also a transition within the artwork published.

Next, there is Lumsden (2009), who examined the framing of black womanhood in *BPINS* from 1968-1980. Her examination investigates the writing, poetry, and artwork in *BPINS*. Lumsden’s (2009) findings suggest there was a reframing of black womanhood as the party transitioned. While Lumsden’s (2009) research does little to help the methodological analysis of this dissertation, it contributes in other means. For example, Lumsden’s (2009) discussion explains how artwork exerts a (counter-) hegemonic femininity. It demonstrates the communal effort in changing a narrative through the dissemination of *BPINS* into an imagined community.

Lumsden (2009), Hughey (2009) Rhodes (2007) and others establish the shifting meanings and patterns that occur throughout an SMO’s history. One of the many activities of an SMO is framing and assigning meaning to events and/or conditions with the intent to mobilize (McAdams and Snow 1997). Indeed, this goal was achieved by the BPP through mainstream media outlets and *BPINS*. The emergence of SMOs, like the BPP, occurs when people see the problematic conditions of their life as an injustice frame, "a mode of
interpretation that defines the actions of an authority system as unjust and simultaneously legitimates noncompliance” (Snow et al. 1997: 236).

Coulter (2012) uses \textit{BPINS} to examine gender dynamics of the BPP. Coulter (2012) samples issues of \textit{BPINS} primarily from 1967 – 1971 focusing on how \textit{BPINS} framed gender and sexuality. Coulter (2012) found that the Party endeavored to break away from the mainstream conceptions of sexuality and gender, but these efforts were not fully realized. The importance of Coulter’s (2012) discussion is the idea of \textit{controlling images}. Coulter (2012) explains that white society has established and controlled images (i.e., frames) for political purposes. The BPP contested these images within the publications and artwork of \textit{BPINS}. While this research will not examine gender politics, it will examine the controlled images of the party. Coulter’s (2012) research demonstrates that similar frames and controlled images can be analyzed empirically. Additionally, Coulter (2012) offers a sampling technique for this current research. With 537 issues and 1000s of images over a 13-years span, an empirical sample technique is necessary.

Mary Duncan (2016) explains how Douglas used visual mediums as a form of visual communication in \textit{BPINS}. According to Duncan (2016), it is through visual literacy techniques that artists convey messages that can then be interpreted by their audience. Duncan (2016) claims that visual language can be more effective than written words. Her use of visual literacy using artistic elements will be employed in this research project.

Another author that focuses on gender issues is LeBlanc-Ernest (1998) but more importantly for this dissertation work is how her analysis of BPP was broken into four historical eras. These eras are:

1) 1966 – 71 Revolutionary Years
2) 1972 – 74 De-radicalization Years
4) 1977 – 1982 Huey P. Newton Returns to Leadership

LeBlanc-Ernest (1998) offers the most logically framed historical eras within the research previously discussed. Further discussion and framing of these eras for the examination are explained in the method section of this research. These four historical eras will guide the analysis focusing on the ideological, political, and symbolic shifts in the artwork of *BPINS*.


Durant’s (2007) book is an edited text with four essays about the significance of Emory Douglas’s work and an interview with Douglas. The contributors to this text explained the importance of BPP art and helped frame the research questions. According to Durant (2007), Douglas’s work chronicled the progression and historical development of the Party. If that claim holds, then the artwork should follow the historical timeline of the BPP. While Douglas was a relevant actor within the party, there is less certainty about the dozens of other artists and the hundreds of artworks published.

Art was a cooperative endeavor producing a visual literacy and counter-hegemonic gaze, framing both a revolutionary and reformative stance that would be published and displayed throughout African American (imagined) communities. Nevertheless, the research to date is focused primarily on Douglas’s early works into the early 1970s while
mostly ignoring other artists and the later years of the party (Courtwright 1974; Duncan 2016). There is no real indication as to how the visual literacy frames the BPP into the latter years of Party. The BPP indeed played a significant role in the BAM, but their overall contributions to the movement need more empirical analysis. The focus of this dissertation is to move past those limitations adding breadth to the scholarly literature in regards to the BAM and BPM.

Political Symbolism, Language, and Imagined Communities

The theoretical framework for this analysis will draw from the SMO literature on framing and frame alignment. SMOs frequently try to recruit from a broad spectrum of people through the process of framing (Gamson and Meyer 2004). As the BPP matured, their goals were to recruit from a broader continuum than just "brothers off the block." The process of framing was critical for recruitment; framing provides meaning (Ryan and Gamson 2009). How possible recruits interpreted the Party was significant, BPINS allowed the BPP a bridge into communities across the nation and internationally. It also permitted them to extend, amplify, and transform particular "frames" within the mainstream press and BPINS (Snow et al. 1997). Furthermore, "core framing tasks" were used to identify problems and attribute blame, offering recruits strategies to address the problem, and motivation for action (Snow and Benford 1988). The BPP use of BPINS was a powerful resource in framing and essential for all of these previously mentioned tasks.

The power of the press has not gone unnoticed by sociology. Historically, both Weber (1998) and Habermas (1991) found the study of the press to be critical. Habermas (1991) studied the 18th-century historical transition of the public sphere and argued as capitalism within the press took hold, so did sensationalization and trivialization. The
press became a primary institution and commercial endeavor, it was a tool of the elite. The public sphere transformed from an arena of critical debate to commercialization. Weber (1998) asserts that since the press is a primary institution, it is therefore a principal means of socialization. Consequently, the press needs a more sociological inquiry.

The press constructs an “official reality” (Hansen 2000). Official reality is influenced by owners and companies who pay for advertising, and oftentimes they are not neutral or objective. The press frames public opinions and social issues (Best 2008). This is not to suggest that objectivity is completely disregarded but as the research by Coulter (2012) and Davenport (2010) indicate, it is still influenced by political leanings, reporter's bias, and the desire to sell the publications. Historically, the press framed the BPP through the construction of fear (Rhodes 2007). Framing an official reality limits autonomy and political opposition (Marcuse 1964) with dissident perspectives marginalized (Chomsky 2002).

BPINS was the countering voice of mainstream press playing a significant role to further the Party's agenda (Hilliard 2007). It helped construct an imagined community of African American revolutionaries across the country and internationally (Rhodes 2001). It was an essential tool for Party self-representation.

Benedict Anderson’s (1991) discussion of imagined communities is also of theoretical importance. The print culture of BPINS was instrumental in the origins and spread of party ideologies like Revolutionary Nationalism and the 10 Point Platform and Program. While a common thread of Party ideology was equality for all oppressed people, BPINS often focused on poor black communities. The creation of the paper itself was a cooperative endeavor. As Becker (1974) asserts, it requires a cooperative collectivity of
people to create and disseminate art. The party utilized *BPINS* as a tool for the publication of artwork which has historically played an essential role within African American SMOs.

Benedict Anderson (1991) argues that print culture is an essential component in linking dispersed populations where people can form nationally-imagined communities. The BPP would assert that African Americans were fundamentally a nationless people who have been historically marginalized. It is through the framing and construction of this “imagined community” that SMOs form. One method in the construction of imagined communities is through visual images. Art can perpetuate ideologies among an entire population and go beyond print since there is no need for literacy with the visual. According to Anderson (1991), signs or symbols aid in the formation of said communities.

**Art as a Communal Endeavor**

Since *BPINS* went beyond just print news it was also a way for Panther members to express their ideas and thoughts through various forms of art including poetry and visual art. While *BPINS* was the collective action of the BPP, so were the various forms of art within the paper itself. As Becker (1974: 767) suggests, "art is social in character" it is a collective and cooperative action involving a network of people that produce art and disseminate it to the community. While the BPP Minister of Culture, Emory Douglas is often considered the primary artist for *BPINS*, it took a collective of people to produce the final works (Hilliard 2007). Additionally, there were numerous contributing artists throughout the publication run. According to Becker (1974: 769), "whatever the artist, so defined, does not do himself must be done by someone else. The artist thus works in the center of a large network of cooperating people, all of whose work is essential to the final outcome." In considering art as a collective action, it could also be assumed that the
ideologies of the group control the content of the art that is produced and published. Artists have a dependence on others that can expand or limit the art that is produced (Becker 1974). From a sociological lens, *BPINS* is a communal creation.

Smethurst (2005) suggests that many areas of study in academia, such as African American studies, Chicana/o studies, and Asian American studies, owe their inception to the nationalist movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Ironically, many of the institutions that house these departments “maintain a far more ambivalent, if not hostile, relationship to the Black Power Movement, the Black Arts Movement, and other forms of political and artistic nationalism of the 1960s and 1970s” (Smethurst 2005: 2).

The BAM’s historical legacy stems from the Old Left (i.e., pre-1960s Marxism) and the break with black radicalism of the 1960s and 1970s which led to groups such as the BPP growing from a local to regional, to national and finally an international movement (Smethurst 2005). While there was a varying amount of hegemony among the various BPM and the BAMs, “the common thread between nearly all groups was the belief that African Americans were a people, a nation, entitled to (needing, really) self-determination of its own destiny” (Smethurst 2005: 15). This was an ideology that was used to develop and expand upon African American culture during this era, and as such, it promotes the ideas of imagined communities (Anderson 1991; Becker 1794). The legacy of Black Power and the BAM needs more academic assessment to realize the importance these movements have had politically and culturally within the United States.

**Methods – Art Analysis**

Scholars suggest that the use of newspapers to study SMOs has become a valid research practice (Earl et al., 2004). The press is a rich data source with visual media that
is imperative for studying cultural meanings (Warren and Karner 2015). Since the BPP had
*BPINS* to publish and frame the ideology of the movement, it is therefore, a rich data source
suitable for analysis. *BPINS* was a symbolic visual representation and visual literacy of
artwork that framed and expressed party beliefs to recruit and construct an imagined
community.

The purpose of this research is to provide critical decoding of Black Panther
revolutionary art found within *BPINS* from 1967 – 1980. This qualitative dissertation
sampled 313 images of artwork from *BPINS* and then coded each work of art in reference
to the previous research questions. This art was initially examined and collected through
the database “Black Thought and Culture” from *Alexander Street Press* with a sample size of
487 issues. Further data was then gathered from a collection of microfilms of *BPINS*. The
approach to this qualitative research dissertation was a historical content analysis of art.
The BPP drew from mainstream media systems creating a newspaper that would frame
their message through various forms of communication both written and symbolic
(Warren and Karner 2015). Upon a preliminary examination and an analysis of issues of
*BPINS* from 1967 – 1980, there were over 1600 works of art. Initially, there was a
summary analysis of the artwork to construct a manageable dataset.

Taking a holistic approach, I attempted to analyze the meaning from the perspective
of the artists (Bloomberg and Volpe 2016: 41). Explicit analysis of the art was performed
five times through content analysis. My first analysis was to determine the number of the
artists in the sample and the number of works they had each published. This analysis
resulted in over 50 artists in the sample (Appendix C). Then the dataset was analyzed and
coded in reference to the first research question and gone through a second time for
verification. The fourth and fifth rounds examined, coded, and analyzed artwork in reference to the second and third research questions. All of the data was coded and entered into MAXQDA, a qualitative software program.

From this analysis, it is clear the artwork of the BPP published in *BPINS*, was vital in promoting communal art and framing party philosophies that would create an imagined community. Through four historical shifts, the imagery does indeed shift from “Revolution” to “Reform.” *BPINS* was certainly one of the most noteworthy independent black newspapers of its era. It advanced the BPM and BAM through the weekly publication over 13 years. *BPINS* moved well beyond the mainstream press and Media becoming a countering voice of “the people”, the marginalized, and the lumpen through their submission of literature, poetry, and art. The visual literacy of BPP’s artwork was transformative throughout its 13-year run following the historical shifts of the Party. The contributions of artwork from the BPP were undoubtedly significant for the BAM.
CHAPTER II

HISTORY: ORIGINS OF THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY

To better understand the significance of *BPINS* and the BAM, knowing a brief history of the BPP is essential. The legacy of the mainstream media regarding the BPP is often linear and ahistorical, offering only a militant or revolutionary frame while ignoring the historical shift in the 1970s to a more communal endeavor. As Mills (1959: 6) explains, "no social study that does not come back to the problems of biography and history and of their intersections within society has completed its intellectual journey." Understanding the structure and history of society and the social processes by which it changes are essential for the sociological inquiry of social movements such as the BPP, especially given the broader historical context of race relations during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

During the 1960s, Black Nationalist sentiment and discourse regarding racial and ethnic equality fermented throughout the Civil Rights Era, leading to the formation of many SMOs. One such SMO was the Afro-American Association (AAA) where members congregated to discuss Black Nationalist philosophy concerning liberation of African Americans from the institutional oppression of the United States (McCartney 1992). It was in 1962 that Bobby Seale first encountered Huey P. Newton at Merritt College in Oakland California during an AAA rally for the Cuban blockade (Newton 1970). These two men would eventually become the founders of the BPP. Newton (2002a) enlisted Seale into the AAA, but they soon developed ideological differences with the group’s leadership and both left AAA by 1965 (Seale 1970).

After that, Newton and Seale joined Ken Freeman in the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM). According to Newton (2002a: 45),
Most of the brothers in this group attended Oakland Community College, but the organization was a sort of underground, off-campus operation. They also had a front group called Soul Student Advisory Committee, which was a recognized campus organization. The RAM was more intellectual than active.

Newton and Seale’s involvement was short-lived, as they found the ideological banter of RAM unsatisfactory. During this period, Newton and Seale were unsure of what they were searching for in these SMOs, but they knew it went beyond the scope of sitting around a room discussing nationalism and revolutionary action. One thing they believed was the need for drastic social changes within the local Oakland social institutions, particularly law enforcement (Marine 1969; Newton 2002a; Seale 1970). They explored SMOs in the San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley areas, but concluded that the social actions of these groups were restrictive. By mid-1966, their focus narrowed down to issues regarding law enforcement and the police in Oakland California. Newton and Seale thought the Oakland Police and city leadership asserted too much power in attempts to repress the black community. They felt it was time for SMOs to move past tautology and discourse, instead taking actions such as "picking up the gun" and armed self-defense (Seale 1970). Abu-Jamal (2004) asserts that historical events like the 1965 Watts riot in south central Los Angeles symbolized this kind of resistance and demonstrated to Newton and Seale that people were willing to fight and die if necessary.

According to Collins and Crawford (2008), the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder asserted that the citizenry within black communities believed police action (i.e., the State) toward African Americans was institutionally racist, brutal, and atrocious, in comparison to the police treatment of white citizens. As protests in African American communities erupted into riots in many parts of the United States, a revolutionary black consciousness was forming (Abu-Jamal 2004; Newton 2002a).
On October 15th, 1966 in Oakland, the “Black Panther Party for Self Defense”[^3] was formed. The BPP’s objective was to offer the black community of Oakland their leadership and guidance in response to racist police oppression and rampant brutality (Gaiter 2004; Seale 1970). The primary goal of the BPP was to take control of their internally colonized communities. Newton and Seale wanted social justice, self-liberation, and self-determination (Newton 2009; Tyner 2005). Newton and Seale would start this movement with the formation of the Party’s first community program: Police-alert Patrols (Abu-Jamal 2004). This meant Panthers would monitor the police and observe their interactions with African Americans. Armed Panthers would step out of their cars with law books, recording equipment, and loaded guns (Lampert 2013). These police-alert patrols, of course, immediately produced a tense relationship between the police and the BPP (Tyner 2005).

Over time, Newton and Seale would go beyond the ideologies of Black Nationalism taking a more Revolutionary Nationalist approach (i.e., revolutionary internationalist approach), which differed from other expressed contemporary Black Nationalist forms. The notions of Revolutionary Nationalism of the BPP were guided by a variety of innovative leaders, scholars, and theorists such as Karl Marx, Frederick Neitchze, Immanuel Kant, Malcolm X, Che Guerra, Franz Fanon, James Baldwin, Booker T. Washington, Mao Tse Tsung, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, and many others. As the ideology of Revolutionary Nationalism formed, Panther recruitment started in October of 1966, and the 10 Point Platform and Program was created. It would be a staple published regularly in the Black Panther Intercommunal News Service throughout its publication (Appendix A) (Abu-Jamal 2004; McCartney 1992; Morozumi 2007; Newton 2007).

[^3]: Soon after, the name would be shorted to the Black Panther Party.
Revolutionary Nationalism took the discussion of oppression beyond race; indeed, it was an anti-capitalist liberation movement (Harris 2001). The focus of the BPP was a revolution against the internal colonization of inner-cities and the strive for racial equality (Abu-Jamal 2004). In many ways, the formation of the BPP was just another act of opposition framed within the historical legacy of resistance movements in the United States. According to Abu-Jamal (2004: 29), "the Black Panther Party emerged from the deepest traditions of Africans in American – resistance to negative, negrophobic, dangerous threats to Black Life, by any means necessary."

The BPP developed a Marxist-Leninist approach that would initially direct Party recruitment toward “brothers off the block” meaning the lumpen proletariat (Newton 1970). This idea was taken from Marx and Engels (1983: 301), these were the lowest class, “the droll of all classes.” The Party asserted that under their current political environment of capitalism, the masses (i.e., proletariat), suffered from class exploitation and oppression. Thus through revolution, significant change would take place (Harris 2001). Black communities needed to build their own institutions and programs to improve material conditions and spiritual dignity (McCartney 1992). However, unlike many African American social movements that often had religions roots, the BPP was markedly secular (Abu-Jamal 2004).

According to Newton, the BPP needed a program to guide them, and out of that thought, Newton and Seale authored the 10 Point Platform and Program (Appendix A) in October 1966 (Seale 1970). This writing framed the groundwork for the revolutionary ideologies of the BPP. According to the Party Chairman Bobby Seale, “The Platform and
Program is nothing more than the 400-year-old crying demands of us Black Americans” (cited in Tyner 2005: 108).

The 10 Point Platform and Program was designed to be the foundation of the Party. Newton asserted that it was a synthesis of what community members had relayed to him (i.e., the voice of the people), and that it was the needs of an oppressed people. It was intended to both uplift the material conditions of African Americans (Seale 1970). The program’s focus was to fight for the people’s control over the government (i.e., the State) and to restructure laws that would serve the people equally.

Soon after the formation of the BPP, Newton familiarized himself with California law so the Panthers could assist citizens in dealing with police oppression. The next step, as mentioned, was forming armed street patrols in Oakland to observe police actions and also to engage within African Americans communities (Heath 1976b). These actions quickly lead to standoffs with the Oakland police. Within hours of the first standoff (between eight BPP members, including both Newton and Seale), news quickly spread throughout the community (Seale 1970).

These actions by the BPP quickly drew local media attention within the black community of Oakland and attracted many recruits into the rank-and-file membership. As a result, more community patrols were established to combat the police occupation of Oakland (Marine 1969). The intent of Panthers intent was clear, to observe police interactions with African American citizens and counsel them regarding their legal rights (Rucker and Abron 1996). While this was a dangerous tactic, Newton believed the Police-alert Patrols would garner the trust of the people (Abu-Jamal 2004). Within a few months
span, local media attention framed the negative perceptions of the BPP and fostered new state legislation attempting to change open gun carry laws in California (Foner 1995).

For the first few months of the newly formed BPP, the national media paid little attention to the movement. The media focus significantly shifted propelling the movement into the national spotlight when a cohort of armed Panthers arrived "at the California state capitol in Sacramento to protest the pending gun-control bill" (Rhodes 1999: 95). The state legislative meeting in 1967 was the first protest that achieved media attention in local to national newspapers like the *Sacramento Bee* and the *New York Times* with headlines reading "Capitol is Invaded," "State Police Halt Armed Negro Band," and "Armed Negros Protest Gun Bills." As Tyner (2005) explains, the spaces of engagement were transformed for the BPP through the confrontation at the state capital.

Soon after the protest the BPP also had the attention of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and their counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO) (Foner 1995). J. Edgar Hoover declared the Panthers the most significant internal threat to the U.S. (Abu-Jamal 2004; Staub 1997). The FBI's top counterintelligence priority would become containment of the BPP through the COINTELPRO and the use of media networks. COINTELPRO operatives were tasked with discrediting the party through the orchestration of a false narrative (i.e., frames) put out through media sources. In the late 1960s, the F.B.I. had 300 cooperating journalists at their disposal (Churchill 2001). This media cooperation constructed and distributed negative frames of BPP members as violent male militants of low moral character.

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4 Formed in 1956, COINTELPRO engaged in 295 actions against African American SMOs, mostly against the BPP. COINTELPRO’s objective was to neutralize Black militants (Abu-Jamal 2004).
With the media strategy directed at the BPP, it served to legitimize law enforcement’s use of violence and repression toward the party (Abu-Jamal 2004). A second method involved government pressure on businesses dealing with the BPP. This included the infiltration of printing facilities, getting Teamsters to refuse shipments of BPINS, and getting United Airlines to cancel "bulk rate" mail discounts (Gaiter 2004; Lampert 2013). It is evident that the BPP’s expansion immediately garnered the attention of other urban communities and their local law enforcement agencies. All across the U.S., recruitment numbers proliferated in those early years drawing new members into the party. This rapid growth established an opportunity for the dissemination of BPINS throughout urban communities and the genesis of numerous community programs.

From “Brothers off the Block” to a Nationally Recognized SMO

Newton and Seale believed African American communities were under assault and they were terrorized by the white patriarchal institutions of the United States (Abugo Ongira 2009; Josephs 2009; Knapper 1996). “The Black Panthers became masters at creating a radical visual and discursive language of affiliation and identification that expressed the need for personal involvement in liberatory social and political change” (Abugo Ongiri 2009: 69).

According to Abugo Ongira (2009: 70),

it is impossible to attribute the widespread appeal of the Black Panther Party to non-African Americans, women, and sexual minorities to the caricatures found in many contemporary accounts that embody simple phallocentric masculinity and a repository of reductionist racial politics ... The Black Panther Party’s differed from other contemporaneous radical political formations of the Black Power era because the leadership was able to promote the empowerment of African Americans while articulating a vision of radical political possibility and change that included the ‘refiguring of identity’ across a broad spectrum of political, gender, and sexual categories (70).
Initially, recruitment was centered in Oakland, California (Seale 1970). However, due to national media attention, Party recruitment swelled to college campuses and urban areas throughout the U.S., into high schools, those in jails and prisons, those on parole, and those on probation (Murch 2010; Newton 1970; Rhodes, 2007; Seale 1970). In particular, the BPP enticed young African Americans who believed in the philosophy of self-defense and willingness to confront police power (Knapper 1996). Although the movement did become international, existing research does indicate that many chapters (e.g., New York, Oakland, and Los Angeles) often focused on and adapted to localized conditions in their communities (Tyner 2005).

A second focal point explained by Josephs (2009) was Newton and Seale’s challenging of the mainstream ideology that black men were somehow deficient. The mainstream media and the government often promoted this stigma. For example, the prestigious *Moynihan Report* (1965) alluded to the idea that African Americans were culturally deficient (Matthews 1998). One of the methods the BPP employed for challenging these philosophies would be the publication and use of BPINS to provide a counter frame.

As party membership grew and expanded nationally, it attracted members from SNCC such as Eldridge Cleaver, Kathleen Cleaver, Stokley Carmichael, James Foreman, and H. Rap Brown. The BPP and SNCC formed a short-lived coalition, but ties quickly weakened due to ideological differences regarding the issue of armed self-defense (Heath 1976b). Nevertheless, many of the people mentioned above would become BPP party members. By 1968, the BPP was a national organization with chapters forming across the U.S. and international chapters forming within the next two years (Abu-Jamal 2004). Heath
(1976b) contends that 1968 was the year that membership peaked with 25 chapters throughout the U.S., but Abu-Jamal (2004) notes that by 1969, there were over 40 chapters and branches. Between 1966 and 1971, the BPP had an estimated 60 chapters operating within 26 states and the District of Colombia (Heath 1976b). It is difficult to ascertain as to what year that Party membership "peaked". BPP membership did not have a paper trail or registry, membership numbers were simply not mentioned. Regardless, an imagined community had formed by the end of the 1960s. Undoubtedly, recruitment would shift as the party’s frame and ideology shifted from “Revolution” to “Reform”.

The media image, frame, and stigma of the Panthers in mainstream America quickly became the black male militant. This sensationalized militant image portrayed by the media to the public was a creation of Huey P. Newton (2002a) who believed this revolutionary image would intimidate mainstream Americans while drawing more members into the fold – and he appeared to be correct (Foner 1995; Newton 2002a). Newton and Seale used this constructed image to counter the suggested claims of cultural and biological deficiency. While it brought many African American males into the rank-and-file, it also drew the attention of African American females.

**Women of the Party**

Women were an intricate part of the BPP and depending on the era of the Party they represented approximately 50 percent of the membership (Cleaver 2004). Following a government campaign of repression that either killed or incarcerated many of the male members of the party, female leadership and rank-and-file membership increased. At one point, women represented two-thirds of the overall membership (Cleaver 2001). Indeed, "Comrade Sisters" played a significant role within the party (Josephs 2009). Panther
women such as Elaine Brown (1992), Ericka Huggins, Kathleen Cleaver, and Assata Shakur (1987) moved up in the ranks of the BPP with some taking on leadership roles. For example, Brown (1992) would become the Minister of Defense of the BPP, after Newton fled to Cuba, in 1974, avoiding murder charges. According to Newton (1991), Elaine Brown was one of the most effective and dynamic Panther leaders.

The literature of the BPP (e.g., Brown 1992; Davis 1988; Shakur 1987; White 1998), it is evident that Panther women played vital roles throughout the party from national leadership down to rank-and-file members. For many of them, the activities they engaged in were no different from their male counterparts. While gender politics was recognized as sometimes problematic within the Party from leadership to rank-and-file, the primary focus of the Party, was the 10 Point Platform and Program (Brown 1992; Seale 1970).

Additionally, women were active contributors to BPINS and the backbone of numerous community programs throughout the Party’s history.

**Community Programs**

Historically, one element of the BPP went largely unnoticed by the mainstream media. Within the first two years of its formation, over 60 community programs were initiated within inner cities across the nation. Moreover, many of these programs became the primary focus of the party when an ideological shift took place in the early 1970s.

**Medical:**

People’s Free Medical Research Health Clinic (Matthews 1998)

People’s Sickle Cell Anemia Research (Abu-Jamal 2004)

People’s Free Ambulance Service (BPINS)

**Community:**
Police-alert Patrols (Abu-Jamal 2004)
People’s Free Community Employment Program (*BPINS*)
Free Food Program (Abu-Jamal 2004)
Free Pest Control Program (*BPINS*)
People’s Free Plumbing and Maintenance Program
David Hilliard’s People’s Free Shoe Program (Abu-Jamal 2004)
People’s Free Clothing Program (Abu-Jamal 2004)
Intercommunal News Service (Abu-Jamal 2004)
Seniors Against a Fearful Environment (SAFE) Program (Abu-Jamal 2004)
Free Busing to Prison Program (Abu-Jamal 2004)
Free Commissary for Prisoners Program (*BPINS*)
Legal Aid and Educational Program (*BPINS*)

**Youth:**

Free Breakfast for Children Program (Heynen 2009)
Liberation Schools (Matthews 1998)
Intercommunal Youth Institute (Abu-Jamal 2004)
Youth Dances (Jennings 2001)

It is interesting to note there was relatively little attention paid to the community program or any other positive contribution of the BPP in media form outside of *BPINS*, where they were mentioned oftentimes throughout the 13-year publication run. In addition, since the focus of most empirical literature on the early years of the BPP, these programs went relatively unnoticed outside of historiographies or historical accounts (Abu-Jamal 2004; Murch 2010; Shakur 1987). Even though national chapters were closing
throughout the 1970s, BPP maintained community-based programs in Oakland until 1981 (Knapper 1996).

**The Black Panther Intercommunal News Service**

Historically, the black press has been a crusading press primarily run by African Americans and distributed throughout black communities, from 1827 through 1970, there have been over 2,700 black operated newspaper publications, although many of those were short-lived (La Brie and Zima 1971). **BPINS** was the dominant crusading press of the 1960 and 1970s. “The Black Panther [BPINS] was the antithesis of the mainstream black press, which they [BPP] accused of guiding African Americans toward assimilating the “American Dream” and aspiring to those values and goals” (Gaiter 2012: 244).

The BPP published the first issue of the **BPINS** on April 25, 1967. While the first few issues were mostly news, community information, and the **10 Point Platform and Program** (e.g., the first issue totaled four pages) it soon grew into an 11 x 17 folded newspaper with typically 24 – 32 pages that offered a variety of news, editorials, poetry, art, and other information. The style and content varied as the paper evolved over its 13-year run. From the beginning, it was the collective action and means for Panther members and those within the imagined political community to express their ideas and thoughts through various forms of art, poetry, and writings. With the mainstream media often framing the party in a particularly negative lens, **BPINS** was the positive voice and image of the party (Davenport 2010; Seale 1970). Indeed, as part of Party membership, Panthers were required to spend time selling **BPINS** (Abu-Jamal 2004; Bukhari 2003). In fact, sales of **BPINS** were an essential as the paper was the Party’s primary revenue source.
According to Hilliard (2007), the need for the BPP to set their agenda and raise political consciousness would be set forth through a variety of actions including "the pen." *BPINS* was one of the most visible and steadfast representations of the BPP (Rhodes 2001). The paper served as an apparatus for political education (Duncan 2016). *BPINS* was an instrument to reinforce adherence to party goals and party ideology (Calloway 1977). “The use of words in order to solidify the group was only one tactic. In addition to the slogans, pictures and cartoons were used to heighten the emotions of members” (Calloway 1977: 62). It gave African American communities across the United States a countering propaganda tool used to illuminate and speak out against the many inequalities and to raise the political consciousness within (Baraka 2007; Brown 2007). As Rice (2007: xvi) eloquently states, “the *Black Panther Intercommunal News Service* grew to represent the physical item of hope, a totem representing possibility in the neighborhoods.” It became the voice of an alienated people and was supported by submissions from across the country that included writing, poetry, photography, and art (Hilliard 2007; Rhodes 2001).

According to Landon Williams,

> The Black Panther Community News Service is not just a newspaper in the traditional sense of the word; it is more than that. The Black Panther Community News Service is a contemporary living history of our people’s struggle for liberation at the grassroots level. It is something to be studied and grasped, and saved for future generations to read, learn and understand (cited in Foner 1995: 8).

*BPINS* offered a voice to the black masses for reporting news and information regarding conditions of the black communities nationally and throughout the African Diaspora. Additionally, the paper reported on oppression and liberation struggles globally (Brown 2007). *BPINS* was a collective endeavor and historical account often overlooked (to this day) by the mainstream media and academia alike. Newton (2009) contended that
the media could not offer a positive representation of African Americans, men in particular; 

*BPINS* was that method providing the BPP the ability to challenge the media's representations of the Party.

*The Black Panther Intercommunal News Service* is the alternative to the ‘government proved’ stories presented in the mass media and the product of an effort to offer the fact, not stories, as dictated by the oppressor, but as seen from the other end of a gun (Jones 1988: 197).

*BPINS* chronicled the BPP’s history, ideology, and development (Hilliard 2007). It enunciated the struggles of oppressed people worldwide and was the most influential record of the BPP (Hilliard 2007). Thus, *BPINS* became one of the most significant black independent newspapers of this era, and a significant source for chronicling the black freedom struggle (Brown 2007; Heath 1976a). *BPINS* first issue included 6000 copies circulating the Bay Area of Oakland, California (Rhodes 2001; Rhodes 1999). It was a weekly publication with a total of 537 issues and over 12,000 pages of print through-out its 13-year run (Abu-Jamal 2004; Hughey 2009; Rhodes 2001). The BPP’s early years were the time with the highest publication rates of *BPINS*. In 1970, for example, 140,000 copies were in circulation, and over 200,000 copies were printed in 1971 (Heath 1976b; Hilliard 2007; Jones 1988). At its peak, circulation reached 200,000 copies and it was distributed both nationally and internationally with sales in Cuba, China, Western Europe, Africa, Scandinavia, and the Middle East (Hilliard 2007; Seale 1970). *BPINS* was the primary stream of revenue for the party, since much of the money deployed for the support and maintenance of numerous community programs (Hilliard 2007). It was the most reliable and lucrative source of revenue (Doss 1999)

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5 Although there were interruption within the early years and paper publication became more sporadic tine final two years (1979-1980) (Abu-Jamal 2004).
BPINS was central in the creation of black revolutionaries and of an imagined community that would (at one point) span the globe (Rhodes 2001). Eldridge Cleaver was the first editor of BPINS, and Emory Douglas was the first and only Minister of Culture responsible for the publication of BPINS and its content. Douglas was also responsible for the visual politics and substance of BPINS and created the ideas of revolutionary art within BPINS (Rhodes 2001; Rhodes 1999). Through BPINS, the BPP started a visual movement that facilitated the transformation of black consciousness that is still discussed today (though with sparse empirical investigation) (Gaiter 2012).

Rhodes (2001) explains that BPINS served multiple purposes: it was a source of income, was educational, it was a process of (imagined) community building, and it deployed and framed symbolism(s) countering mainstream ideologies of the BPP. BPINS framed heroes and martyrs through the writing and visual. It "was the most important tool for the party's efforts of self-representation directed at multiple audiences. It was, particularly in those early years, the only medium completely under their control" (Rhodes 2001: 156).

Rice (2007: xvi) notes, the use of BPINS within African American communities was "read and reread, referenced, argued over, debated and recited. The papers were never trashed. They were absorbed into the branches of the community like sunlight." It was a successful format for inciting political action. A quote from Abu-Jamal (2004: 247) offers further insight into the significance of BPINS.

When an older sister named Audrea handed me a copy of The Black Panther Newspaper around the spring of 1968, my mind was promptly blown. It was as if my dreams had awakened and strolled into my reality. I read and reread the issues, tenderly fingering each page as if were the onion-skinned, tissue-like leaf of a holy book. My eyes drank in the images of young Black men and women, their slim and splendid bodies
clothed in black leather, the breasts bedecked with buttons proclaiming rebellion, resistance, and revolution.

I almost couldn’t believe my eyes as I scanned photos of armed Black folks proclaiming their determination to fight or die for the Black Revolution.

The FBI had strong trepidations concerning *BPINS*, knowing that it was a powerful BPP propaganda tool for recruitment (Jones 1988). In fact, because it was one of the most effective endeavors of the BPP, it became a target and the focus of the F.B.I.’s Counterintelligence Program (a.k.a. CONINTELPRO) (Abu-Jamal 2001; Churchill 2001).

Drawing upon the previous historical discussion regarding the BPP, the importance of *BPINS* should be apparent. First, it served many purposes for the party, including facilitating the creation of an imagined community and providing a forum where members of the BPP and outside contributors could offer their voice. Secondly, it was a method of recruitment to draw members into the party rank-and-file beyond just "brothers off the block." Next, it was a critical source of revenue which the BPP (and most SMOs) needed to further their goals. Finally, it was a way to counter-frame the mainstream media’s construction of the party. With little empirical analysis to date, the *BPINS* is a primary source ripe for further investigation.
CHAPTER III
LITERATURE REVIEW

To date, there has been nominal literature published that focuses on the BAM including the BPP and more specifically the art of *BPINS*. Moreover, there is little empirical research regarding the revolutionary art of the BPP (Collins and Crawford 2008; Smethurst 2005). There has been some historical and empirical research regarding the BPP including investigations of the Press (see Collins and Crawford 2008; Hilliard 2007; LeBlanc-Ernest 1998; Rhodes 2007; Rhodes 2001; Rhodes 1999; Seguin 2016), and more specifically research using *BPINS* as a primary data source (Coulter 2012; Courtwright 1974; Doss 1999; Duncan 2016; Durant 2007; Hughey 2009; Lumsden 2009). However, a significant portion of literature is historical accounts or historiographies (see Alkebulan 2007; Murch 2010). There are also many other books about the party history (see Cleaver 2001; Cleaver and Katsiaficas 2001; Clemons and Jones 2001; Foner 1995; Josephs 2009; Murch 2010; Umoja 2001).

The remaining literature consists of autobiographical works (see Brown 1992; Davis 1988; Forbes 2006; Seale 1970; Shakur 2001), descriptive firsthand accounts (see Jennings 2001), interviews (see Kleffner 1993), articles or reprinted articles from the *BPINS* (see Foner 1995; Hilliard and Weise 2002), and memoirs (see Abu-Jamal 2004). With the BPP being one of the most recognized Revolutionary Nationalist movements of the 1960s there needs to be a more substantive investigation into *BPINS*.

Cleaver (2010) offered two motives behind the lack of scholarship. One, those participating in the BPP had little time to record the party’s history while the movement was ongoing. Members were in “action” and documenting the party achievements was of
little relevance. Secondly, many writings, "the slash and burn journalistic accounts, and police-thriller style portrayals have hampered the development of substantive scholarship" (Cleaver 2010: xvi). Moreover, analysis has primarily focused on the early revolutionary years (1966-1972) of the Party almost wholly neglecting the reformative years (Duncan 2016; LeBlanc-Ernest 1998). Out of this literature and other publications, there are very few empirical research publications specifically regarding the artwork of the BPP as the primary source of data. While some research does mention or focus on the artwork, those examinations were more directly related to gender politics (Hughey 2009; Lumsden 2009).

There are also two books that have a more direct focus on BPINS. One book is The Black Panther Intercommunal News Service 1967 – 1980 (Hilliard 2007), and the other book is an edited text titled Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas (Durant 2007). Finally, some articles have been published that discuss the importance of BPP artwork, but their focus is narrow and mostly relegated to discussions about Emory Douglas’s contributions to BPINS with little to no mention of the numerous other contributing artists.

From a broader lens, the BAM and the BPM had a symbiotic relationship yet have received little sociological analysis. Smethurst’s (2005) book, The Black Arts Movement: Literary Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s illustrates the significance the BAM had on the Civil Rights Movement. Smethurst’s (2005) work is a comprehensive discussion about the historical significance of the BAM and how it was situated within the BPM. Most importantly, he illustrates the scope of the movement’s historical importance through archival data analysis and oral historical works.
Smethurst (2005) offers no empirical analysis of data, but the historical discussion indicates the Civil Rights Movement during 1960s – 1970s era was significant for the BAM. Overall it is a mapping of the BAM that places the movement into four geographical settings: South, Midwest, West Coast, and Northwest. While the title indicates the literary phenomenon, the book also focuses on the visual arts, poetry, and music. However, the discussion of the art of the BPP is limited. In reference to the BPP, Smethurst (2005) offers little historical analysis but has some valuable insights. The artwork of the BPP helps foster a Revolutionary Nationalist ideology and foster community (i.e., imagined political community). Smethurst's (2005) writing demonstrated the importance of the BAM as communal and community building.

Smethurst (2005) complements the theoretical ideas of Howard Becker's (1976) concept that art is a communal endeavor and Benedict Anderson's notion of an "imagined community." Smethurst (2005) demonstrates the historical importance that the BAM had on fostering and framing social movement ideologies of the BPP. Additionally, Smethurst (2005) suggests that the BAM perpetuated Revolutionary Nationalism, but is that all? Was it only revolutionary, a combination of Revolutionary Nationalism and social reformation? Were there historical transitions of the art published within BPINS? Gaiter (2004) suggests that Douglas's artwork reflected the 10 Point Platform and Program. However, that platform changed in March 1972 when restructuring occurred within the BPP.

Another book, an edited text by Collins and Crawford (2008) *New Thoughts on the Black Arts Movement* is a 17 essay collection that analyzes the BAM from 1965 through 1976. This work is divided into three sections that map cities and locals similar to Smethurst (2005), demonstrating the collaborative efforts of the movement. Collins and
Crawford (2008) express the need for a more critical discourse of the BAM. While this analysis offers depth and breadth demonstrating how important the movement was culturally and politically, the focus and discussion of the BPP and their artwork are insufficient, as is the discussion of visual art.

However, some essential discussion points by various authors within this edited text are relevant to the forthcoming analysis. First, Jones (2008: 45) explains the historical importance that BPP had on the BAM "for black culture and life, insisting on its visibility, its place as human and equal, and its viable contribution to the existence and history of the United States." Secondly, Lennon (2008) illuminates a previous discussion point regarding the need for political action versus rhetoric and discourse. As Newton (1970) and Seale (1970) became cynical of SMOs they had participated within, the BPP advocated action to achieve social justice. In part, the artwork within *BPINS* was a significant element toward that goal.

Collins and Crawford (2008) suggest, like Smethurst (2005), how significant the BAM was historically yet offer minimal discussion in the context of the BPP. They all demonstrate a gap within the literature regarding the BPP’s noteworthy contribution to the BAM (Bowen 2008). There are many other historical narratives and texts with similar discussion points referencing how important the BAM was and how there was a wide-ranging impact on African American communities, intellectuals, artists, and others (see Bowen 2008; Donaldson 1998; High 1997). The literature is exhaustive with these assertions regarding the lack of research studies with empirical analysis of the BAM.
This is not to suggest the BAM has not been written about and researched, but the focal point has often been other forms of "art" including, but not limited to: dance (see Widener 2010), film (see Abugo Ongiri 2010), literature (see Berstein 2008; Neal 1989; Abugo Ongiri 2010), music (see Gussow, 2008; Ogren 1989; Widener 2010), performance art (see Smith 2008), photography (see Morgan 2014) and poetry (see Jennings 1998; Neal 1968). This discussion of the BAM provides clear evidence regarding the gap within the literature in broader terms, but more specifically artwork such as drawings, paintings, and political cartoons.

One of the more recent studies regarding the BPP and BPINS was published by Charles Seguin (2016) titled "Cascades of Coverage: Dynamics of Media Attention to Social Movement Organizations." Seguin (2016: 998) expounds that one key goal to SMOs is media attention, but bias will influence reporting and construct a "distorted reflection of the properties of SMOs and their political environment." Seguin (2016: 999) explains that SMOs that are characterized (i.e., framed) by more positive media feedback the more the SMOs will benefit, "positive feedback can explain keys facts about the distribution dynamics of attention to some SMOs." Media acts as a filter that translates information into the news with gatekeepers (i.e., editors and journalists) that select newsworthy events.

According to Seguin (2016: 999), four vital factors affect media attention, "the scope of the conflict, resources, frames, and tactics." The scope of the conflict refers to how many allies and opponents that were drawn into the action. More germane participants will foster additional media attention and thus leads to the possibility of additional resources. Or in the case of the BPP, the media attention aided in recruitment and sales of BPINS (i.e.,

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6 These examples are of historical writing about the BAM and research regarding the BAM.
party revenue). SMOs that frame an ideology that resonates through their rhetoric will also draw attention and recruits. Finally, tactics refer to actions of the SMO, and some tactics are more likely to draw media reporting, for example, as previously discussed by Rhodes (1999), the BPP’s thrust into the national spotlight came from the protest at the California State Legislature in May of 1967.

Seguin (2016) asserts early attention to an SMO can create positive feedback. She employs a power-law distribution of two data-sets that have distribution counts of both newspaper and newscasts. One data-set is from the New York Times with 1,247 articles from a newspaper count of 298,359 for the entire 20th century. The second is from the Vanderbilt Televisions News Archive with 395 SMO’s mentioned in 15,858 stories spanning 1968-2009 (Seguin 2016: 1002). The data only included SMOs with national goals. Seguin’s (2016: 1016) findings were that “distribution of media attention across U.S. SMOs was power-law distributed in national print and television.”

Seguin (2016) then examines the news cascades of the BPP that dominated media attention in the late 1960s. To analyze the cascade she drew from both primary and secondary sources including the New York Times and other newspapers, memoirs, and secondary accounts comparing the media attention of the BPP to other Black Power movements. The sample size was 3,019 stories and 79 events. Her findings show that the BPP dominated the news cycles through the years of 1967 – 1977. Seguin (2016) suggests that the California State Legislature protest was the tactical innovation that put the BPP into the spotlight of a national organization.

Seguin’s (2016) research and findings are useful in the method section of this research project because it frames the early revolutionary years into the 1970s and
explains their successful rise to power in the late 1960s. National media attention brought awareness of the BPP and as a result people’s exposure to *BPINS*. BPINS highest publication periods coincide with these early revolutionary years (1967 – 1971). Also, as discussed and will be more thoroughly examined, Seguin (2016) uses the concept of "framing" or how the media defined the BPP is significant. This likely led to counter frames within the published writings and artworks in *BPINS*. Secondly, her data shows that news media coverage lessens from 1966-1977 which follows the trend within the other published literature regarding the Panther's historical timeline (see Lumsden 2009). The declining media coverage relates to the research question as to whether the artwork itself transitions over these eras.

The scholar who has performed the most research regarding media and the BPP is Jane Rhodes (2007; 2001; 1999). Her first two journal articles, “Fanning the Flames of Racial Discord: The National Press and the Black Panther Party” (1999) and “The Black Panther Newspaper: Standard-Bearer for Modern Black Nationalism” are more theoretical pieces that were precursors to her book, *Framing the Black Panthers: The Spectacular Rise of a Black Power Icon*. What Rhodes (2001; 1999) indicates in her first two works are that research on the Press and SMOs demonstrate that heightened media coverage is a double-edged sword. First, it can frame SMOs like the BPP very negatively, but it will also offer more opportunity for SMOs to use the media in counter framing their identity and ideology (Rhodes 2001; Rhodes 1999).

Media coverage during the Civil Rights Movement occurred during a time of intense racial tension. Add to that, the newsrooms were predominately white and did not understand black communities nor did they go into these communities to listen to their
voices. There was a lack of understanding regarding black communities that possibly increased the racial strife through racist discourse (i.e., framing) in their reporting. Reporting included how the media framed the BPP constructing attitudes and values about the group while omitting discussions about the perpetual institutional racism that continued to obstruct any real equality for African Americans in urban communities. The media had three thematic frames of the BPP – fear, condemnation, and celebrity status (Rhodes 1999).

In contrast, Rhodes (2001) explains that groups like the BPP often use media to construct/reconstruct and frame group identity. The findings of her first article suggest the media coverage of the BPP constructed (i.e., framed) mainstream fears and disdain for the Party and over time these frames shifted from "radicals" to "celebrity status" due to the dialogical relationship between the BPP and mainstream media (Rhodes 1999). Rhodes’s (1999) article does not flesh out her method of inquiry. There was a purposeful sampling of particular articles discussing the BPP within media sources such as The New York Times and Newsweek, but there is no real sense of sample size or how the operationalization of data analysis took place. Rhodes (2001) second article was primarily theoretical. It discussed the importance of BPINS in framing Black Nationalism and produced a counter-memory of opposition to mainstream ideologies of the BPP. According to Rhodes (2001), it was the agency of the Panthers who helped frame and shift how the Party was portrayed.

Rhodes’s (2007) most recent research focuses on the intricate history of the BPM, the rise of black power icons such as the BPP, their relationship with media (newspapers, magazine, and television), and how the Party influenced on American culture early in the Party's history, 1967 – 1970. "By the end of the year [i.e., 1968], the words 'Black Panther'
would be ubiquitous in headlines across the country" (Rhodes 2007: 117). Her work is a study about the collective memory and the Party's upsurge to eminence through the media's culture industry. Media production has shaped the memories of the BPP in literature, news, television, and art (Rhodes 2007).

The emphasis of the book is the tense "dialogic relationship" of the BPP with mainstream media, the media producers, consumers, and the social construction (and stigma) of the Party (Rhodes 2007). Historically, the popular memory of the Civil Rights Movement has been framed almost nearsightedly ignoring more radical groups. For example, the coverage of MLK is more definable and marketable to mainstream Americans (Rhodes 2007). There was an underrepresentation of the "radical," nevertheless the media played a crucial role in introducing the BPP to the public. The media spectacle of the BPP transformed the SMO, but this was in part due to the dialogic relationship and the Party’s self-determination and agency to frame their Party. This relationship allowed for the Panther’s to strategically exploit the media, and utilized their paper, BPINS, to aid in their framing of the BPP.

Rhodes's (2007) method of research uses the "double entendre" of "frames" (i.e., frame analysis) that constructed how blackness was symbolized, and in many ways continues to frame the BPP. Asserting the dialogic relationship, Rhodes (2007) demonstrates the Panthers were not mere victims of the media but also asserted agency in their framing, narrative, and construction of the Party. The Panther’s aided in the framing of members as black beret, black leather jacket, gun-toting militants advocating for armed self-defense, "the Panthers were invested in the fear frame they helped shape" (Rhodes 2007: 76). While she does indicate the importance of BPINS, art is not a focus of her
research. However, Rhodes (2007: 5) does recognize that language, discourse, and images are the constitutive elements of representations, the cultural equipment that conveys "ideas, beliefs, and knowledge."

Theoretically, Rhodes (2007; 2001; 1999) demonstrates the importance of framing SMOs both by the Press and the SMO itself. Therefore the artwork in *BPINS* should also be advantageous in investigating how the Panthers framed themselves. As data is analyzed, there will be an examination of themes/subthemes about the 10 Point Platform and Program. Since *BPINS* “was the most visible and consistent representation of the organization” where contributors could frame and counter frame the mainstream press and media, it is an important source for data analysis (Rhodes 2001: 151). Furthermore, as Anderson (1991) explains, the press plays a central role in the creation of an imagined community for black revolutionaries on a global scale. The significance of the newspaper as a form of communication has been “replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) ... creating that remarkable confidence of community” (Anderson 1991: 36-37).

Some empirical studies focused on the Party’s newspaper with discussion or analysis of literature and rhetoric helped lay out a methodological approach to this research (Coulter 2012; Courtwright 1974; Hughey 2009; Lumsden 2009). Hughey (2009) examined representations of black masculinity in *BPINS* through a historical qualitative interpretive analysis of 100 randomly sampled issues that included 1,316 articles from 1967 – 1980. This analysis focused on aesthetic and rhetorical devices that constructed/framed different representations of black masculinity (Hughey 2009). Through a grounded approach, Hughey (2009: 35-36) found seven themes of black masculinity: diasporic character, economic empowerment, Afrocentrism, counter-
hegemonic gaze, misogyny, non-traditional sexual politics, and militaristic aesthetics. Hughey (2009) posits that representations of black masculinity are historically framed by the dominant discourses of mainstream society (i.e., media) and culture, and the BPP challenged these assumptions through the creation and production of BPINS. Furthermore, the discussion illustrates the fluidity and shift of multiple masculinities and gender politics during the Party’s history.

Hughey (2009) examines how the structural conditions of urban communities propagated cultural variations that personified particular schemes of black masculinity by outlining the components that constructed black masculinity in BPINS. Additionally, Hughey (2009: 31) demonstrates how these components integrated distinctly in two ways:

1) the formation of black masculinity that was politically self-determined with a streetwise reputation, and
2) the exertion of a (counter-) hegemonic black masculinity that both contested dominant registers of sexism and racism while it relied upon them.

This research is relevant because it offers insight into the framing of African American men by the dominant culture and press and the counter-hegemonic gaze framed within BPINS. It demonstrates the claims that BPINS was a countering voice to mainstream media and a representation of the party (i.e., the people). While it may not have a direct bearing on the research questions, it will support the theoretical orientation of this research. When the media constructed images of the BPP, it most often framed them negatively and therefore rarely focused on the community endeavors of the BPP.

Another study that examined rhetoric was performed by Courtwright (1974) through a content analysis; purposefully sampling of BPINS to investigate if there was a change or modification regarding the ideology of “picking up the gun.” According to
Courtwright (1974), a precipitating factor for the change of rhetoric of the Party was in part due to law enforcement and incarceration of leadership in the BPP. Courtwright’s (1974) findings were that there was indeed less militaristic rhetoric in *BPINS* after 1970. Courtwright’s (1974) research was a tool used in the construction of the research questions for this dissertation. Certainly, this fits into the research questions regarding “revolutionary” art; if there were less rhetoric in the writings, it would suggest that any transition within the artwork published would also follow that historic shift.

Next, there is Lumsden (2009), who examines the framing of black womanhood in *BPINS* from 1968 – 1980. Her examination is focused on at writing, poetry, and revolutionary art. For the investigation of articles, Lumsden (2009) scans the headlines of all Panther issues identifying and purposefully sampling over 200 articles that relate to her criteria. The approach to Lumsden’s examination of the visual is less than specific.

However, the findings suggest there was a reframing of black womanhood from the initial years of the party. At first (1968), women were framed as subordinates, but there was a transformation of this frame as time went on. More importantly, Douglas’s artwork countered this initial discourse through the visual portrayal of women as warriors. Lumsden (2009) demonstrates that newspaper imagery countered hegemonic stereotypes (e.g., mammies, sexual objects and emasculating matriarchs) of black women and strengthened party identity. The methods discussion is sparse not offering sample sizes of the data. Moreover, there are no specific discussions regarding findings but it appears to be an inductive approach, the discussion goes from a history of women in the Panthers directly to findings and themes of black womanhood: (1) Role Models of Resistance; and (2) Reproductive Rights, Sexuality, and Feminism. Lumsden (2009) asserts that the
counter-hegemonic narrative of *BPINS* offered a positive narrative that was mostly ignored by mainstream media and press.

While Lumsden’s (2009) research does little to help the methodological analysis of this dissertation, it contributes in other means. First, she is one of a few authors that discusses stereotypes of black women. Lumsden’s (2009) discussion shows how revolutionary art exerts a (counter-) hegemonic femininity similar to the research of Hughey (2009). It demonstrates the communal effort in changing a narrative through the dissemination of *BPINS* into an imagined community. Secondly, out of all the research in this review, other books, and articles, very few mention artworks beyond Douglas. Lumsden (2009) analyzed another contributor’s work, Joan Lewis (A.K.A. Matiliba), who was the first female Panther and first female contributor to art in *BPINS*. Lastly, Lumsden’s (2009) discussion of "framing" will be used within the theory and method sections of this writing.

In a study by Coulter (2012), *What’s Sex got to do with it Anyway? Race, Sex, and Gender in the Black Panthers*, *BPINS* is utilized for the examination of gender dynamics within the BPP. Coulter (2012) samples issues of *BPINS* principally from 1967 – 1971 focusing on how *BPINS* framed gender and sexuality asserting the BPP put forth diverse and fluid representations of Black femininity and masculinity. “The way they constructed sexuality was nuanced, progressive, empowering, and contested negative conceptions of Black men’s and women’s sexuality” (Coulter 2012: 1). The research was a qualitative document analysis randomly selecting an issue from 1967 and then every fourth issue, 53 in total, focusing on themes of gender, masculinity, femininity, and sexuality (Coulter 2012: 13).
Coulter (2012) found that the Party endeavored to break away from the mainstream conceptions of sexuality and gender, but these efforts were not fully realized. According to Coulter (2012), the amount of masculine rhetoric was abundant. She found attempts to redefine Black masculinity away from emasculation (Coulter 2012). A second finding was the Panther’s rally against capitalism due to it being a White man’s project and therefore emasculating to African American men (Coulter 2012). Thirdly, BPINS depicted women fluidly. While gender role representation varied, sometimes framing women subordinate to men, at other times, BPINS illustrated the importance of women within the party and the Party’s successes (Coulter 2012). BPINS publications revered motherhood, depicting women as mothers and fierce defenders of children and families. Finally, Coulter (2012) found that representations of gender inequality varied within the paper and there were different representations of sexuality. These depictions of women are consistent with Lumsden’s (2009) findings.

The importance of Coulter’s (2012) discussion can be drawn from the idea of controlling images. White society has established and controlled images for political purposes. The BPP contested images which were framed as controlling images. In essence, the Party was framing Black femininity and masculinity in a manner more representative of African Americans.

Traditionally, powerful groups constructed these representations with political purpose, and they are then carried throughout history in an attempt to explain and justify Black People’s subjugation. In their newspaper, the Black Panthers both challenged and conformed to many prevailing sexual discourses of the late 1960s and early 1970s America (Coulter 2012: 1-2).
While this research will not examine gender politics, it will examine the controlled images of the party published in _BPINS_. Coulter's (2012) research demonstrates that similar frames and controlled images can be analyzed empirically. Additionally, while Coulter's (2012) methods discussion is somewhat sparse, it does offer a sampling technique for this current research.

A recently published article by Mary Duncan (2016), “Emory Douglas and the Art of the Black Panther Party” is a discussion of how Douglas used visual mediums as a form of communication in _BPINS_. Duncan analyzes the artwork of Douglas's early years, 1967 – 1973, through a semiotic analysis explaining these images "created a communal visual language of resistance ..." (Duncan 2016: 117). Through what Duncan (2016) explains as visual literacy, she examines the work "following artistic elements: line, shape, direction, value, hue, saturation, texture, dimension, and space" (Duncan 2016: 126). According to Duncan (2016), it is through these techniques that artists convey their messages that can then be interpreted by their audience. Duncan (2016) claims that visual language through created works of art can be more effective than written works. Duncan does an in-depth analysis of two of Douglas's works that appeared within _BPINS_ titled "Trick or Treat" and "Virginia Negroes."

Duncan (2016) expounds that the dichotomous image of black men for white minds was an underlying concern for the BPP. Duncan (2016) asserts the Party had to define the "self" within a system where media continuously perpetuated negative stereotypes. To counter, the Panther's strategy was to project an image from "behind the veil" that would counter the deep-seated stereotypes often accepted as "truths" (Duncan 2016: 119). Duncan (2016: 119) finds there is a "consistent thread of African American visual signs of
resistance from slavery as manifested in the Black Panther Newspaper by its primary Artist, Emory Douglas.” According to Duncan (2016), Newton wanted to frame Panthers as strong black men using a double-voiced strategy which is to frame a particular opinion or idea while at the same time take into account countering views. “They were defining self within an alternative system in which they existed primarily as negative stereotypes. They were fixed in the essentialism of the ‘White Gaze’” (Duncan 2016: 118).

While Duncan (2016) illustrates the importance of Emory Douglas’s work in countering mainstream media images that reinforced stereotypes and constructed a frame of fear, her article has some weaknesses. One, the sampling of only two pieces of artwork by Douglas does not necessarily foster a cogent argument as to whether there was "double-voiced" strategy. Her purposeful sampling of the two works does indeed illustrate that Douglas utilized that strategy in those works, but from 1967 – 1973 there were numerous images published by Douglas. Secondly, her examination of visual literacy is never operationalized beyond the previous quote explaining the method. For example, Duncan (2016) examines the "hue" but never explains how or why this element is essential and this is consistent with the themes she analyzes. Next, she claims that the majority of images in BPINS were from Douglas. Within the summary analysis of BPINS for this research, her claim may hold true for some years of the publication, but it does not hold true for the full run of BPINS. Even if the majority of images published in BPINS from 1967 – 1973 were Douglas’s work, then it suggests there was ample opportunity to analyze more works than two.

Duncan’s (2016) article is a strong example of why more research on revolutionary art in BPINS is necessary. For one, like other published literature, it focuses almost solely
on Emory Douglas not explain the importance of *BPINS* as collective work. It also illustrates that framing a countering image for African Americans would indeed be part of developing an imagined community. Additionally, numerous scholars, including Duncan, dismiss the importance of the BPP by, or after 1973. It will be of interest to analyze Panther framing after the early 70s to determine if there is a transition in the artwork.

An article by Erika Doss (1998) that does help to frame art is titled, ““Revolutionary Art is a Tool for Liberation' Emory Douglas and Protest Aesthetics at the Black Panthers.” This writing is more a theoretical piece which offers the history of Emory Douglas. Doss claims that as the primary artist, Emory Douglas “crafted a visual strategy of cultural resistance which aimed at convincing audiences of the efficacy of black power by offering alternative images of a forceful black masculinity” (Doss 1998: 245). As visual literacy, this was a protest aesthetic of armed militancy and community welfare. Doss’s (1998) discussion parallels that of the other works discussing a counter-hegemonic narrative in the artwork of Douglas. It is also one more discussion regarding the gender politics of the era. Doss’s analysis, like many others, only examines the early party years 1967 – 1973 of *BPINS*. There is no other part of a methodology discussed in the article. This article is useful only in that it demonstrates the concerns this dissertation is addressing with more depth. One issue is the examination of other artists who published in *BPINS* and the second, going beyond 1973 in data analysis. Doss (1999) publishes a second article a year later, “Imagining the Panthers: Representing Black Power and Masculinity, 1960 – 1990s”. It is a very similar discussion to her first work and adds nothing more to the literature for this dissertation.
Another author that focused on gender politics was LeBlanc-Ernest (1998). When this article was initially published, the premise was that analysis of female participation within the early years of the BPP had been neglected. While that was true in 1998, there has been more BPP literature examining gender politics. More importantly for this dissertation work is how LeBlanc's-Ernest (1998) analysis of BP women was broken into four historical eras:

1) **1966 – 1971 Revolutionary Years**

   During the first two years of the BPP movement, it was primarily male-oriented, but women attended bi-weekly party meetings by February of 1967; this leads to Tarika Lewis (a.k.a. Matiliba) becoming the first recognized female member of the BPP movement and eventually took on leadership positions within the movement (LeBlanc-Ernest 1998).

2) **1972 – 1974 De-radicalization Years**

   During these years the party transformed from a nationally based “organization to a progressive locally based group influential in Oakland Bay Area politics” (LeBlanc-Ernest 1998: 316).

3) **1974 – 1977 Elaine Brown Assumes Leadership**


4) **1977 – 1982 Huey P. Newton Returns to Leadership**

   Newton returned, and leadership changed within the ranks of the women due to some mismanagement of funds (LeBlanc-Ernest 1998).
This dissertation work will use LeBlanc-Ernest’s (1998) four eras as a guide in the examination of BPP artwork. LeBlanc-Ernest (1998) demarcates the eras better than most of the other authors discussed. One reason is that numerous scholars suggest the party folded in the early 1970s. While there are some historical reasons as to why there was transformation, the BPP existed until 1982. LeBlanc-Ernest’s (1998) framework will be fleshed out in much more detail within the methods section of this dissertation.

The remaining literature of the BPP varies, and it would be difficult to list all the works and discuss. Secondly, a significant portion of that literature has little to do with BPINS and artwork. The literature that will be discussed relates to the Panther history relevant to this study. These are books that have reprinted articles from BPINS (Foner 1995; Hilliard, 2007) and a book on revolutionary art (Durant 2007). Historian David Foner (1995) edited a text; The Black Panthers Speak that republished articles from BPINS early years of 1967 – 1970. This text is a seminal work that addresses BPINS as an essential source for the BPP. Foner (1995) selected the articles within the book to explain Panther’s history, the tenets, and ideologies of the Party, and the 10 Point Platform and Program (Appendix A). Foner’s (1995) stance defends the Party’s historical stigma and demonstrates the Party went beyond the harmful mainstream ideology framed by the media. The book is about the history and rhetoric of the BPP and BPINS. It is relevant to the current research because Foner’s (1995) selection of articles does well to frame the history of BPINS and the importance of the artwork of the Party. It has helped guide the initial framework of this dissertation.

expressing its significance to the Party. Hilliard (2007) asserts BPINS was the primary source of countering information put forth by mainstream media. This text first offers some reflections by former party members and then publishes over 40 selected articles (some art is present) spanning from 1967 – 1980 (Hilliard 2007). While this book is not as relevant regarding the artwork, it did frame the importance of BPINS.

Another book that demonstrates not only the importance of BPINS but also art is *Black Panthers and the Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas* (Durant 2007). The title sums up the entire book. It starts with a brief history of BPINS and then narrows the focus to the revolutionary art of Emory Douglas. It is a six-chapter edited text with four essays about the significance of Emory Douglas’s work and an interview with Douglas. This book in many ways was the starting point of this research. The contributors to this text explained the importance of Panther art and helped frame the research questions.

According to Glover (2007: 10), before the press was even sold, many people would go and distribute them (i.e., revolutionary art) throughout the community. They considered the community their gallery. In a sense, it is an appropriate analogy. The images were images the community embraced. They were so right on and so appropriate for the struggle at hand at that time, and a sense of self-determination ensued from those images.

According to Seale (2006), the artwork of Emory directly reflected their cause, the 10 Point Platform and Program. At the same time, it is encouraging self-empowerment for change provoking a new consciousness (Durant 2007).

Durant (2007) claims Douglas’s work chronicled the progression and historical development of the Party. Douglas was a cultural producer, in part, because he recognized BPINS as a community endeavor. As a cultural producer, he served the political interests of the BPP through a visual context (Durant 2007). Cleaver (2007) explains how his works
gave visible forms to their ideas of revolution. It was a collaborative effort as Douglas would sit and listen to Party member’s conversations and turn to his sketch pad to illustrate ideas of the revolution. As Gaiter explains (2007), his work illustrated the Party ideology through visual images. Douglas “was the party’s Revolutionary Artist, graphic designer, illustrator, political cartoonist, and the master craftsman of its visual identity” (Gaiter 2007: 94).

While this book does explain the importance of Douglas’s work and artwork, it does not go into detail about other Panther artists. Secondly, Douglas’s (2007) asserts within this text that the images of art followed the tenets of the 10 Point Platform and Program (Appendix A). This book helped framed the research questions, expanding beyond just Douglas’s work and assertions, to discover if the claim (i.e., art followed the tenets of the 10 Point Platform and Program) held true regarding the other artists over the history of the BPP, and whether the images of art transitioned as party ideologies shifted.

This literature is the starting point for the analysis of revolutionary art but also signifies there is a definite need for more analysis. While it is clear that Douglas’s was a relevant actor whose art offered visible forms to party ideology, there is less certainty about the dozens of other artists and the hundreds of their works. As a medium, the art was a cooperative endeavor producing a visual literacy and counter-hegemonic gaze, a Revolutionary Nationalist ideology, and militant frame that was published and displayed throughout African American (imagined) communities. Nevertheless, most of the research to date is primarily Douglas’s early works into the early 1970s while mostly ignoring other artists and the later years of the party. There is no real indication as to how the visual history frames the BPP into the latter years of the BPP. The BPP indeed played a significant
role in the BAM, but the overall contributions to the movement needs more empirical analysis.
CHAPTER IV

THEORY

Visual Literacy through Framing

Framing has been a primary discussion point among many scholars researching the BPP although most did not clearly operationalize the concept within their writings. Coulter (2012), Hughey (2009), Lumsden (2009), Rhodes (2007) and Smethurst (2005) demonstrate that meanings, or frames, are not rigid; shifting patterns will occur throughout a SMO’s history in an effort to control images and change the SMO’s narrative. As explained, Newton (2002a) used media framing of the BPP to both construct fear and appeal to potential recruits. Frames were used to create a shared understand of collective identity (Duncan 2016).

Indeed, one of the many activities of an SMO is framing and assigning meaning to events and/or conditions with the intent to mobilize (McAdams and Snow 1997). Frame alignment is the relationship of the SMO’s positioning that emphasizes the point that there is both a set of "individual interests, values, and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology that are congruent and complimentary" (Snow et al. 2009: 235). The emergence of SMOs, like the BPP, occurs when people see the problematic conditions of their life as an injustice frame (Snow et al. 2009). Indeed, this goal was achieved by the BPP through mainstream media outlets and BPINS.

A social movement organization is a sustained movement of collective actors challenging authorities and/or cultural codes (Gamson and Meyer 2004). Furthermore, a SMO is a field of actors that do not necessarily form a unified entity. Thus mobilization is necessary through frame bridging (Gamson and Meyer 2004). Gamson and Meyer (2004)
are suggesting a similar concept to Anderson's (1991) imagined communities. As Gamson and Meyer (2004: 283) explain, "they have a range of actors pursuing numerous strategies in both institutional and extrainstitutional venues." The BPP was a SMO that organized and applied framing strategies through the mainstream media and within the BPINS to convey party ideologies and recruit member. BPINS framed (i.e., diagnosed) what the BPP alleged were social problems within the African American communities and then proposed solutions through various forms of social action.

Social movement scholars generally acknowledge that framing is a critical component of a successful movement organization (Ryan and Gamson 2009). Ryan and Gamson (2009) contest the framing is necessary for the success of an SMO. Framing “provides coherence to an array of symbols, images, and arguments, linking them through an underlying organizing idea that suggests what is essential – what consequence and values are at stake” (Ryan and Gamson 2009: 168). The images of artwork within BPINS were a mechanism to visualize a spirit of pride and solidarity (Gaiter 2007). According to Gaiter (2012), BPP artwork was a visual movement that facilitated the transformation of black consciousness, it was the visual literacy of the Party for the people.

For Goffman (1974: 21), framing signifies a “schemata of interpretation.” It is the “‘world out there’, by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one’s present or past environment” (Snow and Benford 1992: 137). Frames thus serve as a means to focus, attribute, and articulate. A frame is also a mode for individuals to understand their social surroundings, offering them an ability to identify or diagnose social problems and formulate a method to address grievances through action (Snow and Benford 1988). While frames can and do exist over
time, it should be noted that frames are not static (Carter 2013; Noonan 1997). They are socially constructed by the participants and therefore fluidly constructing and reconstructing meaning (Noonan 1997).

In order to recruit people into a SMO like the BPP, ideologies must be presented or “framed” so they will resonate with potential recruits. Coordinated collective action depends on trust and collaboration generated by shared meanings and identity, therefore is central to forming an imagined community. Framing defines the "us" and "them" in a SMO helping to construct a collective identity (Tarrow 1998). Frames are the filtering lenses that take the form of symbols, slogans, catchwords, or attributions such as the BPP’s use of the term an image of the “pig” to represent the State, police, and law enforcement. To attract participants SMOs should, and often do, provide incentives (e.g., newsletter or insurance for members) (Goodwin and Jasper 2009).

In the instance of the BPP, one incentive was in fact BPINS, a publication distributed to African American communities that was low in cost (25 cents) and shared throughout the community. BPINS was a recruitment and networking tool offering a lens into the BPP’s ideologies regarding social issues from local to international. Framing was clearly a Party tactic implemented by Newton and Seale, they believed that BPINS as an instrument the party should use to awaken the people and counter the hegemonic frame of both the government (e.g., FBI) and mainstream media.

It appears that social movement scholars have paid relatively little attention to the relation between protest art and framing (Adams 2002). The forthcoming discussion will detail the framing process and furthermore help to contribute to the empirical analysis of the artwork within BPINS. Frames operate symbolically to structure the social world
(Carter 2013). For Goffman (1974), they were the definition of the situation and constructed in accordance with the principles of an organization. For the BPP the process of framing was performed through *BPINS* and the *10 Point Platform and Program*.

Snow et al. (2009) explains that the frame alignment process has four elements: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation. Frame bridging is the “linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem” (Snow et al., 1997: 238). In their view, SMOs seek support from un-mobilized public opinion groups or others that have similar principles to their own. Frame bridging occurred in the BPP’s formation and history through the publication of *BPINS*. It was used within *BPINS* writings and the use of artwork reaching out to the un-mobilized community.

Frame amplification inspires collective action through the dissemination of belief and values (Snow et al. 1997). *BPINS* was the primary source of frame bridging and frame implication through the voice of party leaders and Party members. Additionally, in every weekly issue of *BPINS*, the *10 Point Platform and Program* was published espousing the BPP’s core values. Frame extension is pushing past the initial boundaries of the SMO’s framework to reach a larger recruitment pool (Snow et al. 1997). As discussed, the initial group the BPP were recruiting from was young African American men, but they extended their boundaries by portraying values and ideas that were salient to other potential participants in the hopes of enlarging their base.

Finally, frame transformation is the shifting of values (Snow et al. 1997). It is apparent that BPP party values shifted over its 13-year span (Courtwright 1974; Rhodes 2007). While the BPP still adhered to the *10 Point Platform and Program*, there was a clear
transformation in Party ideology resulting in actual changes to the platform in the *10 Point Platform and Program* in March, 1972. In addition, according to LeBlanc-Ernest (1998), there were three other historical shifts. By focusing on how the BPP framed its philosophy through the artwork in *BPINS*, it is likely organizational membership was fluid and transformative.

Snow and Benford (1988) contend there are three core framing tasks: (1) a diagnosis of some aspect of social life as problematic; (2) recommend a solution; and (3) a call to action. Framing is critical for social movement success and enticing participants to join (Adams 2002). The diagnostic identifies the problem and attributes blame. However, the persuasion of potential recruits and identification of a problem/problems are achieved more easily than attributional consensus. There needs to be a linkage between an individual’s values and beliefs (i.e. frame bridging) and an SMO’s ideology, goals, and activities. It is a way to mobilize and garner support (Snow and Benford 1988). For the BPP and its potential recruits consensus about the problems of racism and oppression was apparent, but the consensuses regarding the underlying factors were more difficult to obtain (Snow and Benford 1998).

Offering recruits a solution and the necessary strategies and techniques to address the problem (i.e. frame implication and frame extension) is critical (Snow and Benford 1988). As LeBlanc-Ernest (1998) explains, the BPP went through numerous historical shifts which would have resulted in the alteration of the BPP strategies and goals (e.g., from self-defense to more community-based activism). Finally, framing goes beyond the diagnosis of a problem and a suggested solution; it is also a call to arms. Claims about the causes and solutions do not necessarily foster social action. The right emotions, along with
the goal of galvanizing individuals into action are necessary. In short, frames need to resonate with potential recruits (Snow and Benford 1988).

Tarrow (1998) explains that media and cultural frames enter people's consciousness and this leads to consensus formation and mobilization. With the BPP, this often took place outside of any direct control of those people who were being framed, although Newton did recognize and use the mainstream media as a tool (McCartney 1992). Initially, the BPP was framed by the mainstream culture and media resulting in a negative stigma. However this was in part due to the intentional actions of BPP members. Framing results in the Party mobilization and taking collective action to frame themselves and in essence changing the definition of the situation.

Snow and Benford (1988) explain that there are four infrastructural constraints to framing: 1) centrality; 2) interrelatedness; 3) phenomenological; and 4) cycle of protest. Centrality refers to how salient the frames are to possible recruits in relation to the SMO's values and beliefs. Centrality is of vital importance regarding the BPP due to the assertions by many scholars that the Party lost its significance in the early 1970s (Courtwright 1974). The goal in the examination of revolutionary art is, therefore, to follow the historical shifts and see if there is a transition in the framing of the artwork similar to the claims in the literature regarding historical shifts within the Party. If the work became less meaningful, it could offer one reason why *BPINS* stopped publication in 1980 and the BPP dismantled soon after (in 1982).

Regarding interrelatedness, if the framing is limited to only one or two core beliefs or values, then it can function to constrain the movement (Snow and Benford 1988). With claims by many that the BPP underwent an ideological shift and was weakened in the early
1970s, the question becomes, did *BPINS* and art displayed in it shift with these claims and assertions? The third constraining factor is phenomenological (Snow and Benford 1988), does the framing "strike a chord" with potential recruits? Unfortunately this factor cannot be assessed within this research project. It would be difficult to discern phenomenological factors solely through the examination of artwork.

The final constraint on a SMO is the cycle of protest (Snow and Benford 1988). Every year there are a few movements that are more effective than others at that historical moment. If interpretive frames do not cognitively align with potential recruits, then the efficacy of the movement may become limited. Concerning the BPP and its historical shifts, this could be a potential explanation why some view the significance of the Party to end in the early 1970s (Courtwright 1974). The artwork may offer some insight and further potential research ideas.

Successful social movements require human agency for collective action (Noonan 1997). The BPP used collective action frames through the art in *BPINS* to carry out framing work which aided in mobilizing resources and disseminating information (Hughey 1998; Rhodes 2007). The success of the BPP, in part, relied on *BPINS* creating a shared understanding through the usage of master frames (i.e. larger cultural frames) and defining itself. As Coulter (2012) explained, the BPP was “controlling images”. This was a communal effort to change the narrative of the mainstream media and press (Lumsden 2009). *BPINS* and its artwork were used for visual political communication through collective action frames that went beyond written claims, rhetoric, and discourse.
The Power of the Press

The power of the press has been of historical concern since the founding of the United States. For example, George Washington’s apprehension was that an unfettered press was contemptible and irresponsible (Schudson 2011). Media were and still are, very powerful in transmitting information to society (Gamson et al., 1992; Krippendorf 1980; Schudson 2011). Wallas (1948) goes as far as to state that the American and British press are "sinister" and they color the news at the will of the bourgeoisie. To him, the news is conscious propaganda. This historical perception that the media are unfettered or controlled by the elite is problematic for American culture. The news media set the nation’s agenda for public attention of social issues and social problems (McCombs 2002). Agenda setting is part and parcel of the media process. The power of the press influences public opinion and the mobilization of people for political action. It is in part therefore, a political process (Park 1948). Public opinion, in a sense, is political opinion. Media coverage of the BPP stigmatized and framed the dominant discourse of the Panthers increasing racial tensions within the United States (Hughey 2009; Rhodes 2007; Seguin 2016).

The BPP also considered the press a propaganda tool of the bourgeoisie and it was one reason for the materialization of BPINS. Nevertheless, the press and the emergence of BPINS were engines for the mobilization and social transformation within the black community. Media are purveyors of information and ideas. However, many scholars of the media have concerns about the objectivity of the information and ideas that are published. For example, Gamson et al. (1992) asserts that the media are not neutral, but they promote the power and ideology of the elite class. Within Sociology, the news media have been a
social category of interest since the 18th century (Dickinson 2013) and contemporarily, media analysis is a sociological industry (Benson 2004). Numerous sociological scholars have taken up the study of the press.

For Habermas (1991), the 18th century press was the transition of the public sphere that was not previously available to the masses in modern Western Europe. He asserted that the institution of the mass media played a significant role in the regulation of two prominent institutions that have molded and transformed the public sphere, the State and the Market (Habermas 1991). Thus, the media aiding in the creation of a social setting (e.g., public sphere) where private citizens could discuss public issues. Initially, it allowed previously disenfranchised groups into a public sphere. However, capitalism soon collapsed this public space due to the market and sensationalization allowing trivialization to take hold (Benson 2004; Habermas 1991). The transformation went from "rational-critical debate" in the press to the commercialization of the mass market through advertising. While commercialization led to wider participation and spectatorship, it was less likely to produce "rational-critical debate" (Benson 2004: 277). Schudson (2011) asserts that some contemporary scholars (e.g., Susen 2011) do not accept the totality of Habermas’ s (1991) argument, but that the claim is of relevance because of the category of the "public sphere." The media created and transformed the public sphere, opening it for social discourse. The press, therefore, was a social organism that became institutionalized and normalized with broader participation and readership that constructed a public sphere for discourse (Habermas 1991).

Nonetheless, due to the institutionalization of the media and the creation of media monopolies, political and social issues are framed by political and economic elites (Gamson
et al. 1992). In contemporary society, the mass media plays a role in policymaking, especially in the early stages of the process and the shaping of claims (Best 2008; Soroka et al. 2013). The point is, media matters in the public sphere through setting (i.e., framing) agendas, therefore constructing a public awareness. It remains one of the most straightforward methods for people to learn about social issues/problems (Best 2008).

The press is a primary social institution within the United States that fosters and helps to construct sociological issues. Weber (1998) maintained it was a means of socialization for the "subjective individuality of modern man" (111). The press is of vital importance in swaying public opinions regarding political, social, and cultural components "of objective individuality of modern culture" (Weber 1998: 111). While Weber's (1998) discussion was based on the new journalism of the mid to late 19th century when the mass marketing of the press emerged, it would affirm Weber's (1998) assertions also hold true in reference to the 20th-century mainstream press. More prominent sources with more substantial distribution abilities are, therefore, more accessible than smaller scales publications. Consequently, it is essential for the Sociology of the press to understanding the role it has in the formation of public opinion (Dickinson 2013; Weber 1998).

Whether it is at the total control of the elite media and big city news, or not, media reports are often accepted as an official reality (Hansen 2008). According to Schudson (2011: 10), “there is no question, then, that members of the media have some autonomy and authority to depict the world according to their own view.” In fact, a study by Davenport's (2010), *Media Bias, Perspective, and State Repression: The Black Panther Party* illustrates this exact point. His findings demonstrate that the media are layered and bias reporting occurs due to the political affiliation of the media outlets. Add to that, reporters
within the media field at the time were predominantly white and did not understand black communities nor did they go into these communities and listen to the people (Rhodes 2007). This reporting further included how the media framed the BPP, which resulted in the constructed attitudes and values about the group while omitting any discussion about the perpetual institutional racism that continued to obstruct any possibility for equality for African Americans in urban communities.

According to Davenport (2010), the press is influenced by the owners, advertisers, and others who construct/limit the production of content. As Gamson et al. (1992) suggests, political and economic elites are not neutral and they construct (frame) meaning regarding political and social issues. The press can frame opinion through gossip, amplification of rumors, and sensationalization (Dickinson 2013). This tendency to influence again is similar to what both Best (2008) and Chomsky (2002) assert, claim-makers can shape opinions through media and manufactured consent.

What Dickinson (2013), Schudson (2011), Davenport (2010), Best (2008), Chomsky (2002), Hansen (2000) and Gamson et al. (1992) are all signifying is that the mainstream media helps construct, frame, and describe what comes to be an official reality. This is not to imply that objective facts do not get reported in the process of media outlets subjectively selecting news topics. But it does influence what is reported, underreported, or ignored. Journalists frequently rely on "official" sources through predictable channels which can lead to exploitation by those sources (Chomsky 2002; Hansen 2000). Ideally the reporting, regardless of the subject matter chosen, is still objective. Gamson et al. (1992) explains that this process is invisible because it appears reasonable and natural to the average person. Although the majority of the literature suggests there is media bias, Schudson
(2011) claims that this process does not dominate most U.S. news institutions. I posit the opposite, that indeed, the news media have been biased historically regarding particular social issues, at least in the latter part of the 20th century.

There has also been a historical relationship between the government and the press in the United States, with attempts to repress certain SMOs such as the BPP (Boykoff 2007). Historically, in the U.S., the press has been used to challenge domestic threats with the intent of demobilization through resource depletion, stigmatization, divisive disruption, and intimidation (Boykoff 2007). Prior research has clearly shown stigmatization of the BPP by the Press (Rhodes 2007; Rhodes 2001). As previously discussed, the FBI's COINTELPRO was concerned about the BPP and the publication of BPINS. Part of their mission was to sabotage and infiltrate the BPP (Churchill 2001; Gaiter 2004). Elements of COINTELPRO's operations were mass media manipulation through story implantation and journalistic strong-arming (Boykoff 2007). Government agencies, local and national, utilized systemic patterns of repression in an attempt to weaken and break up the BPP. Indeed, this method was effective in discouraging the recruitment of new members (Jones 1988).

Another facet was the negative framing of the BPP, selectively focusing on the "dangerous" or "bizarre" versus the BPP's key ideas (i.e., 10 Point Platform and Program) (Boykoff 2007). Framing the Panthers as the number one terrorist threat in the United States definitely influenced public opinion. The press even went as far as actually comparing the BPP to the Nazi's (Staub 1997).

Rhodes's (2007) historical discussion of how Black Americans were framed in the public sphere demonstrates that African American images in mass culture (i.e., the Press)
were socially constructed and framed through a white lens (i.e., the State). The framing and visibility of "blackness" led to conceptions like Dubois’s double consciousness (Rhodes 2007). Often the images projected regarding African Americans had strong connections to biological deficiency, cultural deficiency, or both (Rhodes 2007). Moreover, the nation’s racial ideology toward African Americans socialized them to view themselves through media representations that fostered stereotypes (e.g., criminals, pimps, prostitutes, etc.).

The hegemony of the media often constructed a monolithic discourse framing actors like the BPP myopically.

Additionally, the press has framed African Americans through hysteria and the construction of fear (e.g., the figure of the "black beast" or "folk devil") (Tyner 2005). The majority of the reports were negative portrayals of African Americans (Rhodes 2007). Rhodes (2007: 42) asserts, "Black Americans existed only in narrow and closely definable frames – as a threat to the social order and political stability, as violent and impulsive, or politically naïve and immature.” The media, therefore, were a central purveyor in framing Black America and African American people. This framing, according to Schudson (2011) is a selective presentation of news. As Rhodes (2007) demonstrates, it has led to significant bias. It can even be said it has led to outright racism, regarding African Americans and race relations of the 1960s and 1970s.

This racism has been institutionalized and it is particularly true regarding the elite media that frame official reality (van Dijk 1991). It perpetuates stereotypes and myths that are not only false but can lead to violence (Ehrlich 2009). Ehrlich (2009: 41) explains that news media (not just the press) socializes and fosters racial and ethnic attitudes along with the "justification of many forms of discrimination." The media thus function to uphold the
subordinate status of ethnic and racial minorities. These effects are also cumulative through repeated exposure (Ehrlich 2009).

As Marcuse (1964) suggests the press is an agent of manipulation that limits autonomy and freedom of political opposition. While it appears rational in character, it is in fact irrational; it is one tool in contemporary industrial society that is totalitarian. The mainstream press’s reporting of official reality was one apparatus in the production and distribution of ideology. The press was used as a social institution to push back and undermine political action by framing black political movements through the optics of “terrorists” or public threats. Social order was privileged above black freedom; branding the BPP and others, as enemies of the state.

The formation of BPINS, in essence, was political opposition, a voice, to reconstruct the social stigma of the BPP that have been put forth by the mainstream press. Marcuse (1964: 4) would claim this challenge to be draconian because it offered intellectual freedom to urban African American communities and “intellectual freedom would mean the restoration of individual thought now absorbed by mass communication and indoctrination, abolition of ‘public opinion’ together with its makers.”

Chomsky notes (2002) that dissident perspectives are marginalized in the Press. There is a limited spectrum for debate or countering opinions. In essence, it is a propaganda system. While it may present countering ideas, or even debate, it only reinforces assumptions. Propaganda and censorship are much more subtle (Chomsky 2002). According to Chomsky’s (2002) propaganda model, the media is used to manufacture consent.
Since language itself is an integral part of the day to day life and a socio-historical phenomena (Bourdieu 1991), it is logical that BPINS was of vital importance to the BPP disseminating their ideology to alienated urban African Americans. In addition, for the functionaries of a revolution it was an important financial resource (Rhodes 2007). BPINS was the constant symbol of the party and a propaganda tool created by Newton and Seale for both member recruitment and political education (Rhodes 2001). According to Hilliard (2007), the Panthers knew from the onset of the BPP that the creation of BPINS would play a significant role in furthering Panther’s agenda (i.e., it was the voice of those alienated from the mainstream) (Rhodes 2001).

BPINS was central in the creation "of an imagined community of black revolutionaries across the USA, and eventually across the globe" (Rhodes 2001: 152). With an emerging visual culture in the 1960s, Newton and Cleaver wanted graphic illustrations of the party's that would prepare recruits for liberation through revolution (Gaiter 2004). Douglas was a key contributor to the visual content of BPINS and created the term ‘revolutionary art’ to delineate the visual politics reflected in BPINS (Rhodes 2001; Rhodes 1999). Indeed, Douglas was not just serving the party through art, he was helping construct and produce the movement (Durant 2007). Through BPINS, the BPP started a visual movement that facilitated the transformation of black consciousness (Gaiter 2012).

According to Rhodes (2001) BPINS served numerous purposes for the BPP. It was a steady source of income. It was a mechanism for community building. Panthers were visibly out on the corners selling BPINS. It was the instructional deployment of symbolisms throughout the community. BPINS "was the most important tool for the party’s efforts of
self-representation directed at multiple audiences. It was, particularly in those early years, the only medium completely under their control" (Rhodes 2001: 156).

The Social Construction of an Imagined Community through BPINS

According to Benedict Anderson (1991), through the late 1970s, nationalism has been the framework for every successful revolution. While the BPP was ideologically a movement for the equality of all people, it was initially framed as a nationalist black power movement whose goal was to challenge the status quo of white mainstream America. Anderson (1991) would assert that the “nation-ness” of the BPP was a unique cultural artifact of a particular era. To better understand the BPP, it is crucial to understand the formation and history of their social movement and how it has changed over time.

Anderson (1991) further argues that print culture is an essential component in linking dispersed populations so that people can form nationally-imagined communities. Similar to other Marxist movements, the Panthers used BPINS to convey party ideology to the masses and push forth their agenda (i.e., the 10 Point Platform and Program). The Party would assert that African Americans were fundamentally an internally colonized, nationless people who have been marginalized historically within the United States. It is, in part, through the communal efforts and construction of BPINS that the BPP was able to frame and put forth its philosophy, thus aiding in the construction of an imagined community.

Anderson explains (1991: 6) that a “nation” can be defined as “an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.” With respect to SMOs an imagined (political) community is such because most often the members will not know or meet most of their cohorts, yet there is an awareness of communion among the
members of the group (Anderson 1991). It is the social construction of a “nation” where one did not previously exist. This was certainly true of the BPP which spread to international membership early in its formation.

The BPP was also imagined, and limited, through often changing boundaries as party membership altered throughout its history. Recruitment and participation within the BPP was fluid and transformative. There were no official boundaries as the BPP formed within the USA and other officially recognized nations. While the BPP did not necessarily assert sovereignty (i.e., the right to govern themselves independently), it was unquestionably a primary goal of the 10 Point Platform and Program for African Americans to govern their own communities throughout the U.S.A. Finally, Anderson (1991: 7) explains that the BPP could be imagined as a “community” because “is always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship.” A network so strong there is camaraderie among members, regardless of social status or class. Members of the BPP were often willing to sacrifice their lives for the movement through revolutionary suicide (Forbes 2006).

While print media is one way of dispersing information and creating imagined communities, this approach can also be fostered through the use of images. Anderson (1991: 23) explains that historically there was a time when most people were illiterate and “the figuring of imagined reality was overwhelmingly visual and aural creations.” According to Anderson (1991), a nation is an imagined political community of people who will never know their fellow members. Similarly, within the BPP, most members and readers of BPINS would not know each other or have face to face interaction but yet they had similar interests (e.g., the art published in BPINS).
Clausse (1968: 627) explains that an audience formed by the media attains "distinctive characteristics" which separates them from the mass public. The audience becomes organized into a social category (i.e., an imagined community). There is homogenization and the formation of a "We" category or social group (Clausse 1968). "Mass, community and communion do not signify physical groups or collectivities, but simply degrees of mention fusion in the 'We'" (Clausse 1968: 628). Cohesion and homogenization merge into an imagined community.

One method in the construction of imagined communities is through visual images. Art can perpetuate ideologies within a population and even go beyond print since there is no need for literacy. According to Anderson (1991), signs or symbols aid in the formation of such communities. The revolutionary art within BPINS was, in part, symbolic representations of the BPP. The audience could choose images they relate to, and in doing so, embolden the imagined community and Party ideologies and the formation of the "we."
CHAPTER V

SOCIOLOGY OF ART

Sociology of Art, BPINS and the BPP: An Expression of Life

Historically, art and science have not meshed although visual examination of data is commonplace in the natural sciences and anthropology (e.g., visual ethnography) (Harper 1998). Furthermore, the sociology of art has been neglected for decades (Adams 2002; de la Fuete 2007; Silbermann 1968). Analysis of art and aesthetics has traditionally been the realm of philosophers and artists, the "field of art has remained aloof from social analysis" (Mueller 1938: 223). While the creation and meaning of art are personal in the sense that an artist constructs the work, social forces also play a role in the formation of those works (Mueller 1938). As Baraka (1987: 23) explains, art "is an expression of life" and an expression of the artist’s values. It also exists within a historical and cultural context (Janesick 2008). However, while art may be an expression of the artist, it also reflects and connects the community from the local to the global (Janesick 2008). Art is social and tells a story. Historically, the arts have also been a tool for education, organization, and collective action (Barndt 2008). Finally, art is also a characteristic of culture. In terms of much of western civilization, it is racist, imperialist, and exploitive (Baraka 1987).

Within the sociology of visual arts, scholarship has been mostly European in origin with a "focus on stylistic and value changes, and psychoanalytic exploration into the role of the artist and the creative process" (Watson 1968: 667). Additionally, as sociology gravitated toward a more scientific mode, the sociology of art was not the realm of "proper sociology" (de la Fuente 2014: 410). According to Harper (1998) visual sociology came into existence in the 1960s with little interest, and de la Fuente (2014) proclaims a shift
took place within sociology in the 1980s primarily with the writings from Howard Becker’s *Art Worlds* (1982) and Pierre Bourdieu’s *Distinction* (1984). Even today, there has been little analysis of framing and revolutionary art (Adams 2002).

Adams (2002: 22) explains how social “movements can use art to carry out framing work, mobilizing resources, communicating information about themselves, and finally as a symbol of the movement.” The BPP used *BPINS* for framing and mobilization; it was the main literary source for framing work and communicating information about themselves. *BPINS* was one of the most significant tools of the BPP.

Before proceeding, the concept of art must be defined for the purposes of this study. Historically speaking, there has been a lack of consensus as to what is art (Zolberg 1997). When art has been defined, it has been delineated into highbrow and lowbrow culture (Grazian 2017). Harrington’s (2004) *Art and Social Theory*, offers the idea there is no unified singular concept of art. In that context, it is likely that during the 1960s and 1970s, BPP art would not have even been regarded as “art” by the mainstream culture and instead viewed as a tool for propaganda. Even if the works in *BPINS* were accepted as “art” within popular culture, it probably would have been framed as aesthetically “low brow” in that historical moment.

Weber (2008) offers a number of reasons as to why visual images such as art should be studied.

1) Art captures the inexpressible. An image-based account reveals what may be hard to put into words. As Weber (2008) explains, words that describe a problematic situation, such as the institutional racism of the police during the 1960s, do not have
the same meaning as a visual account. It is also open to a wider audience beyond the reading community.

2) Images help people to view social issues in a new way. They “break through our everyday perceptions and get us to think outside the theoretical box” (Weber 2008: 5).

3) Images are likely to be memorable and therefore have influence on thought and action.

4) Art is used for more holistic communication – it is layered and evokes stories and questions. Images can reveal more information than pages of text – they “speak” to us.

5) “Images can enhance empathic understanding and generalizability” (Weber 2008: 45). We can adopt someone else’s viewpoint – in essence use our sociological imagination. We can see through the artist’s eyes.

6) “Through metaphors and symbols, artistic images can carry theory elegantly and eloquently” (Weber 2008: 45).

7) “Images can be more accessible than most forms of academic discourse” (Weber 2008: 46). This is particularly relevant since a large portion of the discourse in *BPINS* was written from a Marxist theoretical base which likely would be difficult for the average reader to understand.


Social phenomena are, or can be, a driving force in the creation of art as was the situation with the BPP and the publishing of art. In the circumstance of the BPP, the artwork was implemented to create a visual literacy. Art was a way to capture and frame
the inexpressible breaking through perceptions and influencing thought and action.

According to the BPP Minister of Information Brad Brewer (1970), Newton asserted that the Black community was not a reading community. Therefore, it was up to Emory Douglas and the artists of *BPINS* to disseminate those teachings visually, ”education through revolutionary art” (Brewer 1970: 17). This idea clearly coincides with Anderson’s (1991) discussion about literacy and the intentional use of art as a method to create an imagined community. Emory Douglas explained that the community itself (i.e., the Black ghetto) was the gallery for these displays – walls, windows, fences, telephone poles, doorways, busses, etc. (cited in Doss 1998). This was a form of more holistic communication where the community could view the BPP discourse symbolically and absorb the messages to promote social action and protest (Adams 2002; Weber 2008). As such, Baraka (1987) claims BPP art was a weapon against cultural imperialism.

Becker (1982) explains that art is shaped by cooperation, organizations, and interests. Additionally, certain social conventions offer the foundation on which participants within the art world can work together competently to produce works that are representative of those social worlds (Becker 1982). For Becker (1982: 42), these conventions are known to the “well-socialized members of the society in which it exist.” Such conventions also foster a basis for collective action and standardization. This can be framed in the production and distribution of *BPINS*, as the publication became more normalized, it also became more standardized in the format, page count, and distribution.

Ideally then, the BPP used the artwork within *BPINS* in a manner such that members of African American communities would understand and facilitate collective action. While members of the community did not know all the steps in the process of creation regarding
the art in *BPINS*, they knew what they needed to understand and support these communal activities (Becker 1982).

As previously explained by Becker (1974: 767), “art is social in character.” It is a collective and cooperative action involving a network of people to produce and disseminate it. There is no doubt that it took a collective effort to construct, create, publish, and distribute thousands of copies of *BPINS* weekly. While Emory Douglas was frequently considered the primary artist and producer of art for *BPINS* (Durant 2007; Gaiter 2012), Becker (1976) explains that it takes the coordinated activity of people to produce final works like an issue of *BPINS* and therefore it is a communal creation. In fact, as part of their membership Panthers were required to sell *BPINS*, and from there it was passed along and redistributed among community members (Abu-Jamal 2004). Without Party member cooperation *BPINS* could not have become nationally and internationally successful. Subscribers also formed the readership of that imagined community. While it was at its peak circulation of 200,000 (Hilliard 2007), it could be argued that *BPINS* might have reached double or triple the audience through its community dissemination.

According to Becker (1974: 769), “whatever the artist, so defined, does not do himself must be done by someone else. The artist thus works in the center of a large network of cooperating people, all of whose work is essential to the final outcome.” Art is a collective action, a network of cooperation, and a cultural product that constructs the art world (Becker 1982; Becker 1974). Becker (1982) further describes the elements necessary for the art world. First of all, there must be the idea itself—whether visual art, music, poetry, or another form. Next, the means of execution must become routinely available. Then, the necessary equipment is needed for manufacturing and distributing the
work. Time and resources become two more elements necessary for the production of art. Additionally, support must take place for this production; this would vary with the medium. Following, a response or reaction is needed; without appreciation or interest, there would be no recognition. Finally, a rationale needs to be created and maintained. According to Becker (1982), for all of these things to be done, there must be training for the people involved in the collective activity of the art world and the state must allow the production. While these elements are necessary for the art world in general, Becker (1982) is not claiming these imperatives are all required for an individual work to be completed.

The annals of BPINS demonstrate this cooperation by members throughout the circulation. Without the cooperation of the group and their collective activity, neither BPINS nor the artwork within issues would have been produced, published, and disseminated. While Emory Douglas was responsible for the publication of BPINS (Durant 2007), it took BPP member cooperation and support to create and circulate the paper. Additionally, it was a communal effort with submissions of writing, poetry, and art from Party members and others within the imagined community to create the weekly publication. Finally, it could not have been disseminated throughout the country and globally without the help of Party and community members. While the FBI (i.e., the state) had concerns and the COINTELPRO made attempts to hinder publication (Churchill 2001), the necessary imperatives were in place for the successful publication and dissemination of BPINS.

For this collaboration to become routine, certain social conventions among personnel are necessary and provide a foundation for cooperation (Becker 1982). With 537 issues printed, efficient coordination was necessary and there had to be conventional
arrangements to make the publication routine. *BPINS* adhered to this publication with the forms of artwork following the conventions, form, and standardization.

While Becker (1982) never uses the term "imagined community" he frames his discussion and the art world as a "cooperating network." These concepts may not be exactly parallel, but they certainly complement each other. "The world exists in the cooperative activity of those people, not as a structure or organization, and we use words like those only as shorthand for the notion of networks of people cooperating" (Becker 1982: 35). There is a shared sense of worth within the interaction of all parties from distribution through consumption (Becker 1976).

In considering art as a collective work then, it could be assumed that the content of the art itself was constrained by the ideologies of the group, or in this case, the *10 Point Platform and Program*. There was dependence on a community of workers whose thoughts were expressed within the works and which helped creating shared meaning and understanding.

According to Silbermann (1968: 571), art is within the purview of the “sociology of culture” but that the term culture “has, for many approaches, become extremely imprecise and unwieldy.” Individual artistic adventures are established in social reality and ultimately an expression of culture and society that can be viewed as symbolic representations, communications processes, and/or social processes (Silbermann 1968).

The sociology of art ... as a sociology concerned with cultural spheres of influence, inquires [sic] into those historical facts which are correlated to one another and to the progress of society. They adapt themselves and develop in accordance with forces that it is one of the talks of the sociology of art to analyze and describe (Silbermann 1968: 575).
Silbermann (1968) further explains that expressions of art are expressions of the interdependence between the individual and social world. The social environment influences the creative processes of art. Additionally, if art is to have meaning, consumption of the art is necessary. “It is a social phenomenon that manifests itself as a social process, as a social activity, and consequently needs two partners: a giver and a receiver” (Silbermann 1968: 582). Art must make an impression on a social group. The reaction to the work will determine the reputation of the work and position it within a cultural context. Particular receptions and reactions will thus regulate and foster further creativity (Silbermann 1968: 585). "The first aim of a sociology of art, therefore, is to study total art processes – the interaction and interdependence of the artist, the work of art and the public – in regard to their importance as art forms" (Silbermann 1968: 586).

It should be apparent from the previous discussion that the art of the BPP had meaning and made an impression on African American communities, especially considering how it was displayed throughout those populations. The collective works and communal creation relied on frames that had meaning to the consumers of BPINS. Artwork was used as a tool to educate, organize, and for collective action among imagined political communities.

Black Art: The Intersection of the Black Power Movement and Black Arts Movement

Smethurst (2005) explains that several areas of academia, such as African American studies, Chicana/o studies, and Asian American studies, owe their origins to the nationalist movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Paradoxically, many of the universities that house these departments “maintain a far more ambivalent, if not hostile, relationship to the Black Power Movement, the Black Arts Movement, and other forms of political and artistic
nationalism of the 1960s and 1970s” (Smethurst 2005: 2). However, the BAM and the BPM intersect. It is art that communicates directly to the desires and objectives of Black Americans (Baraka 1985). Neal (1968: 29) describes the BAM as the “spiritual sister of the black power concept.” The BAM addressed the needs and aspirations of African Americans, and represents philosophies of nationalism through an emphasis of self-determination (Neal 1968; Neal 2015).

Emory Douglas (1972) addressed this issue specifically at a Fisk University lecture emphasizing the significance of “revolutionary” art within African American communities. He argued that commercial art (the media) is a tool for socialization and ascription and that Panther art, is art that served the people (Douglas 1972). Baraka (1987) further explained that mainstream art (i.e., commercial art) is an expression of European values. The assertion that the BAM was a tool for socialization, parallels Weber’s (1998) discussion of how the press is an instrument of socialization. As such, art often frames particular values that may reinforce stereotypes and ideologies of African Americans that do not represent the true cultural, economic, and social conditions of their communities. BPP artwork counter-framed the values expressed within commercial art.

Douglas (1972) articulated ideas similar to those espoused by Chomsky (2002), Habermas (1991), and Marcuse (1964) that mainstream media and art served the dominant capitalist class. Neal (1968) explains that the BAM was a way to confront the inconsistencies framing the “Black man’s” experience through the development and construction of a black aesthetic7 (Neal 1968). Janesick (2008) expounds that part of the

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7 Without delving too far into the weeds about “black aesthetic” in general terms, I am referring to Neal’s (1968) claims that it refers to African American Cultural traditions while encompassing elements of periphery nations.
process of creating art coincides with the artist's life chances and community understanding. The creation of that art comes out of human experience of their history and biography.

The artwork in BPINS goes beyond the commercial art world and capitalist ideology. In Becker’s (1976: 710-712) terms, the artists of BPINS were what he defined as "mavericks" and or "naïve artists." The mavericks are innovators of the art world who intended on changing the established conventions, while naïve artists or "grass-roots" are not ordinary members of the art world and may not have any formal training (Becker 1976).

“The Black Arts Movement then enters an intellectual conversation already in progress – though it is a conversation that was hardly more than a whisper in academia at the end of the twentieth century” (Smethurst 2005: 7). The BAM’s historical legacy stems from the Old Left\(^8\) and breaks with the black radicalism of the 1960s and 1970s which led the BPP to propagate from a local, to regional, to national and finally international SMO (Smethurst 2005). While there was a varying amount of hegemony among the various BPM and the BAM, “the common thread between nearly all groups was the belief that African Americans were a people, a nation, entitled to (needing, really) self-determination of its own destiny” (Smethurst 2005: 15).

The BAM was a way for the agency of the BPP and African Americans to define a world through their own lens artistically (Neal 1968). Artwork was a method for people to cut “through the smokescreens of the oppressor and creates brand new images of Revolutionary action – for the total community” (Douglas 1968: 2). What is meant by

\(^8\) The Old Left meaning pre 1960 left-wing Marxist movements.
“revolutionary art”\(^9\) is that it is collective, functional, and committing (Baraka 1987). Collectively, it expresses a whole people and therefore was framed to visually represent that group (i.e., BPP). It was functional in its usage to frame and represent the struggle for liberation. “Revolutionary” art was committed specifically to the struggle (Baraka 1987). The representations of BPP’s artwork were the result of a process that fostered and developed black consciousness and freedom within African American communities (i.e., imagined communities). Those within a community who view the art will have a shared understanding of the meaning because “every work of art tells a story” (Janesick 2008: 482). The primary duties of the black artist are therefore, a commitment to speak to both the cultural and spiritual needs of the Black community (Neal 1989).

Renewed interest in the BPP has led to an expanded body of research and scholarship (Knapper 1996). The legacy of the BPM and the BAM is ever-present in today’s popular culture here in the United States and globally.

The Black Arts movement made significant impressions on artists and intellectuals too young to remember its events firsthand. Many of the more explicitly political hip-hop artists owe and acknowledge a tremendous debt to the militancy, urgent tone, and multi-media aesthetics of the Black Arts movement and other forms of literary and artistic nationalism (Smethurst 2005: 3).

The history of BPM and the BAM needs more academic assessment to examine the importance these SMOs.

**Visual Literacy in Pursuit of Liberation**

The first two issues of *BPINS* were produced by Huey P. Newton and Eldridge Cleaver using a typewriter and copy machine. However, Newton wanted to visually display

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\(^9\) The terms “art” or “artwork” are most often used through this dissertation’s discussion because not all art was in fact “revolutionary” and a significant portion was more “reformative” in its messaging.
the work of the party and he enlisted the help of Emory Douglas (Gaiter 2004). Douglas, the “Norman Rockwell of the ghetto”, would join the BPP in 1967. He was the lone Minister of Culture for the Party whose responsibilities included the publication of *BPINS*. He was also the primary contributor of revolutionary art (Gaiter 2007: Gaiter 2004).

Newton and Seale viewed the police as a state sanctioned occupying force in urban communities labeling them “fascists” and “swine”. When these two terms did not catch on in the community, they settled on the term “pig.” Consequently the imagery of pigs would be published within the revolutionary artwork of *BPINS*. Images of pigs in uniforms would be commonplace and oftentimes badge numbers drawn within the art were specifically attributed to Oakland police officers they believed harassed African Americans within the community (Lampert 2013). Douglas routinely used these images in his contributions to the artwork of *BPINS*.

Furthermore, Douglas’s work moved beyond the stereotypical racial roles and portrayals of African Americans framing cultural, economic, and social conditions of the community. According to Kathleen Cleaver (2007: 51), Douglas’s “drawings gave visible form to the bold ideas of revolution we were kicking around those days.” The Party strategy was to normalize and frame previously radical or revolutionary ideas within the images and create activists versus readers (Gaiter 2007). The purpose of the art was to construct a black consciousness that promoted the *10 Point Platform and Program* that would flourish from local to international distribution within 2 years.

However, Emory Douglas was not the exclusive contributor of artwork within *BPINS*. There were many other artists and submissions of art over the 13-year run of

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10 Their definition; “A low natured beast that has no regard for law, justice, or the rights of the people” (Lampert 2013: 202)
Although Douglas’s art is certainly noteworthy, it is important to push beyond his contributions and examine the numerous other artists. There are hundreds of submitted artworks by varying artists for over a 13-year period. As Berger (2010: 170) explains, the success of the Panther brand depended to a great extent on its reach. The party’s sophisticated visual campaign, which benefited also from the work of artists and graphic designers trained by Douglas, was intended not for the elitist world of museum, but for the space and institutions of everyday life, the black neighborhood.

Before *BPINS* was even sold, Panthers would go out and put Douglas’s art on the walls and other places throughout the community. According to Lampert (2013), runs of 10,000 to 20,000 posters of Douglas’s artwork were printed and posted throughout Oakland. With the entire community being the gallery, it became a method that helped frame and construct a local imagined community while creating an art world. The art communicated performative instructions intended to raise and produce a black political consciousness. The images of art were intended to strengthen new cognitive habits regarding black consciousness through the construction of a visual identity (Gaiter 2012). This artwork had additional importance. Oftentimes the mainstream public images of African Americans stereotyped them into particular roles such as servants or mammies. *BPINS* art was a visual empowerment breaking past those stereotypes and focusing on black liberation (Gaiter 2004). Gaiter (2004: 6) explains that Douglas’s art, turned “ordinary people into heroes.” It was a communal reflection that framed messages of hope symbolized through art.

Thousands of Douglas’s images that were redistributed throughout African American communities visually illustrate the frustration and plight of African Americans (Baltrip-Balagas 2006). As Douglas states, “it was about getting Huey’s and the party’s
message to the people exhibiting “what was really going on” (cited in Baltrip-Balagas 2006: 86). Baltrip-Balagas (2006) asserts Douglas’s work was some of the most revolutionary and radical of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Douglas believed that all the BPP art was political and the community was the gallery (Roberts 2009; Valdez 2008).

It was a visual representation of the struggle and goals of self-determination (Glover 2007).

Of course, we are talking about using art in the most fundamental way of bringing people to a particular place and bringing them there, also defining and legitimizing the space that they are in. It is fascinating from the standpoint of looking at art because it was not only his art, it was collective art as well. That is what art should be – collective – and Emory’s art represented a kind of collective energy (Glover 2007: 10).

Douglas’s art was about empowerment often illustrating a militant stance of self-defense against armed oppressors, it was displaying what revolution looked like (Gaiter 2007). As Gaiter (2007: 94) eloquently writes, Douglas “was fearless in content and style. He was the party’s Revolutionary Artist, graphic designer, illustrator, political cartoonist, and the master craftsman of its visual identity.” Douglas “branded” the Panthers in his artwork with an image of what a Panther “looked like” the black beret, black leather jacket, gun-toting militant. It was a visual identity first presented and framed by mainstream press and then conscripted by the BPP, as an image of empowerment. Additionally, those images often framed radical ideas (e.g., equal opportunity) and were strategically used to normalize the Party ideology of the 10 Point Platform and Program. It helped visualize ideas of pride and solidarity that people within African American communities may not have known how to express. "Douglas’s art fused everyday black life with revolutionary spirit" (Gaiter 2007: 101).
Douglas’s work as the BPP Minister of Culture had the combination of ideology and ability. Through art, there were portrayals of the BPP revolutionary principles that were easily conceived visually. If not for the bluntness of Douglas’s work through visual imagery, many of the notions of the movement would have gone unnoticed to a large number of people within the community. Artwork was a significant factor in advancing the circulation of the newspaper from the local to international (Jones 1988). The intention was to form a new communal collective consciousness empowering communities to in the pursuit of change (Durant 2007).

While the majority of literature discusses Douglas and “revolutionary” art vis-à-vis, there were many other contributors to art in BPINS. As BPP Minister of Culture, Douglas managed the Party cadre "mentoring and inspiring dozens of artists to make revolutionary art that often appeared in the paper alongside his own" (Durant 2007: 20). Unfortunately, there is no literature with in-depth analysis of the other contributors. If this movement did indeed transform black consciousness there is a need for further empirical investigation of the BPP and the framing of its art. BPINS was clearly a community endeavor that fostered an imagined (political) community and the revolutionary art was an important part of the process in the creation of that community.
CHAPTER VI

METHODS

Visual Media

Scholarship analyzing collective action and SMOs has developed a fertile research practice collecting data from newspapers (Earl et al., 2004). Oftentimes, discourse analysis is the method for investigation of language (Gee and Green 1998). “Subsequent research using a variety of sources has largely validated the central findings of many projects that initially relied on newspaper data” (Earl et al., 2004: 65). While the majority of this previous research focused on SMOs and protest events that were reported (i.e., written) the authors demonstrate the importance of the press as a valid and rich data source (Earl et al. 2004). Warner and Karner (2015) explain that printed and visual media are social artifacts important for studying cultural meanings or “frames.” While it is difficult to prove or measure the precise impact of these representations on the social world, they can be studied as characteristics of culture and the changes of that culture over time (Baraka 1987; Warren and Karner 2015).

Using one’s sociological imagination, a researcher can interpret historical data with an understanding of a particular historical epoch. Therefore the press is a valuable source for sociological inquiry in the study of classifications such as race, class, and sex. *BPINS* was used to frame the ideological underpinnings of the BPP. The BPP drew from mainstream media systems to construct and create a newspaper that would frame their ideologies (i.e., diagnosis) through various forms of communication both written and symbolic that often proposed solutions and calls to action. Eisner (2008) explains that forms such as art are regarded as types of knowledge. The visual art of the BPP were
framed symbolically to represent the 10 Point Platform and Program as a style of visual literacy.

The BAM has an informative role to play in the human understanding of social movement groups, their processes, and ideologies that are reflecting within the artwork itself. As Eisner (2008) elicits, the understanding of knowledge cannot be reduced to just language. If a person’s or peoples literacy skills are poor, if they are not a “reading community”, other ways to disseminate knowledge become necessary. One such method for propagating knowledge was to educate people through the frames of visual artwork (Brewer 1970).

The creation and construction of knowledge come from various symbolic forms beyond written language. “Words, except when they are used artistically, are proxies for direct experience” (Eisner 2008: 5). Warren and Karner (2015) expound that visual artifacts are a means to the perception and understanding of social life and to better comprehend the lived experience from the participant’s lens. Framing BPP ideology through BPINS was essential to visualize the movement.

The deliteralization of knowledge opens doors to inquiry and compound forms of knowing.

There are, indeed, propositions whose truth value is significant and whose claims are testable through scientific procedure. At the same time, there are utterances and images that are intended to be evocative of the situation they are designed to describe (Eisner 2008: 5).

In a social setting, even before we think, we see and our thoughts are allied with images when we imagine, plan, critique, or analyze. The visual, or sight, in daily life is taken-for-granted and is not often the focus of systematic inquiry through empirical research (Weber
The purpose of this research was decoding BPP artwork found within *BPINS* from 1967 – 1980.

This case study is exploratory qualitative research focused on a historical visual and content analysis of artwork examining the symbolic meaning of the visual and (sometimes) textual messages. A “case” as defined by Walton (1992) represents general categories of the social world, the study of a particular social position(s) that are related to a larger group of events. A case study in this research is the examination of BPP artwork and the assumption that it represents general features of the Party’s imagined community.

The research technique of content analysis allows for “replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (Krippendorf 1980: 10). Content analysis allows the researcher to make inferences about the underlying meanings and messages of the artwork (Mitchell 1967). Content analysis is a method of investigation allowing the researcher to analyze symbolic meaning(s) of images communicated through visual literacy in *BPINS*. This communication allows the researcher to put the analysis of data and their meanings into a historical context (Krippendorf 1980). A systematic sampling technique examined every 6th issue for visual coding of the art that was published in *BPINS*. The purpose of this research dissertation is to produce new insights and knowledge regarding the artwork published in *BPINS*.

The art within *BPINS* was symbolic, a visual representation of meaning to both the messenger and recipient. As discussed by Weber (2008), images assist in viewing social issues in a new way because they are a more holistic form of communication and way to capture the inexpressible. Through their metaphors and symbols, they can enhance our understanding. Messages within the visual, however, do not have a single meaning and
they need to be unwrapped. They may, in fact, have a plethora of meanings (Krippendorf 1980). Secondly, meanings are not always shared. As Mills (1959) would suggest, one needs to use their sociological imagination and to put these messages into their cultural, historical, biographical, and sociopolitical perspective.

The most distinctive feature of messages is that they inform someone vicariously, providing the receiver with knowledge about the events that take place at distant locations, about an object that may have existed in the past, or about ideas in other people’s minds (Krippendorf 1980: 22-23).

Shapiro (1974) offers that visually, art can be viewed as a sign that has a limited meaning by its nature and open to interpretation. Symbolically, art is an object that is associated with ideas or conventions that the artist is trying to articulate. Therefore researchers need to understand the intention of the work. This is not to suggest that researchers can know "all" intentions, but they do need to take a pluralistic approach. One is by placing the art within a historical context to aid with interpretation (Shapiro 1974). The art of *BPINS* was analyzed through a historical lens within the framework and intersection of the Civil Rights Movement and the BAM.

The second part of this approach of visual analysis is to understand the underlying intent of the artwork (Shapiro 1974). Again, it has been suggested within the literature that Emory Douglas’s intent was "revolutionary" art. While there is no absolute way to understand the other artist’s intentions, I framed and coded what I viewed as the artist’s meaning(s), trying to interpret the work objectively. As stated, the art of the BPP was a visual message regarding the *10 Point Platform and Program* and therefore can be analyzed, coded, and placed into those theme/categories for analysis.

Visual analysis and research of visual arts moves outside the traditional methods of inquiry and has a limited history within sociological empirical research (Sullivan 2010).
Visual data can be analyzed as a visual record and visual representation of the social world (Banks 1995). The scope of this project is to incorporate methods that reflect and attempts to secure understanding of the phenomena in the artwork. The research goal is to add breadth and depth to the current body of sociological knowledge regarding the Black Panther Party and their art published in *BPINS*. The research design is a critical contextual and semiotic analysis of BPP art. *BPINS* was the unit of analysis and primary source for data collection.

**Coding and Analysis**

I initially performed a summary analysis of 487 published issues of *BPINS* from 1967 – 1980 looking through every page that was accessible (see Table 1). This was an overview to get a general sense of how much data there was and the types of data. The investigation was through an archive in the database of “Black Thought and Culture”.

*BPINS* has been archived online with the majority of issues accessible. This database was the principal option for sampling the data. I would eventually use Western Michigan University's microfilm archives attempting to locate missing issues within the final sample.

From the initial summary analysis, there were over 1600 published works of art from numerous artists through the publication run. The number of artists was difficult to discern since many pieces of art do not have an artist's signature. Additionally, some artist's signatures are not legible. The artworks looked over within all of these issues ranged in size from full pages of art 11 ½ X 17 inches to approximately 1/16 of a page.
### Table 1 - Summary Analysis

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<td>1978</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>1620</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The objective for this dissertation was to analyze all art within the issues sampled regardless of size, meaning, or message. Due to the fact there are so many uses of art within *BPINS*, it is important to frame what was not examined. Some images overlaid with print similar to a watermark (it was difficult to see the image because they were faint). Next, pictures with some art added to them were not analyzed. There were some photos where art is added to the photograph, but they are a relatively small part of the photo. Third, advertisements (e.g., movie posters and books) and art images for sale were not analyzed. There were also ads for plays, movies, and other events that were not produced explicitly for *BPINS*. Fourth, “filler” or clip art/images – there were sections where an image such as a gun (i.e., M-16 are put onto a page), were placed to take up, or fill, blank spaces on the page.
The types of artworks varied, they include:

- Drawings – pen and ink, markers, gouaches, and graphite
- Stencils
- Charcoals
- Collages
- Pencil drawings

Forms

- Drawings
- Sketches
- Political cartoons
- Portraits
- Block cartoons

Shapiro (1974) asserts the researcher needs to comprehend the convention the artist is trying to articulate when placing it into historical lens. Understanding that, all the rounds of coding were performed in a manner that attempted to ascertain the message of the artwork published in BPINS without over-complicating the intended message because the artwork was a visual literacy framed for non-readers. However, as Krippendorf (1980) explains, while artwork and symbols can enhance our understanding of visual messages they do not have a single meaning and need to be unwrapped. The intent of this content analysis was to unpack those messages through numerous rounds of coding and analysis examining the following questions:

1) Did the artwork promote a revolutionary and/or reformative stance?
2) Did the artwork follow the historical transitions of the party from early militant ideologies (1966- March 1972) to more a more community focused social movement (March 1972-1980)?
3) Did the artwork following the foundations of the 1967 10 Point Platform and Program and was there a historical shift in the art when the program was changed in 1972?

The first round of coding and analysis was to find the artist’s name. The intent of the second and third rounds of coding was to look for specific visual cues of either “Revolution”
or “Reform” and not seeing either to code as “Other”. For the fourth and fifth rounds of coding, much more time was needed to look at visual cues regarding the 10 Point Platform and Program which led to deeper examinations of the art.

While conceptual categories have been operationalized into chronological historical eras of the BPP, I employed a grounded approach looking for patterns that may not have fit into my initial framework to ensure I understand what is “going on” within the artwork (Miglianccio and Melzer 2011). A grounded approach supports the researcher in the discovery of themes and social patterns within the artwork that may not have been discussed previously within this literature. In all five rounds of the coding, MAXQDA was used to code and store the data.

To examine the historical era of the BPP, I applied LeBlanc-Ernest’s (1998) analysis of BPP who broke the SMO’s history into four eras which frame the history of the BPP logically. Furthermore, Glover (2007) explained that Douglas’s work in BPINS mirrored the historical shifts of the BPP. The art in BPINS chronicled the progression and historical development of the Party (Durant 2007). If these assertions are correct, then it would be logical to believe that the art published would follow this shift since Douglas was the BPP Minister of Culture and had final say on what was published within BPINS.

1) 1966 – 1971 Revolutionary Years

This era is by far the most discussed within the literature and seen by some as the “revolutionary” period of the BPP (Courtwright 1974; Umoja 2001). During the first two years of the BPP movement, it was primarily male-oriented, but women were attending bi-weekly meetings by February of 1967; this led to Tarika Lewis (A.K.A. Matiliba) becoming the first recognized female member of the BPP movement and she eventually took on
leadership positions within the movement (LeBlanc-Ernest 1998). Lewis would also be the first female artist of the Party. These were the radical years where many members were arrested, and violence between police and the Panthers was rampant. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale both faced criminal charges and incarceration in this period.

During these early years, Glover (2007) asserts that Emory's work was in direct response to police oppression. These early years of the BPP is when the term "pig" is frequently used to describe police in BPI NS. The work of Douglas often was framed around armed revolution, "his work revealed the causes of oppression and most importantly, encouraged the self-empowerment necessary to bring about change" (Durant 2007: 20). According to Durant (2007), there was a shift in 1968 from resistance to community/social programs, electoral politics,¹³ and coalition building. According to Durant (2007) Emory's art (and others) also shifted. Finally, Courtwright (1974) likewise suggested a shift within the rhetoric of the Party in the early 1970s.

2) 1972 – 1974 De-radicalization Years

During these years the party transformed from a nationally based "organization to a progressive locally based group influential in Oakland Bay Area politics" (LeBlanc-Ernest 1998:316). After Newton's release from prison, there was an ideological shift and internal fractioning between the BPP on the East Coast and West Coast (Lake 2006). Newton (2002) argued that globally everything is in a state of flux and therefore a framework must be employed that addresses that unrest, this was intercommunalism. In short, intercommunalism is a critique of imperialism which lay the "foundation for communism, and imperialism itself has grown to the points of reactionary intercommunalism because

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¹³ Many Panthers in the Oakland area were involved in politics and running for various offices.
the world is now integrated into one community” (i.e., “global village”) (Newton 2002: 188).

Secondly, Newton thought the Party had veered too far away from community programs. And a re-emphasis was placed on community programs (LeBlanc-Ernest 1998). A factional split emerged from this ideological shift with one side (i.e., West Coast) supporting Huey Newton’s ideas of community programs and the other side (i.e., East Coast) supporting Eldridge Cleaver’s continued call for revolution (Cary-Alvarez 2014; Lake 2006; Umoja 2001). Cleaver wanted the party focus to remain on “guerilla warfare” (LeBlanc-Ernest 1998).

Reasons for the split were numerous and included FBI’s COINTELPROs infiltration into the BPP, raids and arrests, malicious prosecutions, and assassination/killing of party members (Churchill 2001). For example, in 1969 the FBI’s efforts lead to 27 BPP members’ deaths and almost 750 arrests nationwide (Gaiter 2004). Newton would consolidate the BPP party and focus on community service programs. The programs would be renamed "survival programs." This would be primarily in the Bay Area (i.e., Oakland). Through 1974 the scope of these programs was expanded and remained the most important factor of the Party. This fractioning led to a transformation in the party’s collective identity. This era is often considered the undoing of the BPP (Lake 2006).

Finally, this is also the time, March of 1972, when the 10 Point Platform and Program was changed. The two foremost modifications were the addition of the language of “oppressed communities”. For example, Platform one in 1969 states “We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community” (Appendix A) and is altered to “the destiny of our Black and oppressed communities” (Appendix B). The second change was platform
number six. In 1966 it referred to exemption of all black men from military service and shifted in 1972 to the call for “free healthcare for Black and oppressed people”.


Seale resigns, and Newton flees to Cuba in exile in 1974. After Newton’s departure, Elaine Brown took over control of the party. Not all members of the party approved of this decision and the turmoil fostered structural changes (Brown 1992; LeBlanc-Ernest 1998). “During these years, the Party continued its earlier efforts to enhance the political empowerment of the city’s African American and poor communities” (LeBlanc-Ernest 1998: 322).

4) 1977 – 1982 Huey P. Newton Returns to Leadership

Newton returns to an organization that was unrecognizable to him (Brown 1992). Initially, Brown and Newton were going to lead the Party together, but soon there were leadership changes within the ranks due to mismanagement of funds. Even though Newton himself claimed the equality shared in the previous years would remain. After Newton returns, so does chauvinism leading many women to resign from the party. By 1980, LeBlanc-Ernest (1998) claims the membership role was down to 27 members. Additionally, the publication of BPINS also becomes very sporadic and the publication run ends in 1980.

Logically, the artwork should follow the continuity of the party through these four time periods. Through a systematic sampling technique data was collected and sampled from the artwork of BPINS. Every 6th issue of BPINS was sampled. Since the first few issues of BPINS are minimal in overall content (e.g., the very first issues is four pages), I
purposefully sampled the initial issue for data analysis and then systematically sample with a sampling interval of every 6th issue that should have resulted in a sampling ratio of .16.

However, some issues were not accessible. As Warren and Karner (2015) explain, with historical document research, the researcher needs to be flexible. So, if an issue was missing, the prior issue was chosen (assuming it was available) or the one closest in sequence. Some of the other sampling problems encountered were that the volume number and issue numbers were not consistent early in the run of BPINS. For example, in 1968 there were two volume nines and no volume ten. Most of these issues were due to typos in BPINS (e.g., the publisher forgetting to change the volume or number for the next issue).

Additionally, toward the end (i.e., 1977-80) the volumes and issue numbers became rather sporadic and it sometimes became difficult to determine the appropriate volume to sample. For example, as the run slows and is not published weekly, the dates for the issues cover weeks. A normal issue will have a date such as 18 April 1970 volume 4, number 20. In the latter years it would become 15-28 July 1978 volume 18, number 18. The next issues would be listed as volume 18 number 20. During the later years (1978 – 1980) of publication, it is likely BPINS had such a small published run, the issues were just not obtainable through either source used for data collection. This resulted in some oversampling, producing a sample size of 97 issues out of 53714 making the sampling ratio .18.

14 While there were 537 issues, one of them was a special edition with no art or articles. It only contained BPP names, their criminal charges, and court outcomes. This information comprised the entire issue and therefore the previous issue was sampled.
While a random sampling technique could have been utilized for data analysis, it could lead to the oversampling of particular eras or years within the data. Since the number of publications per year varied along with the amount of art published annually, this method offers more consistency. Babbie (2001) claims that the empirical results from systematic sampling are almost identical to the results of random sampling; therefore, this approach was the most logical for analysis. After examining every issue twice, all images that appeared as art were collected and that produced 313 works of art (see Table 2). For collection purposes, the entire page was copied, not just the artwork itself.

Table 2 – Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># of issues examined</th>
<th>Number of images collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MAXQDA is a software package for qualitative and mixed methods research. MAXQDA lets the author collect, organize, and analyze the data (VERBI Gmbh 2018). It can be used for the visual analysis of the artwork. All 313 images were categorized by year, number, and volume initially. The first analysis was to go through every work of art and
determine the artist’s name if possible. This resulted in a count of at least 50 artists (Appendix C)

**First Coding**

The first analysis (Appendix C) of art was to determine the artist’s name (if possible) and to tally the number of artists and works of art. There were numerous pieces of art submitted to *BPINS* that were either not legible (n=26) or without a signature (n=83). Many of the artist’s names were not fully readable but their initials or partial parts the names were readable enough to categorize and create a code. The BPP Minister of Culture, Emory Douglas, was the most published artist with 87 submissions that accounted for an approximate 27% of the works throughout the 13-year run. For analysis, the data was then put into a code matrix browser which is a visual tool in MAXQDA to show what year(s) each artist published works in *BPINS* (Appendix F).

**Second Coding**

The second coding was to address the first research question coding the art into three coded sets either framing the work into categories as “Revolution”, “Reform,” or “Other”. This round of coding resulted in 341 codes of the 313 images that broke down to 119 images that were coded ”Revolution”, 111 works of art were coded ”Reform” and 111 were coded as “Other”. Some of these images were double coded, but no work was coded with all three codes.

**Third Coding**

The third analysis was to verify the three previous themes and then to further classify the artwork into subsets. Since coding must be completely unambiguous (Rose 2016),
these three codes were then broken down into 13 subsets. The number next to each was the number of codes attributed to each subset.

1. Revolution (n=119 or 34.8%)

Images that were initially coded “Revolution” were usually works of art that had a weapon, displayed resistance to the state or imperialism, or showed some form of revolutionary sentiment (see Figure 1). They eventually were coded into four subsets:

   a. Call to arms and revolution – BPP (n=54)
   b. Killing the police (n=41)
   c. International calls to arms and revolution (e.g., resistance in other parts of the world) (n=18)
   d. Call to arms – non BPP (n=6)

\[Figure 1^{15} – Revolution\]

\[^{15}\text{Taken from BPINS 1967 Volume 1 Number 5, page 10}\]
2. **Reform (n=111 or 32.6%)**

Images that were coded “Reform” were works of art that displayed one of the following four themes (see Figure 2 for example):

a. Criminal justice issue and reform (n=44)
b. Community issue and reform (n=35)
c. Political issues and reform (n=17)
d. Educational issues and reform (n=11)
e. International reform (n=4)

![Figure 2](image)

*Figure 2* – Reform

3. **Other (n=111 or 32.6%)**

Images coded as “Other” did not overtly display either revolutionary or reformative themes. Most were political cartoons similar to what someone might find in the mainstream Press like the *New York Times* or *Baltimore Sun* (See Figure 3 for example).

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16 Taken from *BPINS 1968 Volume 2 Number 3 page 4*
The category of miscellaneous were some art such as a doodle or a wish for “happy holidays.”

a. Political cartoons – non BPP (n=66)
b. Portraits or images of people (n=19)
c. Other/miscellaneous (n=17) (e.g., some art for example is nothing more than a doodle or a wish for “happy holidays”)
d. War (n=8)

Fourth and Fifth Coding Rounds

The fourth coding was to address the second and third research questions through an examination of the 10 Point Platform and Program (See Table 3). A significant portion of the literature discusses the revolutionary stance of the Panthers and fails to examine the Party’s reformative years (e.g., after 1972). All the artwork was examined through 11 codes corresponding to the 10 Point Platform and Program and an “Other” category. Additionally, the artwork from 1967 through April 13, 1972 was coded with the first 10

Figure 3\textsuperscript{17} – Other

\textsuperscript{17} Taken from BPINS 1977 Volume 16 Number10 page 2
Point Platform and Program (Appendix A) and the artwork after that date were coded with the second 10 Point Platform and Program (Appendix B). The fifth round was to double check the coding schema reexamining all 313 images to ensure they were coded and entered into MAXQDA. Within each section is listed the number of codes. It should be noted that coding for the 10 Point Platform and Program resulted in 595 sub-codes. The codes were labeled in order to reference each of the 10 Point Platform and Programs (Appendix E).

Table 3 – 10 Point Platform and Program Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ten Points</th>
<th>1966 Themes (n = 362)</th>
<th>March 29, 1972 Themes (n = 233)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Self-determination (n=100 or 27.9%)</td>
<td>Self-determination (n=45 or 19.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Full employment (n=16 or 4.4%)</td>
<td>Full employment (n=13 or 5.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Reparation (n=13 or 3.6%)</td>
<td>Reparation (n=2 or .9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Good housing (n=13 or 3.6%)</td>
<td>Good housing (n=6 or 2.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Education (n=11 or 3%)</td>
<td>Education (n=6 or 2.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Military exemption (n=8 or 2.2%)</td>
<td>Free healthcare (n=6 or 2.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Police/self defense (n=91 or 25.3%)</td>
<td>Police/self defense (n=15 or 6.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Freedom CJ (n=41 or 11.6%)</td>
<td>Freedom CJ (n=21 or 9.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Jury of peers/fair trial (n=12 or 3.3%)</td>
<td>Jury peers/fair trial (n=4 or 1.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Land, bread,...justice, and peace (n=34 or 9.4%)</td>
<td>Land, bread,...justice and peace (n=52 or 22.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Other (n=21 or 5.8%)</td>
<td>Other (n=63 or 27%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A similar approach was utilized to categorize the art within the *10 Point Platform and Program*. For example, Figure 1 was coded as “Self-determination” and “Police/self-defense,” Figure 2 was coded “Freedom CJ,” and, Figure 3 was coded as “Other” because it was a political cartoon.

**Credibility/Validity**

In broad terms, validity denotes the integrity and application of the method(s) utilized and “whether the researchers in fact see what they think they see” (Flick 2014: 483). Patton (2002) argues that credibility hinges partially on the integrity of the researcher(s). Additionally, Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) suggest that a researcher should clarify up front the biases they may have regarding the research and data analysis. Therefore, as a researcher, I had to continuously monitor my subjective perspectives while coding the data. As much as possible, I had to objectively interpret how the data was communicated to me as well the context (i.e. background) of that data (Krippendorf 1980). While the validation of artwork cannot be assessed with certainty, Flick (2014) explains they should be evaluated on the basis of plausibility or acceptability. The intent with examination and coding therefore was framed through the literature which often suggested that BPP artwork was the visual literacy meant for uncomplicated interpretation by an imagined community.

To evaluate the trustworthiness of the analyzed art and concern for descriptive validity (i.e., the factual accuracy) the artwork was examined numerous times to ensure accuracy. According to Rose (2016: 95) coding must “depend on the theorized connection between the image and broader cultural context in which the meaning is made.” This suggests the use of the *10 Point Platform and Program* along with additionally secondary
sources enhance validity. All three research questions were theorized and framed from the literature. Furthermore, examining the data five separate times meant there was prolonged engagement with the data adding to the validity and credibility (Flicks 2014).

Reliability/Dependability

Janis, Faudner, and Janowitz (1943) explain that reliability factors on the issue of whether differing researchers have shared meaning of the content analyzed. Ideally, researchers applying the same techniques would have similar results; coding needs to be replicable (Krippendorf 1980). Being a single researcher, I needed to ensure I was systematic in operationalization and the precisions of my codes (i.e., definitions of my categories and their application). Coding needs to be completely unambiguous for the research to be replicable (Rose 2016). I tried to be as precise as possible with how my codes were defined. Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) suggest some techniques that help with dependability (i.e., reliability) include providing an audit trail and establishing inter-rater reliability. Since the majority of the data is available via Alexander Street Press, there is an audit trail where other researchers can review the data. Secondly, after initially coding a sample of 40 works of art (through the second and fourth rounds of coding), I asked a colleague to code to check the consistency of my coding method. To ensure rigor, the use of MAXQDA was implemented, making the coding process more replicable. Before coding, I explained to my colleague the intent of the artwork as a visual literacy and Brewer’s (1970) assertion that the art was to educate through the dissemination of artwork for a non-reading community.

As a result, after coding round two “Revolution,” “Reform,” and “Other” and their analysis, our coding was fairly accurate (92.5%). We were in disagreement over three
images. My colleague had coded them in the “Other” category and I had coded them in “Reform” category. Their familiarity with the art and history of the BPP was the reason for the difference and no definitive coding adjustments were made for the third round of coding.

Next after coding round four referencing the 10 Point Platform and Program, we agreed on most codes (83%). The 7 images we coded differently were a result of 4 images not being double coded (which I did and they did not) and 3 we interpreted differently. Our disagreement stemmed from familiarity with the art and how we had interpreted 3 of the political cartoons. Through further discussion with my colleague, it was suggested to sub-code the “Other” category for the 1972 10 Point Platform and Program because it comprised 27% of the codes for that analysis. That led to four additional coded categories referencing Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, internal spying, and people of color internationally.

**Transferability**

Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) explain that providing detailed information about the background and context of the research will provide elements of a shared experience. By offering the reader this background information, it allows them to use their sociological imagination in understanding the history and biography of the BPP. Ideally, providing the historical background as to why the BPP formed and an explanation of the Party's historical eras offer the reader a starting point for the understanding of data analysis. Secondly, a discussion regarding the importance of the Press narrowly focuses the reasons and logic of data analysis.
Significance of the Research

Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) suggest the importance of how initial choices are made for the overall study design. I chose this particular research design because of the numerous claims asserting the importance of the art of the BPP (Durant 2007). Secondly, there has been no sociological analysis of BPP art beyond discussions of gender politics. I believe the importance of the artwork goes beyond the primary works of Emory Douglas and investigation is needed. Furthermore, the reason for studying the full era of BPINS publication is because of the limited research of BPINS in general terms and the total lack of examination of the latter years of the publication.
CHAPTER VII
ANALYSIS

The data sampled from BPINS constitutes 313 works of art from over 50 artists spanning a thirteen year period. There were a total of 595 (Appendix E) codes in reference to the 10 Point Platform and Program and 341 codes for “Revolution,” “Reform,” and “Other” (Appendix D). The data was saved and stored electronically, then entered into MAXQDA a qualitative software program designed to analyze data such as text, videos, and images. Using MAXQDA, the data was coded and analyzed in reference to the research questions posed investigating trends, patterns, and themes in BPP artwork. The visual tools of MAXQDA allowed the examination of frequencies and relations among codes for the 13-years of artwork published within BPINS.

From Revolution to Reform: Four Historical Shifts

The first purpose of this research was an examination of the artwork in BPINS to analyze the framing of the BPP’s revolutionary and/or reformative stance(s) in the artwork. This resulted in three main codes (“Revolution,” “Reform,” and “Other”), along with 13 sub-codes (Appendix D). From the first pass of coding the 313 works of art, there were a total of 341 codes quite evenly distributed across the three major codes: “Revolution” (n=119 or 34.9%), “Reform” (n=111 or 32.6%), and “Other” (n=111 or 32.6%).

The second pass (i.e., third round) in the coding was to determine the sub-codes that saturated the data, and this round of coding to then place the art into the sub-codes. Following, for each major code, was a list of the sub-codes, and how many of each there were in the sample. A summary is given for each example to explain the operationalization
of the coding schema. Additionally, some of the codes overlapped resulting with a total of 341 codes for the 313 images:

**Revolution (n=119 or 34.8%)**

1) "Call to arms and revolution – BPP" (n=54 or 45.4%)

These works were typically depiction of a call to arms, with men, women and/or children brandishing guns or those that were anti-state, anti-capitalism, or anti-imperialism. Of the 54 images coded, 40 (74%) of them contained guns within the imagery.

2) "Killing the police" (n=41 or 34.5%)

These images specifically depicted violence against the police and state, frequently with images of people shooting the police.

3) "International calls to arms and revolution" (n=18 or 15.1%)

This was artwork focused on the international community such as African nations, Cuba, and Vietnam.

4) "Calls to arms and revolution – non BPP" (n=6 or 5.0%)

These images were calls to arms for other SMOs (e.g., American Indian Movement)

**Reform (n=111 or 32.6%)**

1) Criminal justice issues and reform (n=44 or 39.6%)

These works focus on institutional racism within the criminal justice system.

Secondly, many images address the incarcerations of Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale (in the early 1970s).

2) Community issues and reform (n=35 or 31.5%)

These were typically illustrations referencing survival, poverty, health, and hunger.
3) Political issues and reform (n=17 or 15.3%)

The common thread within these images was either endorsements for someone running for political office within the Oakland community or reminders for people to get out and vote.

4) Educational issues and reform (n=11 or 9.8%)

These works pertained to education and/or the poor conditions of urban school systems.

5) International reform (4 or 3.6%)

These images pertain to international reform and international rights.

Other (n=111 or 32.6):

1) Political cartoons (n=67 or 60.4%)

The themes within political cartoon focused on U.S. presidents and their administrations, most often, Nixon, Carter, and Ford. There were also many that focused on the local politics of Oakland California. However, there were a myriad of cartoons that varied depending on the year and political issues within those particular historical moments.

2) Portraits or images of people (n=19 or 17.1%)

These works varied from images of BPP members to other images and drawings of people.

3) Other/miscellaneous (n=17 or 15.3%)

This works were a variety of random images, including many that just did not fit anywhere into the coding schema.

4) War (n=8 or 7.2%)
These images pertained to warfare and nuclear weapons (e.g., Atom bomb).

It is evident there was a relative balance among the three main codes within the artwork published. However, when broken down into the 13 sub-codes, it is possible to identify some interesting patterns. For example, in reference to the codes “Revolution” and “Killing the police,” these images completely disappeared in 1971, consistent with the ideological shift that occurred in the 10 Point Platform and Program. Similarly, images coded "Call to arms and revolution – BPP" end in 1974. The remaining two sub-sets, “International calls to arms and revolution” and “Calls to arms and revolution – non BPP”, ebb and flow through the years of 1968 to 1978. After 1978, there is simply no artwork that was coded "Revolution." Overall, the years from 1967 through 1971 contain the volume of the art coded "Revolution" with 103 of the 119 (87%) images in those years.

The second major code “Reform” and three of its five sub-codes, “Criminal justice issues and reform,” “Community issues and reform,” and “Political issues and reform” were more consistent throughout the publication run of BPINS from 1969 through 1976 with over 93% spread more or less evenly throughout the eight year period. The 79 sub-codes of “Criminal justice issues and reform” and “Community issues and reform” accounted for the bulk (71%) of the sub-codes. The sub-codes "Political issues and reform" and "Educational issues and reform" appeared more inconsistently from 1969 to 1976. After 1977, none of those codes appeared within the art published.

Finally, for images that were coded as "Other," there was one main sub-code; it was the sub-code of "Political cartoons" which appeared with consistency from 1973 through 1979 with 55 works coded out of 67 (82.3%). However, there was a notable transition within them. In contrast to the early years when many political cartoons were produced by
BPP members or unknown artists, during the latter years of publication, the cartoons were often from mainstream professional cartoonists. The subset of “Portraits” was also consistently produced within BPINS for ten years, from 1968 through 1978.

The final years of BPINS, 1978-1980, were both sporadic in their publication and in the use of art within the issues that were published. Indeed, the “weekly” publication of BPINS became intermittent, with gaps in publication periods over weeks. The number of works of art published for those final three years totals 17. No patterns emerged during those years other than political cartoons which comprised 9 of the 17 works (53%).

Analysis: 10 Point Platform and Program

The second purpose of this research inquiry was whether the artworks framed and followed the foundations of the 1966 10 Point Platform and Program (Appendix A), also if there was a commensurate historical shift in the imagery when the program was amended in March 1972. Substantial discussion concerning the artwork by Emory Douglas was that it was primarily framed and references the 10 Point Platform and Program (see Gaiter 2012; Gaiter 2007; and Gaiter 2004). However, since there were numerous other contributing artists (over 50) represented in BPINS (Appendix F), this part of the analysis investigated if the artwork submitted reflected and framed the 10 Point Platform and Program. Secondly in the analysis, was to investigate if there was a transition within in 1972 10 Point Platform and Program.

Additionally, other issues remain to be examined. For example, was any emphasis in the art on particular program points? Did the artworks overlap and/or combine program points? Were certain program points more prominently displayed in particular eras? To investigate these questions, each of the two versions of the 10 Point Platform and
Program (1966 and 1972) were represented by 11 sub-codes, once for each point of the platform and an “Other” category.

While the operationalizing of the major codes was straightforward using the 11 sub-codes, interpretation of the artwork was performed through linking the main themes from the critical visual cues within the artworks themselves. Since the program points are relatively complex, significant portions of the art could arguably have been sub-coded with more themes. However, emphasis was placed on the primary message(s) within the imagery. Many of the works of art had overlapping codes. For example, art coded in reference to self-determination (i.e., Program Point 1 in both versions of the program) oftentimes related to self-defense (Program Point 7). Since the artwork was the visual literacy, coding therefore focused on the key visual cues and most prevalent theme(s).

The 1966 10 Point Platform and Program (1967 through March 1972) was comprised of 32 publications, and contained 159 of the sampled works of art published in BPINS (approximately 50% of the sample). Those works resulted in a total of 362 coded works pertaining to the 11 sub-codes (Appendix E), there were two prevalent themes starting in 1967 and running through 1971, Program Point 1 (Self-determination) and Program Point 7 (Police/self-defense) total 192 codes out of a total 362 codes. These two program points encompassed 53% of the images during the four-year span. In 1970, the representation of these two themes peaked, totaling just over 69% of the images published. The next two themes most often published from 1967 through 1971, Program Point 8 (Freedom CJ) and Program Point 10 (Land, bread,... justice, and peace). They represented just over 20% (n=76). The remaining six Program Points were represented by approximately 3-5% of the artwork annually between the years 1967 through 1971.
Following the release of the 1972 *10 Point Platform and Program*, there were a total of 65 publications and 154 works sampled from March 1972 through 1980. It is evident from the year prior (i.e., 1971) there was transference in the framing of the artwork within *BPINS*. Within those 154 works of art, there were a total of 233 codes applied to the 11 sub-codes of the *10 Point Platform and Program* and sub-code “Other” (Appendix E). From the remainder of 1971 through the end of 1972, art publication rates drop off substantially (See Table 2). From 1967 through March 1972 there was an average of just under 5 works of art per issue and the average was over six for the years 1967 – 1971. Starting March 29th of 1972 through 1980 the average was 2.4 per issues.

Within the analysis of these subsets, the focus of Platform Point 1 (Self-determination) and Platform Point 10 (Land, bread,... justice, and peace) often overlapped in the coding (n=97 or 41%). The next code most prevalent was Platform Point 8 “Freedom CJ” (n=21) accounting for 9% of the art. Those three points accounted for 118 of the 233 codes (over 50%) within the 154 works of art, although it should be noted that the codes often overlapped. Importantly, however, the single sub-code that appeared the most was “Other,” which accounted for approximately 27% (n=63) of the coded artwork published during those years. The majority of these artworks were frequently political cartoons.

Since the “Other” sub-code was such a large proportion of the overall coded art in this time period (n=63), a sixth round of coding was performed on that category. The result was four themes (n=40 or 63%) that referred to President Richard Nixon (n=18), President Jimmy Carter (n=9), international people of color (n=9), and domestic spying (n=4). The remaining 23 “Other” codes were various random works that did not apply to any themes.
The Four Eras of the Black Panther Party

After four rounds of coding, it was then possible to explore the data in more depth concerning LeBlanc-Ernest’s (1998) four historical eras of the BPP. From the initial analysis, examining Revolution versus Reform and then comparing the 10 Point Platform and Programs, there are clear indications of the historical shifts that LeBlanc-Ernest (1998) discussed in her research. Since LeBlanc-Ernest's (1998) years regarding the eras overlapped in the writing, four eras for analysis were broken down as follows: 1967 – 1970, 1971 – 1973, 1974 – 1977, and 1978 – 1980. While the first era in LeBlanc-Ernest's (1998) discussion was until 1971, it seemed a logical and balanced approach as to not limit the second era to only two years of analysis.

The artwork that was coded between the years of 1967 and 1970 was often framed images of "Revolution." There were 21 issues of BPINS examined with 130 works of art; this was an average of over six images per issue. The coding and analysis provided a clear indication that “Revolution” was the primary theme throughout this era. In reference to the artists who published works during this era, there were at least 27 contributing artists and a small number of unsigned works (n=19). Emory Douglas was the primary artist for 53 of these works.

The second shift, 1971 through 1973, the total art that was coded was a sample of 62 works. Out of the 27 issues of BPINS, there was just over an average of two images published per issue. Starting with the time period between 1971 and 1973, the framing transitions and was less radical. For example, there was a transition within the art and images related to the police who were almost always displayed as pigs. Similarly, the term "pig" literally disappeared from the artwork in 1971. As Leblanc-Ernest (1998) suggested,
there was a de-radicalization in the early 1970s, and this is also indicative in the works of art published. The theme of “Revolution” becomes finite as the framing of “Reform” appeared more often. Moreover, the total number of published works decrease significantly and there was also a decrease in the number of contributing artists. The number of artist during this three year period drop to a total of 12. Even though there is one less year in this period versus the first era, the decrease was about 1/3 of contributing artists. Emory Douglas accounted for 22 of the submissions.

From 1974 through 1977 when Elaine Brown assumed leadership in the BPP, the volume and number of art published increased, although it did not reach first era publishing rates. There were 37 issues published in those four years with a sample of 103 (or 2.8 works per issues). The number of works published and the number of artists represented more than doubled from the last era to this period. There was also a stylistic transition within the newspaper itself, and political cartoons account for a significant portion. While political cartoons were common for the full run of BPINS, many of those published during this particular era were by artists who would be considered professional political cartoonists. Gary Trudeau, the cartoonist of Doonesbury, is one example. The number of artist published spikes back up with at least 25 artists over this four year period. Interestingly, the number of unsigned works is almost 40% of the images published (n=41).

During this same period, another noticeable stylistic transition occurred, not in relation to art, was that the paper became more routinized. Page two became the editorial page as well as the location where political cartoons would be published. BPINS also appeared much less “radical” and more commonplace with its formatting and placement of
the various sections (e.g., Sports Section). Additionally, there were now advertisements that told the readers what stores sold BPINS.

From 1977 through 1980 the paper was erratically circulated. The nature of the artwork remained about the same but fewer artists were published. Only 12 of BPINS were examined with a sample size of 18 works of art (or 1.5 per issue). From a researcher's perspective, it was apparent BPINS was in decline. There were calls for readers of BPINS to "caption" a cartoon and submit it for prize money. This call for submissions suggests there were fewer submissions from the readership. Finally, there were only a few artists within this era and the unsigned pieces remained about 40%. The paper became so erratic the final two years, systematic sampling became very problematic and it was more a combination of purposeful and systematic sampling.
CHAPTER VIII

RESULTS

From Revolution to Reform: A Re-Framing of Black Panther Party Principles through the Party’s Historical Shift

The art of *BPINS* was transformative in the framing of political thought throughout its 13-year publication cycle. First, the majority of the artworks examined did accentuate themes of revolution, reform, or both. However, there was a more robust framing on revolution (i.e., call to action) and self-defense during the early years (1967 – 1971) followed by a clear shift in framing toward reform and community as the collective identity of the party changed (1972 – 1980). Within this transference, there was also a shift in the number and character of the works that were published.

Secondly, the art did follow the framework of the 1966 *10 Point Platform and Program* and the historical changes that occurred in March of 1972 leading to the modified and reissued *10 Point Platform and Program*. It does appear, moreover, that the art followed the *10 Point Platform and Program* more purposefully in the early years of the publication than the latter years.

As the BPP went through four historical shifts, the number of published works declined and so did the association between the art and the *10 Point Platform and Program*. Indeed, by the third and fourth historical shifts, the artwork became more normative, and less revolutionary or reformative. Oftentimes, this was the result of republishing cartoons from conventional political cartoonists.

Analysis of the BPP’s artwork in *BPINS* undoubtedly demonstrates a transformation similar to LeBlanc-Ernest’s (1998) historical periods of the BPP. It also relates to Courtwright’s (1974) discussion regarding the transformation of Panther rhetoric in the
early 1970s. There was a clear transition within the artwork published. From the years 1967 through 1972 there were 104 images out of 192 (or 54%) total coded as “Revolution.” The most common theme during those years was one of “Call to arms revolution.” The majority of images were with Panthers wielding weapons; most often guns (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

Figure 4 is a clear example of how the artwork was framed to promote self-defense among the people (i.e., lumpen).

The second most noticeable theme was imagery depicting violence to the police and/or the state (see Figure 5). While there were many contributing artists, Emory Douglas was the most prominent of the artists whose art was published. These two

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18 Taken from BPINS 1971 Volume 5 Number 27 page E
themes (of the four coded as “Revolution”) accounted for almost 90% of the images. Within the total of 13 codes, they accounted for 48% of all the coded works in those years. However, in 1971, those forms of artwork disappear from BPINS with nothing in 1972 coded as “Revolution.” Indeed, as the rhetoric of BPINS changed so did the imagery of “pigs” or killing police (see Figure 5) completely disappeared from the imagery and the vernacular within the artwork. The philosophy and framing processes of the BPP were strikingly altered.

![Image]

Figure 5\(^{19}\) – Violence to the Police

The remainder of artwork that was coded as “Revolution” was sparse accounting for only 15 of the total images between the years 1973-1980. The few images that were coded as “Revolution” dealt more with international issues and other SMOs. Indeed, only two of the 15 framed a “Call to arms revolution” pertained to the Panthers. After mid-1971 the

\(^{19}\) Taken from BPINS 1968 Volume 2 Number 3 page 12
frame shifted completely to “Reform” and the motivational frame shifted the call to action to more normative behaviors such as reminding people to go out and vote.

The year 1972 did have the most coded images under “Reform” (n=20 or 91%) (see Figure 6)\textsuperscript{20}. However, from 1973 through 1980 the artworks that were coded as “Reform” fell primarily into the context of the three codes, “Criminal justice issues,” “Community Reform,” and “Political reform.” “Educational issues” and “International reform” became less routine during those 7 years. Political cartoons, sub-coded under “Other,” became one of the more common artwork published in BPINS. Out of 149 images, “Political cartoons” account for 67 (45%) of the works.

The percentage of political cartoons counters the idea of Gaiter (2012) and Durant (2007) that BPP art was seemingly always revolutionary. In fact, it was sometimes routine or mainstream art drawn by known political cartoonists. There was, in fact, a noticeable conversion within BPINS as the contributions of original art lessened in subsequent issues and instead were collected or taken from other sources such as the Baltimore Sun and republished in BPINS. There was even less of the three core framing tasks and more political banter. For example, considerable artwork focused on the Nixon and Carter administrations.

After 1972, the two most noticeable themes coded under “Reform” “Criminal justice issues” (n=16) and “Community reform” (n=13) only accounted for just over 19% of the work. In total, there were 47 images (31%) coded as “Reform.” This would indicate that the restructuring of the 10 Point Platform and Program in 1972 was not parallel with a shift in the artwork. While it did change from a revolutionary stance in 1971 and took a strong

\textsuperscript{20} It should be noted some of these pictures originally had some color or might have been in color but due to acquiring them through microfilm, they were only black and white.
reformative shift in 1972, from 1973-1980, the majority of artwork for that era was under the code “Other.”

Figure 621 – CJ and Community Reform

21 Taken from BPINS 1973 Volume 10 Number 2 page 24
After 1972, there was clearly images of art that were reformatory, they were just overshadowed by political cartoons, especially from 1974-1977. While these images could arguably have been coded as “Political reform,” they did not have the visual cues like other images that were coded as such. For example, “Political reform” codes were often due to visual cues such as promoting a local candidate (e.g., in Oakland) for office, or reminding people to vote.

There was a restructuring of the Party when Elaine Brown took over in 1974. Similarly, the artwork did increase during this era. Additionally, the paper became more routinized, with an editorial page and a political cartoon published weekly. That was the historical moment when Nixon was impeached and a large portion of the political cartoons focused on that issue.

Analysis clearly indicates that there was a historical shift within *BPINS* away from revolutionary art, but not completely to reformatory. The first five years of the publication demonstrate Newton and Seale’s goal for action and self-defense, and it was clearly framed in the images of revolutionary art. These illustrations commonly depicted armed militant Black Panthers. Submission rates of art were also at their peak which supports Becker’s (1974) assertions about the communal importance of art – “art is social”. The revolutionary art framed the “community.” It was images of African American men, women, and even children “picking up the gun”, attacking the police, or defending themselves against police. The art was framing and fostering a black revolutionary consciousness through an imagined community. However, those “revolutionary years” took a toll on the BPP as a whole. Death and incarceration would steer the party in a new direction, one of community, intercommunalism, and reform.
While some authors previously made the suggestion the BPP was revolutionary past 1971, the artwork’s diagnostic framing does not supports that position. Almost every revolutionary element was gone from the artworks. Secondly, the visual imagery of the “pig” disappeared (see Figure 5) and any graphics of police were normal images (see Figure 6). The data support the conclusion that the reasons for the shift in focus are logical, probably due to the effectiveness of law enforcement and the drove of BPP member arrests.

In addition, when Newton was released from incarceration he expressed an ideological shift to intercommunalism. However, this shift was not well received, many BPP members and those that wanted to remain revolutionary left the Party. Consequently, the focus and framing for new recruits shifted.

**The 10 Point Platform and Program**

The BPP’s aims were clearly stated in the 1966 *10 Point Platform and Program* and then reframed in the 1972 *Point Platform and Program*. Moreover, it was almost always published somewhere within the pages of *BPINS* throughout its 13-year run (Abu-Jamal 2004; Newton 2007). Since one of the primary goals of *BPINS* was framing party ideology through writing and art, it was the embodiment of the BPP (Hilliard 2007). There have been many assertions that Emory Douglas’s primary purpose of the artwork within *BPINS* was to frame the *10 Point Platform and Program* (Gaiter 2012; Durant 2007).

Unfortunately, this emphasis on Douglas has been a limitation within the literature in reference to the BAM as a whole, the BPP itself and to *BPINS* “revolutionary” art. Because of the focus on Douglas, attention has not extended beyond him to analyze other Panther art nor has investigation pushed past the early years of the BPP.
Analysis of themes for the years between 1967 and 1971 demonstrated that the 10 Point Platform and Program was clearly a primary focus within the art. In fact, from 1968 through 1971 all 10 Points were coded with some regularity. As previously mentioned, the two most common coded themes were one and seven (see Figures 1 and 4), but all themes were covered consistently throughout the four years. Additionally, 29 of the 50 artists from the sample contributed during those years, further indicating that the framing of art in reference to party philosophy was vital. Secondly, as Rhodes (2007) explained how BPINS promoted an imagined community, the data indicate that with so many submissions of art and the substantial number of artists, the art of BPINS was also fostering an imagined community. The membership numbers and publication rates were strong. By all indications, the Panthers had successfully framed their movement and created an imagined political community. Additionally, while the literature suggests Douglas’s art was significant in the early years, the contributions that fostered a strong communal and revolutionary ideology completely transitioned in 1971, and there was no more “picking up the gun”!

Starting in 1972 (see Table 2) the narrative and visual discourse was transformed, and it was a year where the number of artists and the artworks were minimal. Art was just not commonplace in BPINS that year. There were only four artists within the sample for that year, with the majority of the work’s belonging to Douglas and printed on the last page of BPINS. Regarding the sparse usage of art in 1972, it is likely that it was due to the party split and transition. Additionally, the last issue with an image of weapons in reference to the BPP or BPP members was from an issue in January of that year. In the next six issues
weapons all but disappear unless the imagery referenced other SMOs in the United States or an international issue such as the Vietnam War.

In 1972’s *10 Point Platform and Program* there is a transition within the art published. Starting in 1973, the three dominant themes in *BPINS* were Point one (see Figure 6), Point eight (see Figure 6), and Point ten (see Figure 7). Moreover, the focus on Point ten regarding “Land, bread, ...justice and peace” was a more prominently coded theme representing about 20% of the material from 1973 through 1980. The subset that was coded the most was “other”, which accounted for over 1/3 of the artwork published during those years. The majority of this art was political cartoons (see Figure 3) and other artwork that did not fit within the ten points (e.g., doodles, portraits, and others).

![Image](image.png)

*Figure 7* – *Education and Justice*

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22 Taken from *BPINS* Volume 15 Number 10 Page 2
While the artwork published consistently touched on each element of the *10 Point Platform and Program* in the early years (1968 – 1971), the transition of the BPP in 1972 led to only one year where all ten points of the program were coded. This appears due to the shifting framework and diminished publishing of the artwork in *BPINS*. Secondly, there were fewer submissions from artists during 1972 – 1980. For example, in 1976 and 1977 there were 42 works of art sampled but only nine artists and four of those were mainstream political cartoonists (e.g. Oliver Harrington). A total of 21 were unsigned, and 3 the authors were illegible. It is interesting that unsigned works were not common until 1974. While there was a number of unsigned works in the earlier years the percentages were much smaller. This suggests that the unsigned works in the latter years were gathered from other sources. For example, there are unsigned political cartoons that look as if they are “mainstream” or as something you would see in the editorial section of a standard newspaper (see Figure 8). A second argument for fewer submissions in the final years is because *BPINS* was having reader’s contests (see Figure 9). An image with the words “caption this” image was found twice in *BPINS* final three years of publication. These two points – political cartoons and reader’s contests – suggest that submissions to *BPINS* were reduced in those final years.

**The Black Panther Party in Transition: Four Historical Shifts**

The first of the historical periods was 1967 – 1971 (Ernest-LeBlanc 1998). The artwork coded and evaluated during those years most often related to three key elements of “self-determination” (i.e., Point one of the *10 Point Platform and Program*) (Appendix E), “Call to arms revolution” and “Killing the police” (Appendix D). This supports Glover’s (2007) assertions that Douglas’s work was in direct response to police oppression.
Figure 8\textsuperscript{23} – Political Cartoon

Figure 9\textsuperscript{24} – Reader’s Contest

\textsuperscript{23} Taken from 1976 BPINS Volume 14 Number 21 page 2
While Glover’s (2007) claim was specifically in reference to Douglas’s art, it is important to underscore the fact that Douglas supervised and approved all works submitted by the artists in *BPINS*.

However, Durant’s (2007: 21) claims that the party shifted in 1968 from “armed resistance toward the development of social programs, electoral politics, and international coalition building” is not supported by the art that was published. If anything, in 1970, the revolutionary artwork ramped up within *BPINS*. Later in his discussion, Durant (2007) does suggest that Douglas’s work shifts as the party transitioned and that is supported. However, in no way does the artwork support the earlier assertion.

The second of these historical periods was between the years 1971 – 1973. Concerning 1971 and 1972 the shift in the published artwork coincided with the BPP philosophical transition from nationalism to intercommunalism and the modification of the *10 Point Platform and Program*. There was a distinct conversion in the framing of the police (and State) from images of “pigs” (See Figure 5 and Figure 6) within the artwork. Secondly, the framing of “picking up the gun” and “self-defense” also vanished from the illustrations.

During the years of 1971 through 1973, the work becomes less radical, and the total number of published works decreases significantly along with the number of artists represented. In fact, for the initial summary analysis of 1972 there were 53 issues of the *BPINS* (see Table 2), the most of any year during the 13-year run, but only 64 images were within the nine issues that were eventually sampled, resulting in an average of less than two images per issue. This was a transitory year for the BPP and framing of party values.

24 Taken from 1978 *BPINS* Volume 18 Number 4 page 25
Indeed, the data indicates that the literature is accurate that this was a historical shift, both within the leadership and rank-and-file membership.

There are numerous reasons for the Party’s transition. Certainly the East and West Coast split within the party was a significant reason for the ideological shift. In addition, the death and incarceration of both leadership and rank-and-file members created a necessity for change. COINTELPRO’s desire to disrupt the BPP impacted the Party in at least two ways – a loss of revenue and the influence of the press. As Seguin (2016) explains, distorted frames and bias impact the political environment and draw opponents into action. Once the movement drew national attention (in 1968), it remained in the government’s cross hairs affording the BPP less political opportunity and resources.

The third historical period was from 1974 – 1977. In 1974 when Elaine Brown assumed leadership of the BPP, the number of images of art again increased. While the artwork within BPINS never grew back to the frequency exhibited in the early years, they did become more prevalent than the previous era of 1971 – 1973. Both the works published and the number of artists more than doubled from 1972. There was also a transition within the format of the newspaper itself. The framework of art becomes less focused on reform, but, political cartoons and other forms of art account for a large portion of the published works within this era.

While political style cartoons were normal for the full 13-year publication run of BPINS, many of the cartoons published during this era were from professional political cartoonists. Gary Trudeau, the cartoonist of Doonesbury, is one such example out of many within the pages of BPINS. It should also be noted that Panther artists were often contributors to the editorial page with their political cartoons as well. In fact, the editorial
page (routinely page two of the paper) became the norm, with a political cartoon published regularly.

It was obvious that within this era (1974-1977) the paper became more routinized. While the examination of the paper itself was not part of the data analysis, from a grounded approach it became apparent as every page of the sampled issues of *BPINS* was reviewed. How the paper appeared to readers also became less “radical”. In the early years of *BPINS*, the front covers were much more sensationalized then the latter years. Page two became the editorial page with a political cartoon, and a sports section was even added. Additionally, there were advertisements that told the readers what stores sold *BPINS*. While it is difficult to explain exactly why this happened, it does demonstrate that a change in leadership altered how the paper was formatted and produced.

The analysis of the last era proved difficult at best as the number of published works was fewer than two per issue. After 1977, when Newton returned to leadership, the paper was only sporadically published, and Douglas’s presence as a contributing artist almost disappears. It is apparent that the Party never recovers from Newton’s return. *BPINS* was irregularly published and issues were difficult to acquire, probably, because the number published were so small that locating issues to sample for the last two years was difficult. From the two datasets available, Western Michigan University’s microfilm had none and *Alexander Street Press* only had about 2/3s of the issues.
CHAPTER IX
CONCLUSION

Newton and Seale’s *10 Point Platform and Program* was certainly a philosophy that helped guide and frame the artwork within *BPINS*. While it was initially the groundwork for Revolutionary Nationalism as Chairman Bobby Seale (1970) asserted, the *10 Platform and Program* was 400 years of demands framed within the BPP philosophy. If the primary function of the BPP was to awaken the African American community through the formation of black consciousness, the analysis of the first historical era of the BPP demonstrates the efficacy of the visual literacy of revolutionary art in *BPINS* helped in the construction of an imagined political community.

The early years of the Panther (1966 – 1971) are certainly the most discussed within the published literature. However, this means that within the majority of those writings the focal point was one, or more, of the following: “picking up the gun”, “self-defense”, Emory Douglas, and gender politics. In addition, the latter years of the party are basically ignored within most of the literature. While some research has gone further into Panther history, that research path relatively remains untapped.

When the party transformed from a nationally-based organization back to a local focus in the Oakland Bay Area, *BPINS* became a much less radical newspaper (and likely much less influential, certainly on a national level). Since frames structure the social world (Carter 2013), the shifting frame within *BPINS* was a reorganization of realities. First there was a refocusing on community programs. Next, refocusing or reframing back to community programs appear to have less draw for recruitment of the lumpen and more
enticement from other people and the SMOs that Newton and Seale tried to disassociate themselves from in the early to mid-1960s.

Frame bridging through *BPINS* also shifted. As the beliefs and values of the SMO changed so did the frame implications for recruitment. With the case of the BPP, frame extensions lessened philosophically and regionally, therefore resonated less with the potential pool of recruits. The transformation of the BPP’s *10 Point Platform and Program*, the values and ideas of the BPP were less salient. They likely did not resonate or motivate potential “radicals” into the fold. There was also clearly a transformation of collective identity and a complete reshaping of the imagined political community. The Party splits, membership rolls had to be reduced and so did *BPINS* subscriptions.

The second historical shift further weakened the publication of *BPINS* as it became less and less radical. While it is clear that the artwork still remained focused in framing community empowerment and reform, it also became more “standardized”. While the black press has historically been a crusading press (La Brie and Zima 1971) its normalization likely weakened the campaign and promotion of the *10 Point Platform and Program*, and therefore debilitated the political education for recruits and members. Again, this would detract from recruitment of “brothers off the block” (i.e., lumpen). Also, standardization of art within *BPINS* resulted in a far less countering propaganda tool. Moreover, as publication numbers declined, there had to be a loss of revenue which is needed for any successful SMO.

With a shift and loss of Party membership there indeed was a second historical shift within the imagined community of the party and the cycle of protest lost its effectiveness. This would also suggest that with a loss in membership and standardization of artwork in
BPINS there was a loss of the art as communal. Social movements require human agency for collective action (Noonan 1997) and the collective action of art (as communal) was almost lost within the annals of BPINS by 1977. Finally, as the leadership changed again in 1977, a mismanagement of funds and continuing issues of gender politics and misogyny altered the history of a once radical SMO and black radical newspaper.

The literature review plainly demonstrated a gap in research focused on the visual arts. Additionally, Cleaver (2010) explained an overall lack of scholarship focusing on the BPP. The findings of this dissertation demonstrate there are gaps within the literature of the BPP, BPINS, and their artwork. One contribution of this research is to add to the body of literature and move beyond the revolutionary years to examine the reformative history and the decline of the BPP. While the examination of art may not demonstrate causality as to the historical shifts it does offer some insights into possible explanation.

It is also the case that there has been an overemphasis on Emory Douglas’s artworks and his contributions while neglecting many other significant contributors and art within BPINS. The analysis suggests that at least five artists are worth more qualitative analysis: M. Gayle Asali, Matiliba, Teemer, Ralph, and Paul Rudd. For example, the two known female Panther artists M. Gayle Asali and Matiliba are worth deeper analysis and discussion for the simple reason that the Panthers are often seen as a primarily male SMO. Secondly, no researcher has discussed or referenced the usage of mainstream political cartoons. The focus is almost entirely of the “revolutionary” art of the BPP. For example, Durant’s (2007) edited text is titled Black Panther Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas. However, numerous images within the pages of that book are images of reform.
As with all research, there were both strengths and limitations to this study. First and foremost, all artwork is open for interpretation. Krippendorf (1980) elicits that visual messages are not singular in meaning and they need to be unwrapped. They may, in fact, have numerous meanings and those meanings are not always shared. With over 50 artists examined, there is no measure for knowing the intent underlying their images. Additionally, there is no apparent method to measure how the imagined community interpreted that art. Certainly, some of the artwork was much easier to interpret (see Figure 5) than other images (see Figure 6).

Secondly, for a single researcher, coding of artworks is open to interpretation. I believe there are both weaknesses and strengths to the coding process utilized. The primary weakness was that I did not cross-compare the codes and some that were coded as “Political cartoon” in the second and third coding rounds, were coding with much more depth in the final two rounds. However, there is also strength to the method as it demonstrated how numerous themes within the artwork did following both the 10 Point Platform and Program and Ernest-LeBlanc’s (1998) historical shifts. For future research, I believe analyzing these codes in unification, “Revolution,” “Reform” and the 10 Point Platform and Program codes would offer more depth to the analysis.

A third limitation is based on the fact that I am constructing or reconstructing meaning of artwork from the 1960s and 1970s, and therefore had to try to place them within their historical context. Given that more than half a century has passed, and there have been dramatic changes in the nature of race relations, alternative interpretations are not only possible but likely.
These three issues presented difficulties for the coding and analysis that I endeavored to overcome. I tried to let the literature guide me in my research questions and analysis. I attempted to view the artwork for its meanings without delving too deep into a philosophical quagmire and over interpreting the imagery. I also employed five separate sequences of coding in an attempt to view the art as objectively as possible and then use a qualitative software program that could examine the codes and themes with more depth. Visual analysis and research of graphic arts moves outside the traditional methods of inquiry and has a limited history within sociological empirical research (Sullivan 2010). I believe that this research does add to a limited body of literature and a starting point for future analysis.

However, with so little research of visual art regarding the BPM, BAM and the art of the BPP, this dissertation illustrates the importance of artwork as communal in framing and constructing an imagined community. *BPINS* was one of the most significant independent black newspapers of its era advancing both the BAM through the BPP through their weekly publication over 13-years moving beyond the frames of mainstream press. It was the countering voice of “the people”, the marginalized, and the lumpen. The artwork provided a visual literacy to help provide coherence to a collection of images and symbols about what was essential throughout BPP history. The conventions of their art created a foundation for collective action. The BPP’s was a significant political-cultural movement that undoubtedly aided the BAM of the 1960s and 1970s.
REFERENCES


VERBI GmbH. 2018. MAXQDA the Art of Data Analysis. Berlin, Germany.


Appendix A

1966 Ten Point Platform and Program
1966 Ten Point Platform and Program

1. **We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.**
   We believe that Black people will not be free until we are able to determine our destiny.

2. **We want full employment for our people.**
   We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every man employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the white American businessmen will not give full employment, then the means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all of its people and give a high standard of living.

3. **We want an end to the robbery by the white man of our Black Community.**
   We believe that this racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules was promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment as currency which will be distributed to our many communities. The Germans are now aiding the Jews in Israel for the genocide of the Jewish people. The Germans murdered six million Jews. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over twenty million Black people; therefore, we feel that this is a modest demand that we make.

4. **We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.**
   We believe that if the white landlords will not give decent housing to our Black community, then the housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that our community, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for its people.

5. **We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.**
   We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If a man does not have knowledge of himself and his position in society and the world, then he has little chance to relate to anything else.

6. **We want all Black men to be exempt from military service.**
   We believe that Black people should not be forced to fight in the military service to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like Black people, are being victimized by the white racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist police and the racist military, by whatever means necessary.

7. **We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of Black people.**
   We believe we can end police brutality in our Black community by organizing Black self defense groups that are dedicated to defending our Black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States
gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all Black people should arm themselves for self defense.

8. We want freedom for all Black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.

We believe that all Black people should be released from the many jails and prisons because they have not received a fair and impartial trial.

9. We want all Black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their Black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.

We believe that the courts should follow the United States Constitution so that Black people will receive fair trials. The 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution gives a man a right to be tried by his peer group. A peer is a person from a similar economic, social, religious, geographical, environmental, historical and racial background. To do this the court will be forced to select a jury from the Black community from which the Black defendant came. We have been, and are being tried by all-white juries that have no understanding of the "average reasoning man" of the Black community.

10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to supper, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariable the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

Appendix B

March 1972 10 Point Platform and Program
March 1972 10 Point Platform and Program

1. **We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black and oppressed communities.**

   We believe that Black and oppressed people will not be free until we are able to determine our destinies in our own communities ourselves, by fully controlling all the institutions which exist in our communities.

2. **We want full employment for our people.**

   We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every person employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the American businessmen will not give full employment, then the technology and means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all of its people and give a high standard of living.

3. **We want an end to the robbery by the capitalist of our Black and oppressed communities.**

   We believe that this racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment in currency which will be distributed to our many communities. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million Black people. Therefore, we feel this is a modest demand that we make.

4. **We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.**

   We believe that if the landlords will not give decent housing to our Black and oppressed communities, then the housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people in our communities, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for the people.

5. **We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in present-day society.**

   We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else.

6. **We want completely free health care for all Black and oppressed people.**
We believe the government must provide, free of charge, for the people, health facilities which will not only treat our illness, most of which have come about as a result of oppression, but which also develop preventative medical programs to guarantee our future survival. We believe that mass health education and research programs must be developed to give all Black and oppressed people access to advanced scientific and medical information, so we may provide ourselves with proper medical attention and care.

7. **We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of Black people, other people of color, all oppressed people in the United States.**

We believe that the racist and fascist government of the United States uses its domestic enforcement agencies to carry out its program of oppression against Black people, other people of color and poor people inside the United States. We believe it is our right, therefore, to defend ourselves against such armed forces, and that all Black and oppressed people should be armed for self-defense of our homes and communities against these fascist police forces.

8. **We want freedom for all Black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.**

We believe that the various conflicts which exist around the world stem directly from the aggressive desires of the U.S. ruling circle and government to force its domination upon the oppressed people of the world. We believe that if the U.S. government or its lackeys do not cease these aggressive wars that it is the right of the people to defend themselves by any means necessary against their aggressors.

9. **We want all Black people brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their Black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.**

We believe that the many Black and poor oppressed people now held in U.S. prisons and jails have not received fair and impartial trials under a racist and fascist judicial system and should be free from incarceration. We believe in the ultimate elimination of all wretched, inhuman penal institutions, because the masses of men and women imprisoned inside the United States or by the U.S. military are the victims of oppressive conditions which are the real cause of their imprisonment. We believe that when persons are brought to trial that they must be guaranteed, by the United States, juries of their peers, attorneys of their choice and freedom from imprisonment while awaiting trials.

10. **We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations–supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the Black colony in which only Black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of Black people as to their national destiny.**
When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

Source: The Black Panther Intercommunal News Service May 13, 1972
Appendix C
Artists List
# Artists List

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Appendix E

1966 10 Point Platform and Program Codes/
1972 10 Point Platform and Program Codes
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