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## How The Hell Did We Get Here? A Look at How The Civil Rights Movement Influenced Campus Activism, Civic Engagement, and Current Movements Around Civil Liberties.

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How The Hell Did We Get Here? A Look at How The Civil Rights Movement Influenced  
Campus Activism, Civic Engagement, and Current Movements Around Civil Liberties.

Senior Project Submitted to  
The Division of Social Studies  
of Bard College

By  
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Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

May 2021



I would like to dedicate my project, first, to my grandmother, Ola. The last few years have taken a toll on you psychically, but mentally you have always managed to be there and support me. It saddens me that you cannot see me graduate due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and your current state of health. I love you to the moon and back.

To my mother, Lynetta and my cousin, Ashley. Thank you for being my pillar of support and keeping everything together while I pursue my degree.

To my grandparents, Sharon and Dean Dancy, who are the reason I made it back to campus every semester and how I was able to survive freshman year. Thank you both for the monthly allowance.

To my sister, Leilani. Thank you for the Attack on Titan marathons.

To my wonderful advisors, Tabettha and Christian. Thank you for being the Black historians I need and for the encouragement to keep going everytime I wanted to give up.

Lastly, to my chosen family. There is absolutely no way I would have survived Bard without you all. Thank you Sage, Naty, Isis, Symonne, Tchad, Sacha, Sahar, Nia, Jourdan, Shania and Soledad. Y'all made being at Bard worth it.

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## Introduction

My senior project covers the Civil Rights Movement, how it shaped the criminalization of activism, the emergence of civic engagement, social media, and the present moment in which we find ourselves now. This project covers a wide range of topics and with only 70 pages could not cover every aspect of these moments in history. It is merely an attempt to lay the rich groundwork of this history with room for expansion. The aims of this project is to archive how these national movements influenced the ones happening on the small campus in Annandale-on-Hudson.

## Reflections on the Events of 2020

*Until lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter.*

*-African Proverb*

I have always been fascinated with untold things. How did things end up the way they are now? What are their origins? What can the past tell us about the future? We often hear things like “Learn from the past as to not make the same mistakes,” and “History repeats itself,” and I find both of those statements to be the two sides of the same coin. We are learning from the past in order to not repeat ourselves. Yet some of the same issues manifest themselves in dramatically different forms than before. It just takes people like historians to see those differences. When you are invested in research and engaging with archival materials you begin to see these manifestations of the past in laws, social dynamics, pedagogy, and contemporary artistry.

I began my senior project initially to focus on the erasure of Black women who pioneered the civil rights movement, but soon found that I was being called in another direction. With all the events that had occurred during the Summer of 2020, from quarantine for Covid-19, Black Lives Matters protest across the country, the preparation for election season, and institutional reckonings for- racial and gender based violence-, it became increasingly clear that the need for historians and archivists were more important than ever. As I was paying attention to all that was happening, I began to notice an erasure at my own institution. Many students became interested in organizing against institutional racism at Bard College after the emergence of Black@Bard became a page on Instagram highlighting issues at the college. I immediately saw that many of the demands that students were interested in having met by Bard had already been brought up

before. I saw this via social media as many students, mainly white<sup>1</sup>, would make posts about things that needed to change at the institution and how students should organize during the Fall semester of 2019. I then began to wonder where student demands and moments of activism were being archived. I quickly realized that they were most likely not being archived anywhere. Student demands were forgotten once students who were involved in making them graduated. Knowledge of activism at Bard relies heavily on oral traditions and that has not been enough. Bard needs to produce physical sources, store them, maintain them, classify them, and regularly display them so that students can interact with them. Bard also does not have the resources to take on an archivist to help in making sure these moments of protests are not easily forgotten and are continued. I believe that this is done purposefully in order for Bard continuously sweep issues that need solutions when they are raised by Black students. Bard is an institution that prides itself on inclusive initiatives- often created by students-like the Bard Prison Initiative, the Council for Inclusive Excellence, Gilson Place, their work with the Bard Early High Schools, Passion 2 Persist, and their various scholarships that cater to low-income and students of color. Although these initiatives may look good to those applying to Bard or those looking to donate, these progressive initiatives and ideals projected by the institution do not align with the way things are dealt with on campus. These things being issues of racism, discrimination, and gender based violence. This is how my senior project was born. I want to combine my love and interest in the Civil Rights Movement and the on-campus activism that I played a part in during my time at Bard. Not only will my project be saved in the archives, I also want to make it easier for students who are looking to dismantle systemic racism at Bard to rely on the experiences of those

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<sup>1</sup>I noticed that mostly white students were clueless about the activism that a lot of Black students had paved the way for. I believe that the disconnect between the white and Black student body at Bard, also contributes to the erasure that we see in terms of our advocacy for institutional change.

who came before them in my senior project. I want to break the historical cycle in order for us to move forward with no repeats.

## **Archival vs. Oral Testimony**

### *What we know and what to look for*

In my senior project I am working with student newspapers, trustee papers, photographs, maps, and other archival materials located in the Bard library and online databases. I am also working with oral testimony, primarily alumni interviews. The purpose of these interviews are to help fill in the gaps that the archives did not provide because let's face it archives are not kind to marginalized people. Archives often erase Black people, women, and queer people in order to maintain a specific narrative that will benefit those in power. This erasure occurs when stories are rewritten to give a more respectable<sup>2</sup> perspective, when names are left out or disassociated with events, when events are not archived properly, and the more obvious things like misogyny, racism, and homophobia. I saw this often in the differences between the stories that those I interviewed told me and what I found in the archives. So I decided to write about the history of activism at Bard from 1963-1969 and 2013-2021 from both perspectives in order for readers to understand the full scope of how biased the archive can be. The stories that were shared with me not only helped me to fill in the gaps that the archives left, but to also see these historical moments from a different perspective. They really helped to point out the contradictions that often come with the way that histories are presented in the archives. What is of institutional importance and what is of importance to those who were present rarely align leading to huge gaps in the way history is presented to us.

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<sup>2</sup> An example of this is how Rosa Parks was made to be the first person who didn't give up her seat on the bus, instead of Claudette Colvin. Claudette Colvin was a dark-skinned teen who was pregnant out of wedlock and would not have been a good face for the Civil Rights Movement at the time.

There is an African Proverb that says, “until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.” This proverb spoke to me as I feel that Black people and those of marginalized genders are often the ones that fall prey to the hunter, the hunter in this being whiteness and patriarchy and how it manifests. This will become more clear and prominent as I walk you through the history of Bard’s activism and national activism over time.

## **B.R.A.C (Bard Racial Action Committee) 1963-1968**

### *Archival Findings*

The Bard Racial Action Committee began at a time where the trend of activists in the United States was working to achieve civil rights for Black people. This period of Black resistance and protest influenced many college activists across the country including students at Bard. There is not much evidence of Black student population on campus between 1964-1967, however that did not deter the five founding members of the Bard Racial Action Committee from trying to create change in the Hudson Valley. The first mention of BRAC was written in a two-page report in June of 1964. Helene Tieger, Bards archivist, sent me this document- along with many others- detailing the events of BRAC overtime. In this report the presumably writer is student, Craig Livingston, gives details of the origins of the organization, what members will be doing over the Summer, and future plans for the Fall semester. In the report Livingston states the following:

“The major purpose of BRAC is to bring the vital issues of civil rights to the Bard campus, and by working actively with other civil rights groups and local people to the Hudson Valley. BRAC will also offer Bard students an opportunity for constructive political activity. Most importantly, BRAC will try to establish a Civil Rights group at Bard which will serve as an example to other colleges-- an example of how a civil rights group on a college campus can fight for racial equality with positive programs which get to the heart of complex social problems.”

BRAC's aimed to do this by beginning an educational program in the nearby village of Tivoli called “Horizons Unlimited”<sup>3</sup> that worked with children between the ages of 8-12 and did

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<sup>3</sup> Horizons Unlimited no longer exists, as there is no longer a school in the village. When I reached out in the Tivoli Facebook group to see if there was anyone who still lived there and had any memory of the school, I received no responses. I can guess that those who attended the school no longer live in the area due to the increase in the cost of living in Tivoli and upstate New York overall.

not perform to “their highest aptitude” in school. It is not said what the demographic of the public schools in Tivoli were during this time, but it can be presumed that it would have also been predominantly white. BRAC would also work with organizations in Dutchess County that organized around the rights of migrant farmers in the area. Given what Bard looks like now as far as civic engagement BRAC was ahead of its time and may have been the blueprint for offices like the Trustee Leadership Scholarship program and the Center for Civic Engagement.<sup>4</sup>

After a Summer of engagement, the members came back to campus and shared their experiences with what they did over the summer. Jim Peterson, member of BRAC talked about his experience in working with the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee or SNCC in Georgia. “Sometimes you get paranoid because the whites hate you and the Negroes fear you. The shack we live in had bullet holes..” Jim recounted about his experiences. The program that Jim participated in was funded by the Council of Federated Organizations that gave money to various civil rights projects across the country in order to recruit the help of college students. Jim was one of 800 students chosen to participate in the program and his group consisted of 20 people directly from SNCC, mostly Black. His experience was published in the September 9th, 1964 issue of the Bard Observer. In the same issue, Craig Livingston seems to be putting out a call to action for the Bard community.

“The protest demonstration has been the major toll of the civil rights movement in the North. The object of this action has been the desegregation of housing, schools, public accommodation, and employment. But the demonstration must for the most part be superseded by a more comprehensive kind of action. The civil rights movement must address itself to the economic, social, and educational problems which prevent ghettos and deprived communities from making use of the opportunities that desegregation might afford them. BRAC’s major project will be the tutorial program in Tivoli. The problem of

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<sup>4</sup> Upon my interview with Paul Marienthal it appears that these programs were not the motivator for creating the TLS office or the CCE. See more in my chapter about the importance of engagement and the origins of TLS.



Tivoli is not a racial but an educational problem. It is an educational deprivation which, as a college, we should be most equipped to deal with. The success of BRAC'S program depends largely on the dedication and maturity of Bard students. -Craig Livingston”

I could tell from this statement that there was no direct input from Black students who were active in the Civil Rights Movement, but more so of Livingston trying to grasp at different ways to curb systemic oppression, beginning with the youth. This also confirms my hunch that the educational programming in Tivoli did not directly assist Black and brown students, but rather was a way to bridge educational disparities. BRAC appears again in the Observer on November 2nd of 1964 that gives a progress report on how their work with migrant programming and the Tivoli educational programming. According to this update it is going very well, members are trying to provide better housing for migrant farmers and work on more palpable New York laws that would protect them. The educational program has not lost any students and is getting great reviews from teachers and parents of the students in the program. It is unclear what BRAC was doing between the periods that they were not reporting to the Observer, but it is evident that their work was ongoing during the semester.

BRAC returns again in the archive on March 12th, 1965 after students return from Winter break. This time BRAC took their actions to New York City, one of the epicenters of social protest. They protested the Chase Manhattan Bank funding the involvement of America in the South African apartheid movement in solidarity with the Students for a Democratic Society. BRAC was mentioned again on April 2nd, 1965 we got an insight into what happened for the students that attended the protest on March 19th and another important event that was not mentioned in the previous issue, the March on Montgomery. It is interesting that there was no mention of students attending the March on Montgomery given that Bloody Sunday had

occurred weeks before. Student Jonathan Rosenbaum attended the protest and gave us an in-depth look at what it was like to attend as a white native of Alabama. The piece took up an entire page of the newspaper in order to recount his experience. In summary, although it felt good to attend the march and be in solidarity with the Black community, Rosenbaum did not have much faith in the movement swaying other white people, especially those in Alabama, to fight for the cause. It is odd to me that no members of BRAC wanted to split their time between Montgomery and the protests in the city. At least there is no mention of anyone outside of Rosenbaum. The protest at the Chase Manhattan Bank<sup>5</sup> went fairly well. 43 protestors were arrested, none were specified as Bard students, and the picketing resulted in a 7.8% drop in the bank's stock. I think some might say that the protest was a successful event. It is interesting to see the parallels of protest that were happening in the United States within the same month and which ones students chose to take part in.

The Summer of 1965 proved fruitful for BRAC They began a partnership with the Congress of Racial Equality, a national chapter founded in Chicago, and created the Kingston Community Action Project. The focus of this program was on community organization in order to give people in the “ghetto” a voice to fight for themselves. Their main goal was to help with welfare problems in the area. This program continued well into the semester as there was much to be done. In addition to their work in Kingston, BRAC also made sure to be involved in the happenings on campus. The next mention of BRAC comes during the mention of a brawl outside of the Annandale Hotel also known as Adolfs. The incident raised concern amongst BRAC

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<sup>5</sup> This was to protest the direct profiting that the bank was getting from their supporting of apartheid in South Africa. Students for a Democratic Society participated and so did the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

members because a Black migrant worker was beaten unconscious outside of the hotel, while the police officer on duty did nothing to stop the occurrence.

A November 1966 edition of Bards Alumni magazine<sup>6</sup> further reveals more information about BRACs start and their work within the community. The magazine confirmed that the students' summer work in Kingston solidified the position of BRAC within Bard. Along with the summer program and community partnerships, BRAC also helped to create a freedom school in Kingston. BRAC's official start took place during the Winter intersession of 1965 with the help of five students: Jessica Benjamin, Peter Fuchs, Michael Shafer, Craig Livingston, and Alison Raphael. Because BRAC was established as a club, they were able to use convocation funds in order to help with endeavors on and off campus. Because of their community involvement on the other side of the bridge, BRAC was the first Bard club to receive transportation from the college, which caused quite a rift between the clubs on campus.

In fact another student newspaper called *The Gadfly* was created expressly to openly critique BRAC and the student government at the time. *The Gadfly's* editor, John Faylor, had quite a bone to pick with members of BRAC, especially Craig Livingston. When I first began my research in the student newspaper archive, I didn't pay much attention to *The Gadfly*. I knew that it was a satirical publication similar to today's *Bardardvark* and it was hard for me to decipher actual happenings on campus and things that they sensationalized for the purpose of their publication. However, one day I read a very angry reply from Craig Livingston in the *The Bard Observer* on April 26, 1966. This was in reference to something that John Faylor had written in *The Gadfly*, signaling the beginning of a very tense conflict.

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<sup>6</sup> This magazine was published by Bard College and not by alum.

## **Answer To A Conservative To the Editor**

I am appalled at the irresponsibility of John Faylor's attack on the Bard Racial Action Committee. His arguments against BRAC displace complete ignorance of our goals and accomplishments over the past two and a half years. Mr. Faylor has never been to a BRAC meeting, nor has he ever talked to the people in the sixth and seventh wards in Kingston. John, pray tell us the source of your incorrect information. Mr. Faylor accuses BRAC of "proselytizing" in Kingston. Are we "converting" members through the dance program, the tutorial, or the arts and crafts? Surely, there must be easier ways of "bringing our doctrine" to the people other than teaching them how to dance.

What of the community organization project? The people who have worked in the project believe in "...the establishment of democracy of individual participation governed by two central aims: that the individual share in those social decisions determining the quality and direction of his life; that society be organized to encourage independence in men and provide media for their common participation..." There are many who give lip service to this conception, but in terms of actual programs, no one is acting upon it. Witness the welfare system which is manipulative, tyrannical, and inadequate. Witness the federal anti-poverty program which is controlled by businessmen and well-intentioned ladies who can organize charity balls but know nothing about poverty. Witness urban renewal, and city redevelopment programs which turn out to be negro removal and community destruction projects. If you think these are exaggerations go to Kingston, Newark, Harlem, Roxbury, or Watts.

Mr. Faylor states, "There are people on this campus who do object BRAC's notion of Civil Rights to 1966. There are people on this campus who would question the proposition that the attainment of civil rights demand "radical social change." But these people remain outside the purview of BRAC's liberality." How do they know? They have not spoken to the twenty people most active in BRAC. As for "radical social change" this is my own personal conception, not BRAC's official policy; it has none. Along with the other members of the Gadfly contributors. Mr. Faylor criticizes the purchase of a "community vehicle." The combined travel allowance allowed for BRAC and "The Observer" alone has totaled at least \$2,000 over the past two years. It is false economy to continue paying for private vehicles. Plainly, BRAC had the greatest need for the vehicle and could not continue to function without it. But this by no means excludes the use of the bus in the future by other college organizations.

John Faylor who is co-chairman of the Bernard Iddings Bell Conservative Society, clearly does not see eye to eye with me as to what civil rights means or what BRAC should do. Mr. Faylor like so many others of his kind seems trapped in an ivory tower of conservative platitudes, always willing to criticize those in the streets but unwilling to act himself. If Mr. Faylor really wants to know let him come to the sixth ward, let him talk to the people, and then perhaps he can tell us what he thinks is needed.

-Craig Livingston

Craig's angered response was triggered by a 5 page editorial in *The Gadfly* that expressed its discontent with the fact that BRAC was awarded a vehicle, the corruption on student government and how Craig influenced the vote, and Faylors dislike of BRAC as a group, written 2 weeks before. This exchange continued for another week, garnering support for Livingston from other students. Many were in disagreement with Faylors critique and questioned the legitimacy of *The Gadfly* as they also felt that his critique was unfair and did not do justice to the group. When BRAC's participation began to die down towards the end of the 60's *The Gadfly* ceased to exist as well, which furthers my theory that it was created in direct response to how BRAC was being treated on campus.

I learned a lot by engaging with the online student newspaper archive and also working with Helene in the library, after Covid-19 restrictions allowed us to. It was the first time that I had ever engaged in-depthly with archives and I definitely saw just how easily things could be misconstrued and filled with incorrect information. A lot of the dates for events conflicted depending on the source I was reading, which made for a very difficult time in trying to find other sources. In reading these materials, I knew that there was more to the story than what I was seeing in black and white and I knew that I needed to interview the students who were present in the moment. I had a hard time getting in touch with alum through the Alumni Office as I requested for an email to be sent to students who I had found in the archive. After about a week with no response, I decided that it would be better to ask for forgiveness than to continue to wait for permission and I sought these students on the internet. I was extremely excited to see that Craig Livingston was alive and well. He was running a law firm and I was able to easily get his contact information from the website. I emailed and he instantly responded and connected me

with 2 other students. We set up an interview via Zoom and I was able to get an insight into the Bard Racial Action Committee from the founders themselves.

### *Oral Testimonies Findings*

I was so excited that I was able to find *Craig Livingston* so easily from doing a quick Google search. I was afraid that those who attended Bard at the time might not be here with us any longer. I emailed Craig and was immediately connected with two other students who helped pioneer BRAC, *Jessica Benjamin* and *Martha Bragin*. Jessica Benjamin was actually the mastermind behind BRAC in 1963 along with Craig Livingston. Craig began the conversation by giving me the background on how BRAC became a part of Bard.

“My relationship with her, her name is Jessica Benjamin by the way, had a lot to do with the creation of the Bard Racial Action Committee, which we both created I think. And some other people, I don’t know what happened to them, but Jessica will give a much better history. After that another woman Allison Raphel showed up the next year I think and she brought with her, she had been a leader of SDS, students for democratic society, she sorta said we have to create a SDS chapter here, I said what’s that? And because of the sexism of that period, neither Jessica nor Allison, I think became the leaders of either of those groups.”<sup>7</sup>

Craig’s statement did not surprise me in the slightest as it is common for the leadership of women to quickly be replaced with a male poster child. Craig was the perfect one to assume the role as the established leader of BRAC and the SDS. Had it not been for my persistence in getting a hold of the alumni who made these organizations possible, I would have never known that Jessica existed, let alone was the creator of BRAC. Following Craig’s statement that Jessica knew the history more than he did because she was the mastermind behind it, she went on to tell me the engaging story of BRAC.

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<sup>7</sup> Robinson-Dancy, Talaya. BRAC Interview. Personal, March 21, 2021.

<sup>8</sup>“And the reason we started things the way that we did is because somehow we got into our heads that we should, I'm sure this is how it went, we should contact the Congress of Racial Equality and ask them what we could do. And when we did that they put us in touch with these three African American guys who worked at the IBM in Kingston and at that time and up until about, what is it, maybe, 10, 15, or 20 years ago. IBM Kingston was the biggest employer...right so this was like really very important. So these guys kinda showed up in their suits and they had about as much of an idea as we did of like what we were doing. And I really don't know who told us, it could have been CORE itself that told us, that if we wanted to do something in Kingston, the issue there that we were going to have urban renewal and the urban renewal was going to throw all out all of the poor people, Black and White out that section in Kingston . And so it's really hard to reconstruct exactly how that came about. But there are many community organizing projects all throughout the country, not only run by people who are affiliated with CORE, but also people affiliated with SDS. That's the point that Craig was trying to make earlier, that a lot of SDS chapters in the North did community organizing essentially in poor white and black ghettos in northern urban areas or small towns. Even so, that was our model. And then and the JOIN was the right JOIN in Chicago was one of the big community organizations and is that right, wasn't it called JOIN? SDS had a oh oh, NCAP Oh, then there was newer Community Action Project NCAP right? OK, so what it basically said so we started thinking about this in the spring of sixty four. And then in that it's just in terms of my own personal involvement, so in the spring of 64, Bob Moses was recruiting for the Mississippi Freedom Summer, which my cousin joined. I just saw a photo of him in a film about it recently. I was like one still shot of him sitting there when they find out that Goodman, Schwerner, Chaney had been killed and they're all sitting there kind of, you know, paralyzed, trying to understand that now they're going to go into these communities where they could be killed. So my mother had been like basically not doing any movement activity for a long time because she and my father felt that they would just be a communist was so tainted that they couldn't they would just harm any movement they were part of. But at this point, she just had had it and decided she was going to start supporting SNCC and she was going to run a big benefit to support SNCC and make all the people in Washington contribute to this. So she took on that project for the summer. I was not allowed to go south. Instead, I helped my mother do this. But we did go to Atlantic City for the Democratic National Convention, which was so important at that point. Right. And so we got to sit on the boardwalk and hear Fannie Lou Hamer

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<sup>8</sup> In this section you will see how memory is slowly recovered as details are remembered during our conversation. There will be repetition of words and moments and reference outside of Bard. This is important to note as this is how history happens. People remember important things about periods of time that are important to them and not the ones that were important in the archives point of view.

sing and speak and kept getting these reports about what was happening with the seating of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

So then at that point, things have escalated so much, and I remember actually that before that summer, Stokely Carmichael came. God knows why we must have already had our chapter going by then because Stokely Carmichael came to talk to us. We had different people come and talk to us. It's hard for me to believe. So Stokely Carmichael came and spoke to us about the Mississippi Freedom Summer. And I remember him describing what was going to happen. And I remember saying to him, but then there's going to be like violence and chaos and then what are you going to do? You're going to be dependent on the federal government sending down troops or people. And he said, yeah, I remember thinking, like, oh, shit, that could be bad.”

Jessica’s statement gave me a lot of insight into how much what was happening nationally influenced the drive behind the creation of BRAC at Bard. Her historical references really fascinated me as she was able to shed light on all the different types of groups, Black and white, that existed to fight against racial inequality and poverty in the country during the 1960’s. When I asked how they went about reaching out Jessica told me very candidly that you had to have guts back then. “You had to, like, call the national organization and be this, like, little pipsqueak because 18 years old and say, excuse me, but can I speak to someone about starting a local chapter? That's like how it went. I mean, it was pretty good to be very gutsy. You know, clicking on something is a lot less gutsy than having to call somebody, introduce yourself.” Of course before the invention of pagers, cell phones, and the internet information had to be passed down through different avenues which is drastically different from the way that organizing looks now. The trio told me that before the digital age, pamphlets were mailed out to all the chapters in the country on a weekly or monthly basis that contained updates, different modes of organizing, and anything else that SNCC or CORE thought should be shared. On rare occasions you would be visited by someone from the organization to give talks about more effective ways to organize for



racial justice. This was a reference to Stokely Carmichael coming to speak at Bard during their time at Bard as he was one of the driving forces in SNCC and the originator of the Black Power Movement. As the civil rights movements began to shift from the involvement of white people and more towards the framework of Black power in 1966, I was curious as to what that looked like for BRAC. This question was aimed towards Martha in particular because she was still here when this shift began:

“ I just want to come back to a question you did ask, which is what did we do (when SNCC asked us to leave). So I think I was the only one who was in a room where somebody said, OK, we're now going to be an all Black movement. I was at the epicenter, a Black Baptist church. There had been some other white people there, mostly students from Antioch. And then at some point I was at church and Stokely was there and I was being in the most friendly and warm hearted and lovely way, being asked to leave and to find my own struggle. And how to do that became for me, very complicated. Certainly there was the antiwar movement to be most immediately involved with while I was still a student. But then the question is where I would go?”

Martha’s statement spoke to the displacement that a lot of white people felt during the divestment of having white leaders in SNCC. In fact, a New York Time<sup>9</sup> article spoke to the decline of Civil Rights activism on college campuses around the country in October of 1966.

“In the turmoil of student activity on local college campuses this fall, the civil rights banner has almost disappeared. And where it disappear, it waves uncertainly. Interviews with rights organization leaders and professors on ten major campuses here have produced general agreement that civil rights as a cause no longer provokes the excitement of a year or two ago when student demonstrations and trips to the South were common. “Civil rights is fading as an issue around which students are going to rally,” said Susan Rosenberg, last year’s chairman of the City College chapter of the Congress of Racial

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<sup>9</sup> By EDWARD C. BURKS. "Students' Interest in Civil Rights found Dying on Campuses here: Students' Interest in Civil Rights Issue is found Fading on Campuses here Contributions in Skills Hails Columbia Plan A Role of Assistance 'no One was Interested!." *New York Times (1923-Current File)*, Oct 24, 1966. <https://search.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/students-interest-civil-rights-found-dying-on/docview/116848982/se-2?accountid=31516>.

Equality (CORE). Her summary of the rights struggle was broadly representative of reaction on the campuses: “Future gains for the Negro are not going to be made on picket lines—at least not by white students. They will depend on whether the Negro people themselves are going to get together and raise themselves.””

The rest of the NYT issue continues in the manor discussing the lost “spark” that the civil rights movement gave white people, how the populations of schools may have influenced this, and excerpts from President Kennedy denouncing racism from negro leaders. Even though this article was written over 55 years ago, I see very similar echoes of concepts like ally fatigue, reverse racism, and the lack of diversity on college campuses.

Outside of the insights that the trio gave me into what the civil rights movement looked like during their years at Bard, I also asked them about their memory of the freedom school that they began in Tivoli, their recollection of the event at Adolfs, and pushback that they received from Bard administrators and from students like John Faylor. To my surprise they didn’t remember any of these things outside of how the Bard administration treated them. Craig shrugged and said he couldn’t even remember doing such a program in Tivoli or answering the call of the racist act at Adolf’s.

He, however, did remember that the Bard administration was not very supportive of activism on campus as they felt it would draw a lot of negative attention to the school if things went sour. This is a direct contradiction to what I saw displayed in the archives, especially in an alumni magazine published in November of 1966<sup>10</sup>. The magazine characterized BRAC as a rich civic engagement project that assisted those who lived in the ghettos of Kingston. The article made sure to reference the New York Times article about the decline of civil rights organizations

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<sup>10</sup> “Bard St.Stephen's Alumni Magazine,” November 1966.

on campus in order to highlight BRAC as one the “largest, most active organizations on campus.” When I told them this they couldn’t help as it was a direct contradiction to the difficulties that they had organizing on campus.

My interview with Jessica, Craig, and Martha was very enlightening to say the least. I could not relay everything that was said in our two hour interview, for the sake of relevance to the project, but I learned a lot about the Civil Rights Movement through their lived experiences. Talking with them also helped me to understand that another major issue with archiving is that they deem what it is important to preserve with no outside consultation with those who were actually involved. Even if those who participated in the major moments in history *do* archive their experiences there will always be some details that are left out. This makes me wonder if archives can ever be objective and how can we as historians be more inclusive in how we engage with the narratives found in them.

## **A Brief History of National Organizations in the 1960's**

### *Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)*

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, more commonly known as SNCC, was founded by Ella Baker and students who gathered at the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. This historical event happened during the weekend of April 15 in 1960. The conference was fueled by all of the sit-ins that were occurring across the country and Ella Baker saw it as the perfect opportunity to organize students who were participating and passionate about the fight for civil rights. With the financial assistance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. they put out the call all across the country.<sup>11</sup>

“Recent lunchcounter Sit-ins and other nonviolent protests by students of the South are tremendously significant developments in the drive for Freedom and Human Dignity in America. The courageous, dedicated and thoughtful leadership manifested by hundreds of Negro students on college campuses , in large cities and small towns, and the overwhelming support by thousands of others, present new challenges for the future. This great potential for social change now calls for evaluation in terms of where do we go from here. The Easter week-end conference is convened to help find the answers. Together, we can chart new goals and achieve a more unified sense of direction for training and action in Nonviolent Resistance.”<sup>12</sup>

126 student delegates responded to this call from Alabama, D.C, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi, and

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<sup>11</sup> Ella Baker, “Youth Leadership Meeting,” n.d., [https://www.crmvet.org/docs/6004\\_sncc\\_call.pdf](https://www.crmvet.org/docs/6004_sncc_call.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> This call can be found on the SNCC digital gateway. It is a beautifully archived website that gives the through history of SNCC and provides accompanying documents that help to tell us the history of this organization.

Virginia.<sup>13</sup> The rest was history. Although Ella Baker had been organizing for years around voters rights and systemic oppression she needed more people involved in the fight. When the conference proved to be a success in garnering support, everyone in attendance took back what they had learned and to share and begin organizing in their respective communities. These direct actions included the organizing of Freedom Rides, seminars, sit-ins, walkouts, education programming, voter registration in smaller counties, marches, and Freedom Summer. Freedom Summer is significant because as Black college students became more involved and engaging on campus, white students began to take notice. SNCC leaders noticed this and began discussing ways to take advantage of the white gaze in January of 1964. Many were concerned about the involvement of white people in the movement as they thought it would lead to them wanting to take on leadership positions and would defeat the purpose of SNCC, which was to appoint leadership based on those who worked and lived in the communities they were serving. On the other hand, members thought that with the involvement of white people they might be afforded more protection from the rising violence that was occurring against organizers in the South, especially in Mississippi. Fannie Lou Hamer, Amize Moore, and Lawrence Guyot, senior organizers of SNCC, were the key people in advocating for white volunteers, which resulted in the organizing of Freedom Summer. The main goals of Freedom Summer were to establish Freedom Schools, community centers, register Black voters, and to prep white people for the Democratic National Convention in August. Over 44 projects were developed across the state of Mississippi and for 10 weeks community volunteers and college students from across the country worked to make the goals of SNCC come to fruition. In our interview, Jessica spoke about not

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<sup>13</sup> “Delegates To Youth Leadership Conference ,” *Delegates To Youth Leadership Conference* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Southern Christian Leadership Conference, 1960).

being able to go South to participate in all the organizing that was happening, but there were other Bard students who were able to. Written in the September 9th, 1964 publication of the *Bard Observer*<sup>14</sup> student, Jim Peterson, gives a detailed account of his experience working in the Jim Crow South to get Black people registered to vote. “Sometimes you get paranoiac because the whites hate you and the Negroes fear you. The shack we live in has bullet holes...” Said Peterson. He then went on to detail the work that he assisted SNCC in and the conditions that he lived in. Peterson was able to participate in the Freedom Summer because of money that he received from the Bard College Community Council that helped those involved in Civil Rights projects. The amount he got was 150 dollars which would be 1,281 dollars and 66 cents in 2021, which was a privilege compared to the Black students and community members participating in the program without pay. Although most of Freedom Summer took place in Mississippi, Peterson’s group was located in southwest Georgia. His group, mostly composed of SNCC “negroes,” worked specifically for voter registration, voters’ rights education, and the testing of integration in public spaces. Although many people decided to stay and continue the fight for freedom after Freedom Summer, Peterson returned to Bard to give reports about his experience to the Community Council. It was unclear if Peterson was a part of BRAC or went on to do more organizing for SNCC on campus.

Although SNCC was a pinnacle of the Civil Rights Movement it met an untimely decline just six years later as the organization began to divest from having white participants. SNCC introduced the The Atlanta Project, a campaign dedicated to addressing the issues of poor wages, lack of transportation, and quality housing through the lenses of Black solidarity and

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<sup>14</sup> Don M Baier, “Bardian Spends Summer In Troubled S.W. Georgia,” *Bard Observer*, September 9, 1964, Vol 7, No.1 edition, pp. 1-1, <https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1032&context=observer>.

consciousness. When this project was being developed they published an 11-page paper with this statement<sup>15</sup>:

“In attempting to analyse where the movement is going, certain questions have arisen as to the future roles played by white personnel. In order to make this issue clearer, we have written a few paragraphs, stemming from our observations and experiences, which serve as a preview to a broader study on the subject. The answers to these questions lead us to believe that the form of white participation, as practiced in the past, is now obsolete. Some of the reasons are as follows: The inability of whites to relate to the cultural aspects of Black society; attitudes that whites, consciously or unconsciously, bring to Black communities about themselves (western superiority) and about Black people (paternalism); inability to shatter white-sponsored community myths of Black inferiority and self-negation; inability to combat the views of the Black community that white organizers, being "white", control Black organizers as puppets; insensitivity of both Black and white workers towards the hostility of the Black community on the issue of interracial "relationships" (sex); the unwillingness of whites to deal with the roots of racism which lie within the white community; whites, though individual "liberals", are symbols of oppression to the Black community--due to the collective power that whites have over Black lives. Because of these reasons, which force us to view America through the eyes of victims, we advocate a conscious change in the role of whites, which will be in tune with the developing self-consciousness and self-assertion of the Afro-American people. In concluding, we state that our position does not stem from "hatred" or "racism" against white people, but from a conscientious effort to develop the best methods of solving our national problem.”

When the media got ahold of this document they took it and ran with it. The New York Times published an article titled, “BLACK POWER IDEA LONG IN PLANNING: S.N.C.C. Dissidents Wrote Document Last Winter.”<sup>16</sup> This article only focused on one specific part of the document which was the, “If we are to proceed toward liberation, we must cut ourselves off from the white people.” The article went on to say how this meant that white people could not

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<sup>15</sup> “Black Power: A Reprint of a Position Paper for the SNCC Vine City Project,” *Black Power: A Reprint of a Position Paper for the SNCC Vine City Project* (Atlanta, Georgia: USNSA, 1966).

<sup>16</sup> By GENE ROBERTS Special to The New York Times. "BLACK POWER IDEA LONG IN PLANNING: S.N.C.C. DISSIDENTS WROTE DOCUMENT LAST WINTER BLACK POWER IDEA LONG IN PLANNING." *New York Times (1923-Current File)*, Aug 05, 1966.

participate at all in SNCC and responses from white people who were a part of the organization. This article greatly impacted SNCC losing most of its funding and participation after it was published. You can see the results of this in the NYT article that came out a few months later about how civil rights movements were declining on college campuses and which resulted in Bard interviewee Martha being kicked out and asked to “Find her own struggle.” Although SNCC lost a lot of momentum because of this they still continued to organize with more of a focus towards the anti-war movement that was beginning to happen. SNCC still exists today and continues to fight for and support organizations that organize for civil rights.

### ***Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)***

The Congress of Racial Equality<sup>17</sup> or CORE was born in 1942 from inspiration of Mahatma Gandhi’s strategy of nonviolent protest. Students Chicago-Bernice Fisher, James R. Robinson, James L. Farmer, Joe Guinn, George Houser, and Homer Jack began the group at the University of Chicago. CORE was the beginning of the trend for nonviolent protest across the country. They were able to expand quickly as they traveled the country with Bayard Rustin, an influential civil rights leader and political organizer, to help employ direct actions such as sit-ins, jail-ins, and freedom rides. Because CORE was founded on interracial participation it was easy to recruit students and community members of all backgrounds. CORE successfully helped integrate public spaces in the North and advocated for systemic change through the Supreme Court. CORE went on independently for a number of years before joining forces with SNCC in 1960. They helped SNCC to organize Freedom Rides, develop their jail-in strategy, assist in

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<sup>17</sup> The History of CORE, 2014. <http://www.core-online.org/History/history.htm>.



education projects, co-sponsor the March on Washington, and assisted in Freedom Summer. COREs shift towards Black power and Black only leadership happened a few years before SNCC in 1963. With over 53 chapters that operated in the North, the West, and the South they found it to be best if more Black people took on the higher positions in the organization than white college students. They also got rid of the recruitment policy of having interracial membership in their chapters. Much like SNCC, this caused a decline in participation in the organization as well as questioning of those who were in charge. In 1966, the national director, James Farmer, stepped down and the organization went through another leader before Roy Innis took charge and remained a leader until his death in 2017.

In my experience, CORE is less talked about than SNCC despite it being the influence for a lot of the work that SNCC did and still aims to do. CORE does have an online presence that details the history of the organization, how to get involved, and current updates about the organization. It does not have as much as a developed archive as the SNCC digital gateway does, but it does offer useful<sup>18</sup> information that is worth exploring.

### *Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)*

The Students for a Democratic Society<sup>19</sup> or SDS was founded in 1959 as a branch of the League for Industrial Democracy. Like many other organizations at the time, SDS was founded on the principles of nonviolence with an aim to fix the inequalities in America, specifically equality, economic justice, peace, and participation in democracy. There are no sources as to the official

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<sup>18</sup> I believe their archive is not as extensive as SNCC's due to the lack of funding that they had and the immense amount of debt that they struggled to recover from as the height of the movement was ending. With Innis's death in 2017, CORE may also be struggling to stay alive and find new leadership to upkeep the website and their archives.

<sup>19</sup> "Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Archives and Resources," Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Archives and Resources, accessed May 2, 2021, <https://www.sds-1960s.org/index.htm>.

chapter locations of SDS, but it can be assumed that it expanded everywhere in the United States as they had over 50,000 members by 1968<sup>20</sup>. SDS participants were mostly white, middle classed, college students as we saw when members of BRAC talked about their involvement in the organization. Their numbers most likely began to increase as white students began to gravitate towards them after being asked to leave SNCC and CORE and to find their own struggle. SDS most likely took advantage of this surge of white students looking for a cause to fight for and began organizing against the Vietnam War. The slogan “Make love-not war” was the SDS rally cry that still lives on today. The fall of SDS was a little more direct and quicker than the fall of SNCC and CORE. After the Vietnam War, the FBI became involved as SDS was suspected of “terrorist” activities and the hierarchies of the organization crumbled quickly with the mounting pressure of surveillance. By the middle of the 1970’s SDS no longer existed. SDS is now attempting to put together a digital archive in order to preserve the history and the missions of the group.

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<sup>20</sup> “Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Archives and Resources,” Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Archives and Resources, accessed May 2, 2021, <https://www.sds-1960s.org/index.htm>.

## The Switch From Activism to Civic Engagement

The Civil Rights Movement had a lasting impact on the America that we see today. The movement pushed for the creation of The Voting Rights Act, the Fair Housing Act, and The Civil Rights Act. The Civil Rights Act made segregation of race, religion, or national origin illegal at any public accommodation, discrimination of race, religion, national origin, and gender by employers and labor unions illegal, and the use of federal funding to assist in school desegregation illegal as well. Although these forms of direct discrimination were made illegal those who wish to keep structural racism find a way around the law. With this, we saw redlining, voter restriction and oppression, gentrification, and many others that were reimaged in our present moment. Because the Civil Rights Movement garnered so much support from the youth, i.e., high school and college students, the way in which advocacy for change occurred also had to change.

A part of the civil rights movement that is not often focused upon is the backlash they faced from those in politics and the media. While many Black Civil Rights groups had the policy of nonviolence, the mere audacity to protest structural racism was violent in the eyes of those who upheld it. In 1963, Justice Charles Whittaker publically critiqued President John F. Kennedy for getting behind the Civil Rights Act<sup>21</sup>:

“[t]he fact that some self-appointed Negro leaders who, while professing a philosophy of nonviolence, actually tell large groups of poor and uneducated Negroes...whom they have harangued, aroused, and inflamed, to a high pitch of tensions, that they should go forth and force the whites to grant them their rights... Inflamed by the

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<sup>21</sup> Katherine Beckett, “Creating the Crime Issue,” in *Making Crime Pay: Law and Order in Contemporary American Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 28-42.

preachments of self-appointed leaders of minority groups...[who told their followers]...to obey the good law but to violate the bad ones... This simply advocates the violation of the laws they do not like...and the taking of the law into their own hands.” Sociologists who study the Civil Rights Movement have brought to light how the rhetoric of that moment shaped the way in which law and order is conducted in the United States. There were many who shared the same thinking of Justice Whittaker: wanting to be equal in America was an act of violence, no matter how non-violent the protests were. It is actually astounding to see how easily those being hunted, bombed, shot, and lynched were characterized as enemies of the state, despite the fact that they never retaliated. This rhetoric that Civil Rights activists were a threat to the state continued throughout the height of the movement and even became a basis for presidential elections. Most Republican segregationists supported 1964 presidential candidate Barry Goldwater, as he promised to instill law and order back in America. During one of his campaign speeches he stated:

“Tonight there is violence in our streets, corruption in our highest offices, aimlessness among our youth, anxiety among our elderly... Security from domestic violence, no less than from foreign aggression, is the most elementary form and fundamental purpose of any government, and a government that cannot fulfill this purpose is one that cannot command the loyalty of its citizens. History shows us that nothing prepares the way for tyranny more than the failure of public officials to keep the streets safe from bullies and marauders. We Republicans seek a government that attends to its fiscal climate, encouraging a free and a competitive economy and enforcing law and order.

Although it was said very briefly, Goldwaters comment about aimlessness among the youth was telling. High school and college students were one of the major driving forces behind the Civil Rights movement and without their participation and support, I don't think many things that came out of that period would have succeeded. Goldwaters statement was very boldly misinforming, but also lets us know that the way in which youth engage in activism is not taken

seriously or seen as legitimate, no matter how influential. Other politicians quickly followed suit to mirror Goldwaters statements, conflating actual street crime with those who were being civilly “disobedient”. In fact this conflation caused the FBI statistics of violent crimes to rise 129% in a 9 year period (1960-1969) because Civil Rights protests were being classified as such.

After the Civil Rights Movement transitioned to the Anti-War movement against the Vietnam War, a serious reconstruction of how activism occurs in the United States occurred. This is how we arrived at the present moment of civic engagement. There are many different classifications of civic engagement. The most common classifications being: activism/advocacy, civic learning, community service/volunteering, service learning, and philanthropy/fundraising. The most common types that are referenced to in the conversation of civic engagement, especially in institutions of learning, are civic learning and community service/volunteerism. Civic learning<sup>22</sup> is the acquiring of knowledge of community, government, social issues, or political issues with or without the application of the knowledge. Community service/volunteerism occurs when you engage in activities to benefit others or one’s community; such activities may or may not involve structured training and reflection. Many scholars argue that civic engagement is not a luxury that is afforded to low-income communities because of access to opportunities and a language gap.<sup>23</sup>

“Young people are most likely to become civically engaged when they are in settings, such as faith-based institutions, workplaces, schools, and community organizations, where they become knowledgeable about issues and about how to take action on them, where they are asked by someone to join an organization or attend a meeting, or where normative pressures encourage them to participate in civic

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<sup>22</sup> “Types of Civic Engagement,” Types of Civic Engagement | Center for Civic Engagement - Illinois State (Center for Civic Engagement at Illinois State University, February 19, 2021), <https://civicengagement.illinoisstate.edu/faculty-staff/engagement-types/>.

<sup>23</sup> Flanagan, Constance, and Peter Levine. "Civic Engagement and the Transition to Adulthood." *The Future of Children* 20, no. 1 (2010): 159-79. Accessed May 5, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27795064>.

affairs...Inequalities in political participation among young Americans are rooted in the differing education and political involvement of their parents. Parents of high socioeconomic status pass on their children such advantages as political awareness, access to community and educational resources, and, ultimately, the child's own educational attainment. Parental education is a more powerful predictor of a young adult child's voting than is parental profession or income, though, not surprisingly, its influence diminishes over time as a child's adult roles and the normative pressures associated with them begin to shape habits of civic participation. Voting in young adulthood entails certain "costs," such as learning about political parties and about the registration and voting process; in addition, peers of young adults are more likely to be non-voters. Having better educated parents overcomes many of these costs and also increases normative pressures to be engaged."

This is from a 2010 Princeton University study about the transition to adulthood and civic engagement. The population for this study did not seem very diverse in who was studied for patterns of civic activity, but I can conclude that not many Black youth were included. The only population that they stated to have "directly" engaged with was the children of immigrant parents with no specification on where they immigrated from. The same study goes on to say: "Belonging to at least one group, attending religious services at least monthly, belonging to a union, reading newspapers at least once a week, voting, being contacted by a political party, working on a community project, attending club meetings, and believing that people are trustworthy. Only in a tenth form of citizenship-volunteering-are they more likely to participate, probably as a result of deliberate efforts over the past several decades by schools, colleges, and community groups to encourage volunteering." This study was written in 2010 that looked at trends of engagement during the 1970's until the early 2000's, which raises questions as to why they did not include the happenings of the 1960's where youth were super involved in all these categories. I believe that this time period was not included in their research because it is easy to erase the story of Black youth organizing in churches, political campaigns, community projects,

volunteering, etc in order to continue the narrative that Black, underprivileged youth do not organize in the more respectable way. A sociological study in 2013 about youth achievement really drives home this point.

“Importantly, poor and working-class youth may not be invested in the community, but language of “civic engagement” and “volunteerism” may not resonate with youth who are not college educated or bound. Socioeconomic disparities, therefore, in levels of engagement are linked to the contexts in which young people encounter institutional opportunities for civic involvement and a sense of efficacy.”

Civic engagement is not meant to be accessible to those outside of institutions of higher learning, but to serve as a form of gatekeeping. If you do not go on to seek secondary education the work you may do in your community will never receive the noble title of being “civically engaged.” This is done purposely to allow white students who want to help out politically to boost their resume and to also instill the rhetoric that Black people who organize are no more than disruptors of law and order.

## **The Emergence of Civic Engagement at Bard**

Bard College in its current state has two major entities that aim to get its students civilly engaged: The Trustee Leadership Scholar Program (commonly known as TLS) and the Center for Civic Engagement (commonly known as CCE). I have participated extensively in both of these programs making me a product of Black respectability in organizing. When I discovered how we have arrived at a time where the language of being civically engaged is not afforded to Black organizers who do not have a college education, I knew that I had to find out more information about how these offices came to be at Bard. I work very closely with Paul Marienthal, the founder and current director of the TLS programs, and knew that he had been at the college for a very long time, even before the CCE existed. I looked a little into the student newspapers to gain insight on how TLS came to be, but decided that an oral history of the program and its evolution would be better. I sat down with Paul and he gave me a complete rundown of the TLS history:

“Yeah. All right. So the origin of the TLS project, like many things at Bard. Um, Just kind of happened, it wasn't, it wasn't perfectly well thought out ahead of time, it actually came through the athletic department. The college was concerned at that time that perhaps there were too many. Art students on campus and too many women on campus, that college was heading towards being a women's art school. They wanted to make sure that demographically the college attracted people broadly across the board so that the college came to the athletic department and said, can you guys come up with a plan, a leadership plan that will attract [respectable men] who want to do something at the college. I was asked because I have a background in all kinds of education and I have a master's degree in clinical psychology, and I had worked on high ropes courses and have done a lot of coaching and a lot of facilitating things in generally athletic, the athletic department asked if I would help them think it through and I put something together that I thought I could do and I wanted to do it. I was looking for a job, and so I put together a program that I was pretty sure I might be the only one who could do it. That's just that, by the way, that's a good piece of advice for getting jobs in the future. Somebody ask you to put together something, put something together that only you can do if you want the job.”



Paul's brief history not only highlighted the fact that Bard was more than happy to actively engage in gatekeeping, but also that the college wanted more white male youth to attend in order to give the college more credibility.

"I had about two or three days to do it. The trustees saw it. It was presented at a trustees meeting and the college came back and said, "Well, do you want to do it?" I said, "Yes, I do." At that time, it was loosely connected with the athletic department, but it became very clear very quickly that it wasn't going to stay as a part of the athletic department. Originally the test program was connected through the admissions office and it was a part of the admissions packet. You could actually apply to the TLS program, which also turned out to be not very useful because the people who applied were often sort of semi-do gooders in high school who were clicking on resume boxes but didn't really mean business. So that lasted for one season...I read maybe 100 applications and I took about 20 people, and of the 20 people I took, at least half of them really had no interest in doing anything. They just put it down as a scholarship thing, so very quickly, we just open it up to everybody, anybody who had a good idea. And that proved to be. You know, I was actually told by a number of people, "We have no idea whether Bard's students are going to respond to this or not. There's no way to know." But pretty quickly, they did. There was a lot of interest on the campus. I went from 12 students to 20 students to 35 students in three years. So there was a lot of interest, actually, some of the first early projects are still going. The very first project was the Astor Home Project, which is still going."

Paul surprised me because I could not have imagined that TLS was something that you applied for and that participants in the program are more than semi-do gooders. I beg to differ as I see many students upon graduation throw away the service learning through the program and go down very different paths that do not lead back to civic engagement work. Because the program started during the Spring of 1997, Bard was not yet as diverse as it is in its current state. There were never any Black students leading this project, until the first person integrated the office in 2011.

### **Meditations on Bard with Karimah Shabazz**

I had heard many stories about the woman who was the first Black person to have a TLS project at Bard. I had never met her, but she lived on in the memory of Dariel Vasquez, the founder of the TLS project, now CCE initiative, Brothers at Bard. Dariel, who was also a History major during his time at Bard, was telling me how unfortunate it is that people do not know the history of the Black students who paved the way for us to thrive on campus. He then began to tell me about Karimah Shabazz, the first Black person to have a project in the TLS office. Although I didn't know Karimah at the time, I would end up meeting her later through my own TLS project, The Black Body Experience Conference. Because of our prior relationship, it was a lot easier for me to get in contact with Karimah and interview her to hear about how she came to be the first Black TLS project and how it was to be at Bard during such political moments in America. She came to Bard in 2011 and was here throughout the Obama administration, the rise of social media, and the beginning of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2013. I went into my conversation with Karimah expecting to only learn about her TLS project, but was surprised to learn that Karimah had contributed much more to Bard. Her first year at Bard she began, Building Up Hudson, a TLS project with three other Posse scholars. These scholars were Durante Barringer, Jonathan White, and Brandon LaBord. These men were a year older than Karimah and had been volunteering in the Hudson community, prior to her arrival. Their volunteering was never officially made into a TLS project, until Karimah began working with them. With her help they pitched the idea to Paul, found community partners, and the project was on its way.

“So it was four of us who was leading Building Up Hudson. And we were I mean, at the time when I was first year, I believe we were the only black students who were in TLS

and were TLS scholars. And so, yeah, that that's what it looked like. It was us. The other projects that were being run largely by white students. There are also some Latinx students as well. But it was just interesting to know to see what the projects were and also kind of this differentiation between like what the projects were and who the project was for versus who was leading it. So, you know, you would have projects that were meant to support, you know, maybe communities of color or communities with other marginalized identities. But then the leadership, it was led by white students. So that was interesting. So I know I appreciated that, you know, from our background, you know. Black students, some of those first generation with low income, we have those identities that also was in alignment with the students who we were hoping to to serve and work with.”

Because TLS had been white for so long, I asked Karimah how it was for the students they were helping to have volunteers that looked like them.

“They were really excited. I mean, we first tried to, you know, put the program within Hudson High School. We wanted to we met with the principal there and other leaders. We wanted to have a space where we would come to the school to have a classroom so students don't have to leave campus to receive tutoring, and mentoring support, that we ran up against a wall because there was a lot of different, you know, just barriers there. So, for instance, you know, being within this public school, they would have to make sure, I think, that background checks were done on anyone who was coming in and out. And that kind of posed a challenge for us because with our program, it was us. We're leading it. But then we also had students who were participating, so who were serving as the tutors and the mentors. And so we didn't always have a super consistent roster. Because you're a college student, you know, sometimes people sign up for something and they're like, oh, I got too busy. I can't do it anymore, you know, like sometimes like we had our consistent folks. But then sometimes it was kind of a revolving door where people signed up and couldn't do it anymore or people started hearing about it and then they want to be a part of it. And so that was a little challenging, was like trying to make sure everyone got background checks and fingerprinted. And then there was also the challenge of like, OK, you all will need a classroom space because you're on site. Will also need like a teacher or someone who's in the space with us all. So that also means someone would have to dedicate their time after they're scheduled to be at work to stay behind. So we ran up against those things.”

Karimah spoke to something that is common amongst TLS leaders: finding a place to organize and having a sustainable team of volunteers to keep the project alive. Luckily the stars aligned for Karimah and her team when they attended a chancellors meeting in

Hudson. They met Elena Mosley, the executive director for Operation Unite, a nonprofit in Hudson, New York. Mosley introduced herself to the group after hearing them advocate for more funding in schools for after school programs. She offered them a place to operate from and students to mentor. The team jumped at the opportunity.

“And so that's how we basically fortified ourselves. And she was just thrilled, like she was happy. Most of the people who participated in Building Up Hudson were also folks of color as well. So it was really great having college students who know look like them and who could connect with them. And we just started building out the program. And eventually I was the sole leader of it because they eventually graduated because Brandon was two years older than me and John and Durante. They were one year older than me. And so we started developing committees with been Building Up Hudson. We had a fundraising committee, so we were infamous for our bake sales. We would hold our bake sales in the campus center. And we also had a college mentor team like a curriculum team who like, focused on what what, what the content would be and other things as well, a publicity squad. So they focused on kind of the the media aspect, trying to get the word out about our bake sales and just about Building Up Hudson and we would fundraise. So we eventually the first year we gave a 250 dollar scholarship. I think the next year we were able to move to 500. And then eventually, because our bake sales were so lucrative, I. We're coming off, we did a benefit concert, we did other things, and we were eventually able to move up to three 500 dollar scholarships to graduating seniors.”

As someone who participated in Building Up Hudson my freshman year at Bard, I was delighted to hear about its origins and just how impactful it was for the students who participated in the program. I made sure to thank Karimah for her contributions to the project as it really helped to shape my first year experience in helping those students in Hudson. We then went on to talk more about her experience at Bard and what she had done with her 3 years on the Annandale campus, as she had studied abroad one year.

“Yeah. So I don't really know what I know. It's shifted like they're trying to make it into now. So I'll say I remember you know, for what is it, citizen science. You have that day day of service and. OK, well you know the MLK Day of Service, my year, it was just the day of service and it was on it was obvious that it was connected to Martin Luther King Day. But there was no mention of Martin Luther King Jr. or why that day of service was taking place, which was connected to Martin Luther King Jr. and his legacy. And I

remember we did the thing where you sign up to go to one of these places and to service at this location. And then we had like this talk back at the end. And I remember Erin Canan was there too, we were in MPR. You know, we were broken off and I said, you know, I'm from Atlanta. So, you know, Martin Luther King Day is a big thing like parades and stuff and flew all the things. And so I said, you know, this day, obviously, we're participating in this day of service, obviously, in connection with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. And there was no mention of him today. You know, obviously, there's definitely like politics was like, MLK, you know, I even when I voice this on some students on our trip, you know, I brought up like, this is MLK Day and they're like, well, you know, there's issue with MLK. Because I'm like, I get that. I hear that. And there's no way you can \*zoom glitch\* . And so I said, you know, we have a say. And so the first this is like the moment when I realized that my voice had power because then it changed. The next year, 2012, it became the MLK Day of service. And so I remember telling she like well, like we didn't think about that. Like, y'all ain't think about that? Y'all didn't think about the fact that you have a day of service, obviously, in connection with MLK Day, but you ain't make no mention of this night. And so it changed like it changed. And that is why is now the MLK Day of Service during Citizen Science. A part of it, I wonder if other people brought up that issue, but I know I did. I also knew she was like a dean of something on campus. And I'm like you need to hear this cause y'all need to change this.”

That’s right, you heard it here first, Karimah is the reason for why Bard acknowledges Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the Citizen Science day of service. I thought it had always been an acknowledgement of Dr. King's legacy, as many universities across the country use the holiday to serve the community. I was not surprised to hear that it was not originally acknowledged as I feel it is common to erase the original purpose behind holidays, especially as it relates to Black people and culture.

“So I believe I was a sophomore. Maybe like spring semester, and so we were talking about, you know, I was talking about, you know, just this lack of institutional support, like, you know, it went into that conversation, like the onus falls on students to put on these events, to do these things. But there's no structure. There's no institutional support. And so there lacks accountability, you know, and so it basically led into, ya’ know, student government having these conversations and it developed into having a chair in student government, the Multicultural Diversity Committee chair that you had never been a part of, student government. And so they did it. They're like, yeah, we're going to do it.

And they did vote someone in who at the time was a senior. But that person never didn't really go anywhere like that person was voted in maybe for like the last couple of months of that semester and nothing really happened. And so I I was essentially the first chair to take it on. We started doing things. We did a campus climate survey<sup>24</sup>. I still have access to the campus climate survey.”

When I heard Karimah say that the Multicultural and Diversity Committee didn't start until her time at Bard, I was genuinely surprised. I had thought it had always been a part of student government as it seemed like such an important part of the larger scheme of things. When I arrived at Bard in 2014, they had multiple spaces on campus, one in Kappa House<sup>25</sup> and one in Sawkill Coffee House, so I thought that they had been well established for a long time and not just 4 year prior to my arrival. The MDC hosts many cultural events on campus and conversations around topics relating to race, culture, and diversity. They also assist in helping similar initiatives on campus and work with the affinity clubs as well. Something that the MDC fought for was a space for students of color on campus. This space was supposed to be what is now the Sawkill Coffee House. Although it was pitched as a multicultural space, Karimah shared a screenshot of an email that went out to the student body in regards to what Sawkill would be.

“Dear Bard Community, I'm pleased and honored to deliver some exciting news, the first being a triumph of sorts for the student body. Because of the many students that have spoke up and out about the need for student space and because of the administrators who recognized that need, Student Government has acquired a space to create a 24-hour Student Study Space and Coffee House on north campus. The dorm, known as Sawkill, is currently undergoing construction for this project. The goals of the space encompass the many concerns students have been expressing for sometime now. Sawkill will have 24-hour capabilities, a fully functioning coffee and tea business run by students, and be a place for both studying and socializing. The hope is that Sawkill will be a place of intersection between the academic and social realms of student life, giving literal space to

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<sup>24</sup> A campus climate survey was completed in 2019 as well. I wanted to compare the results of both surveys in my project, but the data was not compiled in time for me to do so.

<sup>25</sup> Kappa House is a space on campus for students who are under the umbrella of the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

foster this exchange that already exists in most of our lives at Bard. In addition to this 24 hour student space, the LUX Lending Library and EMS will also be moving into Sawkill. Other club spaces are also being worked into the plan in progress. The Learning Commons will be expanding into the EMS space under Stone Row. That will not affect the Root Cellar in any way. The project will be con-funded by both the administration and student government. The space should be fully operable in the beginning of the spring semester. I understand there will be plenty of questions about such a space, and I welcome them.”

This was sent out by the speaker of the student body and as you can see there was no direct mention of the MDC having a room in the space. Karimah expressed that many on campus were opposed to the idea of having a space for students of color, namely the current president of the college, Leon Botstein. He believed these types of spaces to be exclusionary and segregationist, which I believe may have contributed to the struggle in acquiring a space specifically for students of color. When I arrived at Bard there was a mural in Sawkill that was similar to the one in Kappa House, that was meant to indicate a place of diversity. Upperclassmen told me about the story of how that room used to be the designated space for the MDC, but was moved when students defaced the mural. The new space was a small room in Kappa House that would just be used for council meetings, before they were moved again to a room in the campus center that served as a space for all of student government. Although Karimah never got to see a space for students of color at Bard, she was happy to hear that my class was able to achieve that goal with the birth of Gilson Place<sup>26</sup> in collaboration with the MDC.

Talking with Karimah only solidified the purpose of my project and how important it is to speak with people who were here and can give detailed accounts of how things occur and took

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<sup>26</sup> Gilson Place is a space on campus solely for students of color.

shape over time. I don't believe that anyone knew that Sawkill was originally pitched to be a space for students of color and I do not think anyone would have known. This is why it is so important to archive student demands so that it can be in the public record for students, staff, and faculty, who want institutional change, to engage with so that it is not forgotten every 4 year, when the classes who advocated for change graduate.



## The Role of Social Media in Student Activism

I can only imagine what social media would have looked like if our ancestors had it to advocate for themselves and to network with. The rise of social media<sup>27</sup> has no doubt changed the way in which we communicate and share information with one another in our present moment. Sites like Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, and Twitter have been especially useful in organizing around social justice movements like Occupy Wall Street, Arab Spring, #BlackLivesMatter, and #SayHerName to recruit volunteers, begin chapters, and raise awareness around social issues in the United States on national, local, and institutional levels<sup>28</sup>.

These social media sites have billions of users from all over the globe with access to information and to share it with the touch of your fingers. The internet may have a lot of problems when it comes to sharing and spreading information, but it has proven to be a great resource for archiving information as well. Once it's on the internet, it never really goes away.

### *#BlackLivesMatter*

#BlackLivesMatter<sup>29</sup> was first used in 2013 in a Facebook post after the acquittal of George Zimmerman. It then resurfaced again after the shooting of Michael Brown in 2014. The hashtag was used at an average of 58,747<sup>30</sup> times in the 3 week period after his death. When Michael Brown's murderer was not indicted, the hashtag was used over 1.7 million times within a 3 week period. Today Black Lives Matter has become a household entity, whether you agree

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<sup>27</sup> Esteban Ortiz-Ospina, September 18, 2019.

<sup>28</sup> With the rise of social media, I believe it is harder to track how trends build off one another, at least outright. With more time and research, I am sure I would see interesting parallels into how more modern justice movements have influenced one another.

<sup>29</sup> "Black Lives Matter Timeline," n.d.

<sup>30</sup> Monica Anderson, "History of the Hashtag #BlackLivesMatter: Social Activism on Twitter," Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech (Pew Research Center, December 31, 2019), <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2016/08/15/the-hashtag-blacklivesmatter-emerges-social-activism-on-twitter/>.

with the movement or not. It is known that Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, 3 Black queer movement, were the ones who began the movement originally in 2013. On the Black Lives Matter website they share their story of resistance and how the hashtag became to be such a global sensation. The following statement can be found on the Black Lives Matter website<sup>31</sup>:

“The project is now a member-led global network of more than 40 chapters. Our members organize and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks’ humanity, our contributions to this society, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression. As organizers who work with everyday people, BLM members see and understand significant gaps in movement spaces and leadership. Black liberation movements in this country have created room, space, and leadership mostly for Black heterosexual, cisgender men — leaving women, queer and transgender people, and others either out of the movement or in the background to move the work forward with little or no recognition. As a network, we have always recognized the need to center the leadership of women and queer and trans people. To maximize our movement muscle, and to be intentional about not replicating harmful practices that excluded so many in past movements for liberation, we made a commitment to placing those at the margins closer to the center. As #BlackLivesMatter developed throughout 2013 and 2014, we utilized it as a platform and organizing tool. Other groups, organizations, and individuals used it to amplify anti-Black racism across the country, in all the ways it showed up. Tamir Rice, Tanisha Anderson, Mya Hall, Walter Scott, Sandra Bland — these names are inherently important. The space that #BlackLivesMatter held and continues to hold helped propel the conversation around the state-sanctioned violence they experienced. We particularly highlighted the egregious ways in which Black women, specifically Black trans women, are violated. #BlackLivesMatter was developed in support of all Black lives. In 2014, Mike Brown was murdered by Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson. It was a guttural response to be with our people, our family — in support of the brave and courageous community of Ferguson and St. Louis as they were being brutalized by law enforcement, criticized by media, tear gassed, and pepper sprayed night after night. Darnell Moore and Patrisse Cullors organized a national ride during Labor Day weekend that year. We called it the Black Life Matters Ride. In 15 days, we developed a plan of action to head to the occupied territory to support our brothers and sisters. Over 600 people gathered. We made two commitments: to support the team on the

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<sup>31</sup> “Herstory,” Black Lives Matter, September 7, 2019, <https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/>.

ground in St. Louis, and to go back home and do the work there. We understood Ferguson was not an aberration, but in fact, a clear point of reference for what was happening to Black communities everywhere. When it was time for us to leave, inspired by our friends in Ferguson, organizers from 18 different cities went back home and developed Black Lives Matter chapters in their communities and towns — broadening the political will and movement building reach catalyzed by the #BlackLivesMatter project and the work on the ground in Ferguson. It became clear that we needed to continue organizing and building Black power across the country. People were hungry to galvanize their communities to end state-sanctioned violence against Black people, the way Ferguson organizers and allies were doing. Soon we created the Black Lives Matter Global Network infrastructure. It is adaptive and decentralized, with a set of guiding principles. Our goal is to support the development of new Black leaders, as well as create a network where Black people feel empowered to determine our destinies in our communities. The Black Lives Matter Global Network would not be recognized worldwide if it weren't for the folks in St. Louis and Ferguson who put their bodies on the line day in and day out, and who continue to show up for Black lives.”

This detailed account gives shape to the often faceless organization that many may imagine when they hear Black Lives Matter. I see traces of the Civil Rights Movement in the way the Black Lives Matters ride was organized, much like the Freedom Riders of SNCC and CORE. Although their organizing may have done some good in Ferguson, BLM has often been criticized for their capitalization of the movement and for those who were already doing work in the community. These criticisms are often made on social media sites like Twitter and Facebook. Most notably Samaria Rice, mother of Tamir Rice, came out to speak about how displeased she is with the way that Black Lives Matter has evolved and the faces that they have to represent it. She said that activists like Tamika Mallory, Shaun King, and even the founders of BLM are capitalizing off the attention the movement gets without any consideration for the family and their needs<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> Weekly Check In Podcast, “Ark Republic,” *Ark Republic* (blog), March 31, 2021, <https://www.arkrepublic.com/2021/03/31/after-the-funeral-they-drop-you-samaria-rice-other-parents-claim-activists-lawyers-misguide-the-black-lives-matter-movement/>.

Because BLM is such a faceless and nameless organization and it is not always clear who is running what and where donations always go. I have always had the assumption that it operated this way in order to prevent infiltration from government organizations like the FBI and the CIA that often led to downfalls of Black political movements in our country. However, as time has passed, I wonder if the three original leaders of the movement, Alicia, Patrisse, and Opal, may have acquired a fame that took off quicker than they expected and have no idea what to do with. Unlike the days of BRAC, it is fairly easy to sign up to become a chapter with the organization. You can simply send an email to the organization or even list yourself as a chapter, unofficially. While everyone may not agree with the methods, ideology, or the founders of BLM, many do resonate with the saying and the call that Black Lives do indeed Matter and sometimes that is enough to unite those who fight against the injustices in America.

### *Million Hoodies for Justice*

Dante Barry and Daniel Marea founded Million Hoodies for Justice in 2012 after the murder of Trayvon Martin to advocate for the arrest and imprisonment of his murderer, George Zimmerman. They garnered over 2 million signatures on Change.Org, but it was not enough to have him imprisoned. Although Zimmerman was charged with 2nd degree murder, he was acquitted and freed on July 13th, 2012. Million Hoodies for Justice wanted to change the perspective on Black youth in America, while also tackling issues of racial profiling, police brutality, and the prison industrial complex. Million Hoodies for Justice had over 50,000 members in cities and universities across the country. I was a part of Million Hoodies for Justice my first year on campus. While I was not a direct leader of the organization, I was very familiar

with the founder Dante Barry and the work that he did to help organize students on Bards campus. After my first year, in 2017, participation in our campus chapter decreased until it ceased to exist all together. There was a disagreement between Dante and campus leaders and I believe that may have contributed to the decline in participation on campus. Million Hoodies for Justice stopped existing and now exists under the current rebranding of Brighter Days for Justice.<sup>33</sup> This rebrand started in 2020 and it is not clear why it occurred. The organization's current mission statement is listed on their new website. "Brighter Days for Justice works in relation to the music industry, house music, and the criminal justice reform field to bring people together around social causes and popular music that champion issues that matter to everyday people and re-energize the music industry to impact people's hearts."

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<sup>33</sup> "Brighter Days for Justice on Strikingly," Brighter Days for Justice, 2019, [https://brighterdaysforjustice.mystrikingly.com/?link\\_id=0&can\\_id=10e41f68436a27fd4b52d407e8ee0a1e&source=email-announcing-the-black-lives-matter-awards&email\\_referrer=email\\_1162812&email\\_subject=announcing-the-black-lives-matter-awards](https://brighterdaysforjustice.mystrikingly.com/?link_id=0&can_id=10e41f68436a27fd4b52d407e8ee0a1e&source=email-announcing-the-black-lives-matter-awards&email_referrer=email_1162812&email_subject=announcing-the-black-lives-matter-awards).

## **Social Media and its Effects on Campus Activism**

During my interview with Karimah, she mentioned a social media site called Yik Yak. Yik Yak was a public forum that only worked in a 5 mile radius of other users of the app. You could make anonymous threads and users could like or dislike the post. The app was created in 2013 and has since been discontinued. At Bard, the app caused quite a stir when a racist thread was posted on the app. There is no memory of what exactly was said, but it was enough for students to go to administration and request to have the app banned on campus. When students voiced this concern they were met with a lot of pushback with administrators insisting that there was nothing they could do. This is a common problem when racism occurs on online forums. It is hard to pinpoint who posted what, who to hold accountable, and how to handle it when the situation arises. However, as time went on and tensions began to rise, the app was banned on campus. Although Yik Yak was banned it was hard to curb other social media giants like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter when racist occurrences happened.

During my time at Bard, I have experienced and seen a number of racist attacks on social media. My first experience with racism online was when myself, another student, and a staff member received an email with the subject line, "What's up nigger bitch," and the body saying "GO BACK TO AFRICA you fucking CUNTS," during my Summer intersession in 2018. I immediately brought this to the attention of Bethany Nohlgren and former director of security, Ken Cooper. Ken promptly responded with "Ugh- we are investigating these emails- they are being sent most likely from a basement in Jersey! No one from our community. I will forward to investigator." Needless to say I was more than displeased with Ken's response. I did not believe

for one second that this was the act of a random stranger in a Jersey basement and I was right to do so. It turned out that it was indeed a Bard alum, who had not sent an email only to us, but to other women of color on campus. He was a part of a larger incel group in the United States that was being investigated by the FBI. He was banned from all campus connections and we were even offered the option to write him a letter about the incident, I declined the opportunity.

Another instance of racism via social media occurs when an Instagram page called Bard Shade was created. Bard Shade was a page where you could submit “tea”, confessions, and other things via a Google form and remain anonymous. Many students took issue with the page as they felt it would cause unnecessary tensions on campus and they were right to have that feeling. Not long after the page's creation in 2018, a submission saying something along the lines of “The Black kids that sit in the back of Kline are so mean and rude.” This resulted in an outrage amongst the Black students at Bard, myself included. I remember our immediate response being to take over the middle of Kline, playing music, and sarcastically asking people to sit with us. Bard Shade was taken down shortly after and it was never revealed who ran the page and because the post was submitted anonymously there was no way to tell who originally submitted it. Ariana Stokas, our former Dean of Inclusive Excellence at Bard, responded by placing culturally informative pamphlets on the tables of Kline that were relevant to educate those on why the incident was racist.

Although social media did have a lot of downfalls, it also has been helpful in some regards. In 2014 at Harvard, there was a photo campaign called #ITooAmHarvard that was created to address microaggressions, but to also highlight the face and voices of Black students at the prestigious university. This campaign took place before Instagram was popular, so it was

archived on Tumblr and still remains there until this day. In solidarity with Harvard, Bard also did a version of this campaign, with the photographs also being on Tumblr for you to view under #ITooAmBard. In 2015, The Black Liberation Collective<sup>34</sup> called for Black students across the globe to participate in #StudentBlackOut, a day of action dedicated to ending racial injustice. Students were encouraged to create a list of demands for their institutions in order to help curb racial injustice on campus. Bard participated in this day of action with ours being called Black Out Bard and their demands can be found on the website. We did a second iteration of Black Out Bard in 2017, my freshman year, in partnership with those participating in Millions Hoodies for Justice and live streamed the event on Facebook to be saved in archived. I had no idea the origins of where the Black Out came from, but it was a good and catchy title to have. Going back through the list of demands, I saw that they did recognize Black Out Bard as an iteration of so many of these protests happening around the country, it was just not something that was commonly discussed amongst the volunteers. Both sets of demands, just a few years apart, can be read in the table below:

<p>Bard College Students of Color Demands 2015</p> <p>November 23, 2016</p> <p>In light of recent events at Mizzou, Yale, and other schools across the country, students, administrators, and community members at Bard College came together on Wednesday, November 18th at 12:00PM at Ludlow Lawn to show support for and solidarity with Black</p>	<p><b><sup>35</sup>Bard College Students of Color Demands 2018</b></p> <p>It has been nearly two and half years since Bard College’s historic Blackout at Bard student manifestation , this was done in conjunction with 85 other American colleges and universities. Nonetheless, we firmly believe that there is a lack of inclusivity that</p>
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<sup>34</sup> “#StudentBlackOut,” Black Liberation Collective, 2015, <http://www.blackliberationcollective.org/first-campaign>.

<sup>35</sup> “Google Document,” 2018.



students across the country who are fighting back against institutional racism and other forms of oppression.

Our Call to Action: “We, students at Bard College, recognize that in order for these institutional oppressions to end, everyone needs to get involved. There is no room for inaction. We ask that you leave your classes, your jobs, your meetings, to show that Bard is more than a place to think, that we are doing more than copying and pasting Facebook statuses, that we want to and need to actively dismantle systemic racism so that Black students can go to class without fear.”

We need to acknowledge that these problems are not only far away. Bard is complicit in systemic racism and, as members of this community, it is up to us to fight against it. In an effort to keep the conversations from the Black Out alive and ensure that each member of

the Bard College community is accountable for the ongoing issues regarding race, diversity, and inclusion on campus we propose the following solutions:

1. Bard College must hire more people of color as faculty members, counselors, and administrative staff members. It is unacceptable that the vast majority of professors and staff members are white. People of color must be adequately represented on this campus, especially considering the rising population of black and brown students at this institution.

2. We recognize that part of the job of any university is to prepare students for life beyond the university. As such, it is an act of deliberate negligence that there is no explicit requirement to learn about any form of social justice or anti-racism at this college. Whether this takes the form of an academic requirement (such as a class) or

still occurs due to the lack of institutional memory that Bard College demonstrates. Yesterday, our support and solidarity with Black students across the country in 2015 became a set of evolved demands. Today, we seek to rethink inclusivity by means of promoting diversity as a practice rather than a symbolic numerical approach.

Since Blackout Bard 2015, some of the changes that have occurred have had a positive effect on Bard College’s campus not only for students of color but for Bard as a whole.

With various changes in the First Year Seminar and the Language and Thinking program, students from all backgrounds have had the opportunity to encounter texts that they have never attempted to read before.

Nonetheless, a few authors of color in a curriculum do not embrace inclusivity as a practice, rather it utilizes our intellectual history only symbolically. We must recognize however, that we were deterring our progress to achieving purposeful change. We demand for these changes to be less symbolic. These changes included clearer guidelines to what the Rethinking Difference requirement meant by transitioning to the Difference and Justice (D&J) title. Our issue today revolves around

the same dilemma: this change was a symbolic one lacking clear criteria to what a D&J class means. We also want to acknowledge the major pedagogical and practical changes that have come through the creation of the Council of Inclusive

Excellence and the position of the Dean of Inclusive Excellence. It is offices such as this one that have adopted praxis as their approach

an extracurricular requirement (such as training each semester), we demand that Bard College come together to ensure that faculty, staff, and students at all levels are able to engage with social justice and anti-racism productively without putting anyone in unsafe or compromising positions.

3. The “Rethinking Difference” requirement must be re-thought. The goals of this requirement must be made clear to students as it is unacceptable that students at this college fulfill the requirement without even knowing that they have fulfilled the requirement. In addition, students should be told how faculty decide which classes “rethink” difference and which classes do not.

a. What is being re-thought must be thoroughly examined. What qualifies as a Rethinking Difference class? Stricter guidelines and criteria for what counts

as a Rethinking Difference credit are needed. There is currently a lack of explicit intention in taking a class that is “rethinking difference.”

Curriculums must make room for questioning.

b. FYSEM should allow students to question why the canon is what it is. It should give students the space to read authors that are not in the canon and talk about why they are not in the canon. The changing nature of our society and world must be reflected in the FYSEM curriculum in terms of diversifying the authors chosen for the class. It is unacceptable to introduce a black author only in the context of slavery; while such a text like Equiano is necessary, it must not be the only voice of color examined in the class. Intellectually training students and having diverse, thought-provoking curriculums are not mutually exclusive goals.

by developing faculty trainings, inciting student led projects and serving as a major factor in preserving institutional memory at Bard.

It is with the acknowledgement and potential to this change that we return to this moment in Bard’s history. Our model has worked and, us, students of color from Bard College stand in solidarity with ourselves and those to come in order to rethink diversity approaches at Bard as we think about inclusiveness. These acts of institutional change can work for black and brown students to find the ivory tower of academia accessible and reflective of our experiences, rather than constantly contrasted to the white standard. We hope with these changes comes a campus that can be free for all to think and to enact change. The demands listed below are the path we have paved for this institution to follow.

### **Diversity amongst faculty of color**

Bard College, thanks to the Council of Inclusive Excellence, has started to implement policies in the hiring process that promotes and attracts a more inclusive pool of applicants. We see and appreciate this first step. However, this is just a first step and this is our institution - meaning it should reflect and represent *us*. Currently, Bard has an ethnic breakdown of: African American/Black at 11%, Asian/Pacific Islander at 11%, Hispanic/ Latino at 9%, Multiracial at 4%, and Native American at 1%; Cumulatively, Students of Color make up 36% of the campus. Yet, 15% of faculty are people of color. These numbers may be higher than previous years, but

4. Bard College must support and ensure the establishment and provision of Diversity and Sensitivity Workshops multiple times a semester to faculty and staff at all levels. These workshops will provide continuous in-person training regarding cultural understanding, engagement with bias, the use of inclusive language, etc.

5. The Multicultural Diversity Committee (MDC) at Bard College must be made more visible, transparent, and accessible to the Bard community regarding its roles and responsibilities on campus. Members of the Bard College community should be informed about the committee's role in the diversity and inclusion hiring process as well as the committee's weekly meetings and progress made by the MDC throughout the semester.

6. Bard must support the establishment of a student-run Diversity, Inclusion and Accountability Board:

a. This board would consist of no more than 10 students (2 seniors, 3 juniors, 2 sophomores, and 2 freshmen, and 1 graduate representative) and 1 Bard faculty or staff member serving as an advisor to the board. This board could either take the place of the Multicultural Diversity Committee of the Student Government, expand its role on campus, or serve as an entirely separate entity. The tasks of this board would be to:

i. Assist in the creation of required faculty and staff diversity training-- either in the form of workshops or incorporated into divisional faculty meetings. This must be put in place to ensure that all members of the Bard College community are held personally responsible for creating an inclusive and safe environment for all

they are not sufficient. Departments such as STEM and the Arts are highly lacking in faculty of color, yet we can see artists of color and people of color in STEM making moves in national and international spaces. As a liberal arts institution, it is our demand and understanding that Bard should be able to mirror the movement that we witness happening outside of Bard. Why is Bard not with the times? We not only demand for there to be a bigger push for more diverse faculty members but also that in consideration for tenure weight is placed on diversity efforts professors have been involved in. Through this, we can not just attract more professors of color - historically underrepresented - to the ivory tower of academia, but change the value system that defines tenure, expanding and placing importance on efforts to understand and uplift diversity. When we speak of diversity, we do not only mean in terms of racial representation, but also accessibility. We are seeking to create a network of faculty of color that will not only serve as a support system for POCs on this campus, but also give us access to faculty we can relate to. We demand greater accessibility to a network of faculty of color so that we can expand our own at Bard College from there. We also demand that already tenured professors go through an inclusive pedagogy training along with professors waiting to be tenured.

### **Create New Positions to Address Institutional and Everyday Racism**

We demand that Bard College emphasize its efforts to make its campus a diverse and inclusive higher educational institution by establishing a position or office that pertains to Equal Rights, based on the Civil Rights Act of 1964. A designated position will not only be a symbol that Bard is dedicated to addressing and mending trends of racism, sexism, or other forms of violence that occur on this campus, but will also

students. Furthermore, inclusiveness must not only be considered in terms of the physical classroom setting but also in the texts and discussions that students are engaging with in class. Some of the current discourses and practices regarding race in classes on campus have created unsafe environments where students of color are singled out, personally targeted, or invalidated during classroom discussions where race, ethnicity, and culture becomes part of the discussion. While this hostility may not be overtly recognized by the professor

teaching the class, the lasting impacts result in feelings of fear from the student when approaching the next class discussion.

ii. Be in attendance at the faculty/staff trainings, meetings, or workshops in order to ensure that the issues of diversity and inclusion are properly discussed by the faculty and staff present.

iii. Participate in meetings regarding bias incidents involving faculty or staff. Each meeting will be used to discuss any incidents or reports that have arisen within the school and solutions to rectify the situation. This time will also be used to discuss any notable progress that has been made in the program. This time will also be used as a place to discuss bias incident reports filed and progress made. See example below:

1. "Student in the John Doe's ARTH section anonymously reported being singled out in class for speaking up against a

allow students to know there will be designated professionals that will hear our concerns and work to make our environment safe for students of color. The job of a Diversity/Equal Rights Officer is to reduce discrimination on campus on the grounds of disability, age, gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation. They help to maintain an environment that is not only diverse, but *inclusive*. While we have mentors and professors who make it a point to hear concerns of students of color, this is on a case-by-case basis - making the act of filing complaints not only opaque but daunting. In creating a position that solely addresses issues of discrimination, we can work to not only illuminate the '-isms' students face on campus, but understand the existing patterns and work to address them. Bard College boasts its progressive nature, yet we - as students of color - have no designated person who is working to protect our civil rights in relation to race or gender (beyond Title IX). This is why we demand the creation of a Title 6 Office that works in conjunction with MDC. This addition will include a student liaison officer for diversity and inclusion that will be fulfilled by a student of color. Bard College receives immensely impactful and diverse students - many through the Bard Early College High Schools, BEOP and POSSE. However, what happens when these students come into a predominantly white institution where they tend to feel excluded and unwelcomed socially and academically? It is time to create a process and an office whose sole job it is to work with and for students of color to create a safer and more inclusive college experience.

### **Addition of a POC Student**

#### **Union**

Bard College is a place to think, grow and explore, but the institution should also be one that has minority, or POC students in mind- to think, to strive and to succeed on a campus to provide

certain topic. Issue was brought to the attention of the Diversity, Inclusion and Accountability Board in writing.

There was a follow-up with the professor where it was determined to be a misunderstanding.” Cases may be anonymous if the Bard community member chooses to remain anonymous. In addition issues to be brought up could be a push in incorporate or remove a text, bring attention to certain language that was used in class by peers, etc.

b. Diversity, Inclusion and Accountability Board will be responsible for writing written outcomes for any substantial changes from departments which will be sent to the graduate and undergraduate student class.

7. Bard College must encourage dialogue between students and the local towns of Red Hook and Tivoli with their respective officials about race and diversity.

8. A plan of action must be developed by the college, in tandem with students of color, to address racial equity in the coming years. Yearly benchmarks will be determined as a means of tracking the progress being made on this and related initiatives.

9. The Office of President Leon Botstein must release a Statement of Accountability:

a. We ask that president Leon Botstein personally address the Bard Community in a written statement acknowledging the student testimonies and grievances voiced at the campus wide Black Out on Wednesday, November 18th as well as the ongoing systemic racism and microaggressions faced by students of color on a daily basis on campus.

students with the tools to build a stronger community. While we understand that students must be the agents of change that they want to see on campus, a space for students, run by students, will evoke a sense of belonging for scholars who are not able to acclimate to Bard. Although we acknowledge the fact that a building or space does not assume community, our concern is more directed towards the conversations and actions that will occur amongst POC scholars. So, we demand a space that encourages Students of Color to embrace collaboration, communication, cooperation and unification amongst ourselves, our clubs and organizations. The current space that exists for this purpose is the Multicultural Diversity Committee Lounge, which is inside of Kappa House and exists as a part of the Bard Educational Opportunity Program (BEOP) space. While we are glad that this one room exists for us, we recognize that many students of color on campus (particularly POC Clubs) do not feel that BEOP is a space for them, because they are not BEOP scholars. We believe that the creation of a new building or space that is meant to be utilized by Bard clubs that support students of color (among other clubs) will be what the MDC has been working towards in the past few years. A POC Student Union will provide scholars at Bard something to call their own that immerses them in culture. In order to get the space, we demand the opportunity to have an open discussion with administration officials about the addition of a Multicultural Student Center as a new campus space and location. With this, we request campus wide transparency about the progress occurring in pursuit of this request, as well as student involvement throughout the process. We are willing to host fundraisers, donate club funding, and do what we can in order to do our part to make this dream a reality for the future Bardians of Color.

This statement should also address silence from the president's office during the following events:

- i. Threats against black students in Missouri, Yale, and other schools across the country. No statement was released expressing solidarity or support for students of color on Bard's campus.
- ii. Ongoing violence and disruption of education at Bard College's campus in the the West Bank, Al-Quds. No statement was released

addressing the current state of the campus and the ongoing chaos  
Bard students at Al-Quds have been subjected to since September.

- iii. The incident at Bard College's campus in Simon's Rock regarding the Diversity Day Boycott and the ongoing complaints expressed by students from Simon's Rock on November 18th, 2015.

10. We demand that President Botstein, relevant members of the Senior Administration, and members of other relevant faculty-led Committees (such as the Diversity Committee) here at Bard College meet regularly with students of color to discuss short- and long-term solutions to attaining racial equity on campus.

\*These list of demands were drafted by a collection of Bard College students. Some these students were also organizers of the campus-wide Black Out on Wednesday, November 18th, 2015 and others are concerned students of color on campus. We understand that while a variety of students of color contributed to the creation of this document, these

## **Rethinking Difference/Difference and Justice (DoJ)**

Two years ago, Bard POC fought for the 'Rethinking Difference' requirement to be rethought. Bard College applied a band-aid with rebranding, but the same issues exist: it is unclear what the Difference and Justice requirements consist of and what is needed to fulfill it, as it feels like an afterthought amongst the rest of the requirements. It must be rethought, again. We demand, firstly, that any courses considered to fulfill a 'Difference and Justice' distribution are not only submitted for approval, but specifically read and considered by an advocate for inclusive pedagogical approaches. As we clarify this approval process, we need stricter guidelines and criteria, hence the justifications that professors submit for their class to be categorized under the requirement should be thoroughly examined and questioned before qualifying as a course. To aid in students' confusion around 'Difference and Justice,' these requirements should be integrated and referred to throughout the course. We demand an implementation of 1 to 2 credit multiyear seminars that work to, over our four years at Bard, think and critically question the concept of DoJ on its own, rather than added on as a title to an academic course. This would therefore help to make the Difference and Justice requirement more visible and attainable. When it comes to this department, there should be classes that are not based solely on global politics, but also what is happening locally in the United States. Since this country, as well, has its fair share of involvement in traditions of colonialism, imperialism, etc the conversation about how we can improve domestic relations must continue. When it comes to authors of color being introduced in these classes, they should not be examined as 'other' or different from the academic canon, for this reinforces the



demands do not represent all students of color on Bard College's campus. This document is a work in progress and a small step towards change. Other students of color on campus are encouraged to add their own amendments at any time.

oppressive white standard to which we measure authors of color. They are not 'different,' they simply *are*...and they are powerful. Bard College must use the DoJ requirement to not only be a diverse campus, but an inclusive one.

### **Inclusive and Radical Curriculums**

First Year Seminar exists to lay a foundation of knowledge considered necessary for students to succeed in an academic setting, yet most of the current texts reflect a eurocentric, exclusive understanding of the Western canon. The texts should instead reflect the diversity within the canon through intentionally chosen authors. Simply adding Malcolm X's biography or the *Invisible Man* does not necessarily mean Bard College is providing a diverse, inclusive curriculum. We will not allow for prominent authors of color to be added and tokenized as an afterthought and pacification. We, as students, have formulated a curricula to implement in FYSEM and demand that these changes be implemented with the new FYSEM director.

### **Demand Written**

### **Acknowledgment From the President**

Lastly, as overworked and underrepresented students of this college, we spend our spare hours fighting to make this institution OURS. So, we demand a letter of written acknowledgement and an in-person meeting with President Leon Botstein. The organizers of the original Black out Bard paved the way - and we will continue it. Superficial fixes, tokenizing hires or course name changes will not suffice; our present aim is to override the minimal and temporal installations implemented by administrators to create a permanent version of an inclusive and all-encompassing Bard. We have tangibly outlined processes that will make this college a safe and inclusive space - both socially and academically

	for students of color. It is now on you, the president of this college, to acknowledge and work to make good on the needs of your students.
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In such a short amount of time, the similarities in the demands are visible. The way in which students kept track of what has and what has not changed, are also documented unintentionally. Both of these demands on the internet and available resources for anyone to engage with. You just have to know where to look.

In the present moment, Instagram pages across the country appeared during the quarantine period of 2020. These pages were Black@ fill in the name of the institution that caused you harm where you could anonymously submit your grievances with the institution you attended. When Black@Bard began student, staff, and faculty submissions to the page really brought to light the injustices that happened on campus. These posts still remain up on the Instagram page and serve as a reminder that our institution still has a long way to go in order to create a more inclusive and equitable space for students of color on campus. Pages like these are important as they act as a compilation of first hand experiences of marginalized people at institutions and seek to serve as a reminder that these issues are present and will not easily disappear no matter how much administration would like them to disappear. One notable accomplishment that is associated with Black@Bard is their dismantling of the Bard men's lacrosse team. Many of the submissions that came into the page were accounts of abuse from the team. This included racial slurs, sexual assault, bullying, and harassment by players on the team. Black@Bard pushed for the acknowledgement of these stories from Bard Athletics. They would



often tag them in posts of these accounts and for something to be done about the conduct of their players. Athletics would often respond by untagging themselves from these posts with no acknowledgement of what was happening. There had already been grievances brought up by the Bard Coalition of Student Athletes or COSA about the racism that existed in athletics. In November 2020, COSA released demands for the department that can be found on their Instagram account @bardcosa. The demands on the page are as follows:

- We DEMAND that, during this time of protest, no pictures, media, or posts of athletes be published on any Bard Athletic social media platforms. We collectively state here that, at this time, our consent for the college to do is withdrawn.
- We DEMAND that a mediated forum is held to open to the public, where the community can talk about the acts of character misconduct (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and harassment, etc) that have come from athletes, the athletic administration, and Bard athletics in general. This forum would include the presence of every student-athlete as well as athletic staff, including, but not limited to James Sheahan and Kristen Hall. We also feel that great value could be drawn from holding following public meetings throughout the academic year.
- We DEMAND the implementation of mandatory anti-racism training that every athlete must complete as a prerequisite to any participation in Bard's athletic activities and commitments. Until such completion of this training, they will remain unable to participate or attend any Bard athletic events.
- We DEMAND the athletic staff and administration should attend the same or similar mandatory anti-racism training. We feel strongly that, given the insidious and often

unacknowledged nature of this problem, that follow-up training sessions be made available in order to make sure there is a deeper comprehension of anti-racist teaching. Teams should also be required to develop plans as to how they will implement what they have learned in their training.

- We DEMAND that all mandatory Title IX meetings be attended by Bard Athletics coaches and administrators, rather than being held strictly for the student-athletes. We believe that their attendance alongside athletes will allow for the programs to be more fully effective for all parties involved, more professional, and to be conducted in a more serious manner. We believe that coaches should ensure that all of their athletes are appropriately trained, and that they should be adequately trained, themselves. We believe that these training should be mandatory by penalty of revoking clearance to participate in athletics.
- We DEMAND the establishment of an unbiased platform where athlete, gym patrons, and members of the Bard community can report and address acts of character misconduct (including but not limited to racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, harassment, etc.) committed by the Bard Athletic community with full transparency.
- We DEMAND that the Bard Athletic administrative team acknowledges the hurt and trauma caused by their actions over the recent semesters. This acknowledgement should be a formal post on all Bard Athletics social media accounts, the website, and as an email addressed to the whole Bard community. This should be done by 5:00 p.m on Wednesday, October 28th.
- We DEMAND a response, including a time-specific preliminary plan, presented to us by 5:00 p.m on Wednesday, October 28th. At that time, we will evaluate whether or nto the

plans presented are tangible, realistic, and sustainable. Upon thorough evaluation, we will respond accordingly. Approved plans should be enacted as soon as possible before Thanksgiving at the latest.

Although Black@Bard and COSA seemed to be in agreement that something needed to be done about the happenings in the department of athletics, there was a rift between the groups. Black@Bard began “organizing”<sup>36</sup> without any consideration for the actions that COSA had already set in motion. This is also a downfall when activism occurs on social media. There is a lot of stepping on toes and often very little communications between groups with similar intentions, until it is pointed out by an outsider. This can often be counterproductive and if it becomes too much of an issue between groups it can lead to the downfall of an organization. Despite this tension between the two groups, the Men's Lacrosse team did end up being discontinued. The announcement happened on March 9th, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Although many people on campus were familiar with the happenings with the team, the announcement that was released stated the following:

“Following a careful evaluation of participation numbers in recent years, Bard College has concluded that it will discontinue its men's varsity lacrosse program after the end of the 2020-21 academic year.

"This was an extremely difficult decision to make, but we believe it is the best path forward for our Athletics and Recreation department," said Interim Athletic Director David Lindholm. "Since the introduction of the sport to our varsity offerings in 2014, we have not been able to field a roster large enough to provide the proper competitive environment for the student-athletes. Ultimately, we think we can provide other opportunities that will better serve Bard students as a result of this decision."

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<sup>36</sup> I use organizing very loosely here as Black@Bard did not have any clear demands on what they wanted to occur outside of acknowledgment of the accounts posted on their page.

While Bard is still developing plans related to competition in spring sports within the Liberty League, men's lacrosse will not compete this season because of low roster numbers.

The athletic department will work with Head Coach Brian Praetorius and current members of the lacrosse team to support their athletic interests in accordance with Bard's COVID-19 protocols, and hope that team members will continue to pursue their Bard education and participate in club team opportunities or other varsity sports.

Bard's institutional support for its athletic programs and student-athletes has never been stronger. This decision, while difficult, will enable the department to reallocate resources to increase intramural and club sport opportunities for Bard students and to further support the College's 18 varsity programs. The women's lacrosse program is unaffected by this decision.”<sup>37</sup>

During my four years at Bard, I have never known the Men's Lacrosse team to be lacking in recruitment and neither had other students who were familiar with the team. This statement was created to help the college maintain its appearance of the liberal and inclusive college that it claims to be. Past team rosters, statistics, schedules, and social media pages have since been deleted, a wiping of the teams existence. Although this was seen as a win by Black@Bard and COSA, I was personally troubled by the discontinuing of the team. The players who caused this harm are still on campus and may continue to perpetuate harm to students. None of the issues, in the department of athletics and across campus, will be solved by removing the entity in which the issues fester and are perpetuated without seeking institutional and structural change for issues around inclusivity and tolerance.

## Where The Hell Do We Go From Here?

It is hard to come up with a conclusion for my project as the issues and fight for change is still ongoing. This conversation will not end with the submission of my senior project and will most likely continue to inspire research around movements of change in America long after. Although the fight to end systemic racism is not something that my generation will probably see come to end, I do want to leave those who read this with a beacon of hope: there are things that you can do to help. I have always known that I was not a person who could be on the frontlines. I really didn't have a clear path on what my activism was until I came across Deepa Iyer's map of the social change ecosystem.<sup>38</sup> I now know that I am a weaver, a builder, and a storyteller. By finding my place in the ecosystem it became more clear to me that making history inclusive and accessible was my mode of resistance in a system that would love to see me disappear. You do not have to be a historian to archive happenings that you deem important. Social media has become a great tool for informal practices of archiving. Instagram has the feature where if you have a post that you would no longer like on your personal feed you can archive it rather than deleting it. Many apps have features that will allow you to revisit your memories on the day that it occurred. This is a great feature as it can serve as a reminder on how far and how much change has occurred overtime. You can uplift Black public historians, like myself, whose work is to bring to light the parts of history that some historians would rather us leave in the past. If you attend an institution of higher learning, talk to your archivist. See what you can do to assist them and how you can go about submitting things to the archives. I'm sure that they would love to engage with you and could use the support.

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<sup>38</sup> Deepa Iyer, "The Map: Social Change Ecosystem," DEEPA IYER, accessed May 2, 2021, <http://deepaiyer.com/the-map-social-change-ecosystem/>.

I wouldn't feel right ending this without some demands of my own. My four years at Bard have been long and tiring and though I can no longer continue the fight as a student, I want to leave something behind for people to review and push for.

1. Helene Tieger is the only college archivist as of May 4th, 2021. She could use some assistance in going through the archive and helping to make them more visible and accessible to students. I demand that Bard provide the resources to her department.
2. I demand that the Dean of Inclusive Excellence, which as of May 4th, 2021, is Dr.Kahan Sablo be allotted more staff and resources for his department. Kahan and the three current employees he has cannot be expected to fix all of Bard's structural issues with the investment of the institution in which they reside.
3. Although students of color currently have Gilson Place, formerly Greystone Cottage, it is a historically protected building that does not allow much room for renovation and expansion. I demand that Gilson Place be given a newer placement within a four year period. This period would end in 2025.
4. I demand that the college acknowledge Montgomery Place, as a historical plantation on their website and more in their touring and showing of the site.
5. I demand that Title VI have a better presence in the college with clear guidelines on how students can submit issues of racially based discrimination and harrasment on campus. This should also include clear guidelines on how the student will be protected and how the accused will be held accountable for their actions.

There is much more that I could include about the happenings at Bard, but all great things must come to an end. I hope that my senior project serves as an archival record for the happenings at the institution and can inspire future Bardian historians to keep a record of their experiences.

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