THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS EXPERIENCE IN NEVADA, 1900 - 1979

PREPARED FOR

Nevada State Historic Preservation Office
901 S. Stewart Street, Suite 5004
Carson City, NV 89701

August 2020

PREPARED BY

SWCA Environmental Consultants
257 East 200 Suite 200
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
www.swca.com

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS EXPERIENCE IN NEVADA, 1900–1979

Prepared for

Nevada State Historic Preservation Office
901 South Stewart Street
Suite 5004
Carson City, Nevada 89701
Attn: Rebecca Palmer

Prepared by

Kate Hovanes, M.S.

Principal Investigator

Anne Oliver, M.S.

SWCA Environmental Consultants
257 East 200 South
Suite 200
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
(801) 322-4307
www.swca.com

SWCA Project No. 52784

SWCA Cultural Resources Report No. 20-102

August 2020

Partially funded by the African American Civil Rights program of the Historic Preservation Fund, National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material do not constitute endorsement or necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior or U.S. Government.

This page intentionally left blank.

ABSTRACT

The African American civil rights movement is often most closely associated with the American South, particularly events such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott or the work of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. But Nevada also has a long (if less well-known) history of African American civil rights activity. This context is designed to provide an overview of that history and guidance in the evaluation and nomination of historic properties related to that history to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

This context was prepared for the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (NVSHPO) under the auspices of the National Park Service (NPS) African American Civil Rights Grant Program. In 2018, the NVSHPO received an African American Civil Rights Grant through the NPS to increase awareness and representation of African American heritage in Nevada. In fulfillment of that grant, the NVSHPO contracted SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) to complete a historic context for the African American experience in the state. This context is intended to focus particularly on the civil rights movement of the twentieth century and the identification of property types (including buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts) that are on or may be eligible for listing in the NRHP because of their importance to and representation of civil rights history and African American heritage.

The results of this research are reported in this context, which includes several sections.

Background and Methodology provides background context for the project and a discussion of the project design, goals and limitations, and methods.

Definition of Context defines the focus and limitations of the context in terms of its theme, geographic parameters, and temporal limits. Thematically, the context is focused on African American history, with a particular focus on the civil rights movement. It geographically encompasses the entire state of Nevada; its temporal focus is on the period between 1900 and 1979.

Historic Overview provides a history of African American civil rights and encompasses four eras: African American Civil Rights in the Nineteenth Century (1848–1899), Jim Crow in the Early Twentieth Century (1900–1940), World War II (1941–1945), and the Activism and Advocacy Era (1946–1979). The African American civil rights movement extends throughout the entire period of African American history in the state, but the nature and success of those efforts vary widely throughout the Historic period.

As a result of Reconstruction, African Americans in Nevada experienced considerable success in their civil rights advocacy during the 1870s. But the backlash against Reconstruction on the national level also affected them during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Efforts by African American communities to push back against the growing issues of racism and segregation were often met by failure, due in part to the extremely small size (proportionately) of the Black population in Nevada prior to World War II. But during World War II, in-migration of African Americans increased the Black population in the state substantially. The needs of industry and the military in the face of the war effort encouraged the recruitment of African Americans from out of state, who subsequently moved to Nevada for newly available jobs. Despite white racism, these recruits generally remained in the state after the end of the war. As a result of increased advocacy for African American civil rights on the national level, and because of the ongoing discrimination they faced within the state, many African American communities in Nevada began to increase civil rights activism during the post–World War II period and beyond. Because of the proportionately larger African American population in the state during this era, and because of the visibility of that civil rights activism, protestors and activists had considerable success in their work.

African American Civil Rights Property Types in Nevada discusses property types that may be associated with those civil rights efforts and provides guidance on property identification and assessing eligibility for the NRHP. Identified examples of potentially NRHP-eligible property types (including location information and condition) are included in Appendix A.

In summary, the goal of this context is not to serve as a comprehensive history of African American civil rights in Nevada. It instead offers insight into a long-neglected but extremely important aspect of Nevada's history and provides a basis for additional historic research to help facilitate future NRHP nominations and offer guidance for historic preservation efforts.

CONTENTS

Appendices

Figures

Tables

This page intentionally left blank.

1 INTRODUCTION

While the history of African American civil rights in Nevada may not be as well-known as elsewhere in the country, those who worked as advocates and activists deserve equal recognition for their work. Facing a frequently hostile public, habitually unsympathetic officials, and a system intentionally designed to put them at a disadvantage, African Americans and others who worked alongside them in Nevada challenged racism and discrimination for over a century and often came out the victors. It is therefore unsurprising that the word frequently applied to those efforts is *persistence*, a descriptor that remains as apt today as it did in 1870 (Coray 1992:239–240).

Since the earliest days of Euro-American exploration and settlement, African Americans have shaped Nevada's history. During the early and mid-nineteenth century, they joined exploring expeditions through the region and early immigration movements, like the rush to the Comstock Lode. Although African Americans initially made up only a fraction of a percent of the total population and faced blatant racial discrimination, they began to advocate for civil rights as early as the 1860s and 1870s. The political climate during the Reconstruction era aided them in getting many of Nevada's racially discriminatory laws overturned. But racism grew more common and overt in Nevada in the years following the end of Reconstruction through the Great Depression. The creation of Ku Klux Klan branches throughout the state during the 1920s and aggressive efforts by city officials to segregate Las Vegas beginning in the 1930s are two obvious examples. African Americans in Nevada actively worked to combat these growing patterns of racism through advocacy and legislative reform, but their efforts during the early twentieth century were largely unsuccessful.

During and after World War II, however, African Americans in Nevada began to employ new tactics to secure their rights. These included direct action, such as a strike of hundreds of workers at Basic Magnesium, Inc. in Henderson during World War II, picketing and sit-ins, direct lobbying of legislators, and threatening and conducting large-scale marches against specific instances of discrimination. With the growing national awareness and support of the civil rights movement, these tactics brought success to civil rights activists in Nevada. By 1965, the state had ratified its own Civil Rights Act, and African Americans began to be hired for jobs that had previously been segregated (although access to lucrative positions only followed later).

But the trajectory of civil rights in Nevada was not in a straight line; progress was not always equal throughout the state, nor did every segment of the African American population benefit equally. Compliance with standards of integration and desegregation was not always done in good faith. As a result, while some general trends characterize the history of civil rights throughout the state, the history is often best understood on the local or regional level rather than at the state level. Ultimately, the civil rights movement in Nevada must be understood as process: a process of advocacy, activism, and resistance by African Americans on an individual and community basis, a process that was ongoing throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and that continues to this day.

This historic context is a study of the African American civil rights movement in Nevada between 1900 and 1979. It provides a historic overview of events and patterns in that history throughout the state, with a particular emphasis on the relationship of those events with the physical environment: where civil rights activists lived and worked; where protests or other acts of resistance or advocacy occurred; areas that African Americans were excluded from or where they were forced to live as a result of racism and segregation. This context is not a comprehensive history but instead seeks to chart the broad patterns of history in relation to African American civil rights. It also includes a discussion of property types associated with that history and how to evaluate them for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The goal of this context is to serve as the basis for future scholarship and to facilitate future historic preservation efforts, such as the nomination of properties to the NRHP.

2 BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Project Background

In 2008, the National Park Service (NPS) published a report titled *Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites* (NPS 2008). Based on the findings in that report, the NPS now operates the African American Civil Rights Grant Program (Program), funded by the Historic Preservation Fund, a program administered by the NPS using royalties from the Office of Natural Resources Revenue. The Program provides funding to states, tribes, local governments (including Certified Local Governments), and nonprofit organizations to conduct planning, development, and research projects for historic sites (NPS 2020a).

In 2018, the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (NVSHPO) received an African American Civil Rights Grant through the NPS to increase awareness and representation of African American heritage in Nevada. The NVSHPO contracted SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) to complete a historic context for the African American experience in the state—particularly in relation to the civil rights movement of the twentieth century—and to identify property types, including buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts, that are or may be listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) because of their importance to and representation of African American heritage.

2.2 Project Design

NPS guidance states that historic contexts exist as summary documents that present relevant information and avoid extraneous information. In general, the purpose of historic contexts is to provide a basis for the evaluation of properties for their eligibility for the NRHP and to facilitate their evaluations and nominations by providing a developed history against which they can be reviewed (Wyatt 2009). This project combines the work of experts in architectural history, vernacular architecture, historic preservation, public history, and oral history. It is hoped that the context will facilitate future historic research on the subject of African American civil rights in Nevada and the nomination of properties significant within the context to the NRHP.

General guidance for the preparation of historic contexts is provided by Wyatt (2009) in *The Components of a Historic Context: A National Register White Paper*, but the format and content of these documents, as well as the methodology used to develop them, can vary widely. To refine our approach, we examined multiple property documentation forms (MPDFs) relating to African American history in other parts of the country and contexts from Nevada. Particularly useful were MPDFs and contexts relating to local and regional history and specific property types (Baker 1991; Bertolini 2017; Cyriaque et al. 2009; Grimes 2008; McBride and Bedeau 2008; Van West 2013; Wolfenbarger 2010, 2011). At a minimum, a context should include 1) a background history, a definition of the context (theme, geographic parameters, and temporal limits), and a development of the theme or area of significance; 2) an identification of property types; and 3) a discussion of eligibility evaluation and registration requirements for the NRHP. Our methodology for developing these three parts of the context is described below.

2.2.1 *Advisory Committee*

In addition to historic research, the context also incorporated the feedback and insight of representatives from the African American community and local experts on African American history throughout the state. To achieve this, SWCA convened an Advisory Committee of the following five individuals with an interest in the project from the academic, cultural, and religious communities in Las Vegas and Reno:

- Gloria Bennett
- Demetrice Dalton
- John Edmond
- Claytee White
- Brenda Williams

The role of the Advisory Committee was to facilitate outreach to African American communities and organizations about the project, assist in identifying research sources and significant properties, and review all deliverables. Although budgetary constraints only allowed for one in-person Advisory Committee meeting, SWCA solicited committee members for feedback on potential primary and secondary sources, property types, and historic properties.

To organize the Advisory Committee, SWCA subcontracted with Dr. Alicia Barber, PhD. Dr. Barber is a public historian and oral history expert, and her assistance was invaluable in connecting with committee members, organizing the committee meeting, and soliciting feedback from participants.

2.2.2 *Notes on Terminology*

In writing about the history of race in America, it is important to consider terminology. This context uses the terms *African American* or *Black* interchangeably when referring to individuals of African ancestry. This context generally does not use the term *people of color* except in referring to Black or Brown people in a general sense, and usually only in differentiating those individuals from their white counterparts. It is also important to note that terminology to describe race has evolved significantly over the past 50 years and continues to evolve. Although historic language, such as the use of the term *Negro*, is no longer considered appropriate, many historic documents written by and about Black Nevadans use that language. When these documents are quoted, the original language is preserved to prevent applying a modern standard of language to historic sources.

In the case of Nevada specifically, one additional note should be made about terminology regarding the Historic Westside of Las Vegas. Starting in the 1930s, white city officials forced African Americans to live in a segregated neighborhood on the west side of the railroad tracks. This area is generally referred to as "the Westside." But as Claytee White notes in The March That Never Happened, "The term 'Westside' carried a derogatory connotation. It is still remembered as 'ragtown' and 'tent city'" (White 2004:75). In her article White refers to the neighborhood as "Historic Westside," a term used by a descendant of one of the original families living there. In an effort to address the derogatory connotation the term *Westside* may still hold for African Americans in Nevada, this context will also use the term "Historic Westside" when referring to that neighborhood.

2.2.3 *Regions*

For the purposes of this project, Nevada was divided into three regions for which background literature was reviewed: northwest, northeast, and south (Figure 1). Because this context represents an overview of the history of civil rights in Nevada in the twentieth century, the regional backgrounds were based on directed research meant to create a broad understanding of historic patterns in the state, not focus on the lives of specific individuals. The distinction of regions in telling the historic narrative is very important, since the African American population was historically concentrated in specific areas of Nevada. As a result, civil rights efforts historically varied widely between regions—and even municipalities—in the state. This regional approach allowed SWCA to account for those variations in research and when writing the overall historic narrative for the state.

2.3 Project Goals and Limitations

The goal of this project was to create a summary of historic events related to African American civil rights between 1900 and 1979 in Nevada as a tool to nominate properties for the NRHP. This historic context was not intended to be a comprehensive or definitive history of the subject. It provides in-depth guidance for communities, historians, and preservationists on the process for identifying, evaluating, and nominating properties to the NRHP that are significant for their relationship with the African American civil rights movement. It also provides a general outline of African American civil rights history that may serve as a basis for additional scholarship and research into the subject by community members, historians, and others with an interest in the subject. Although SWCA has attempted to incorporate Nevada's African American communities as part of writing this context, that involvement was limited in extent. Future scholarship on this subject led by or involving SHPO, universities or other academic institutions, civic or volunteer organizations, or members of the general public should center that involvement on the lives and stories of community members.

Properties important to African American civil rights history in Nevada must be recognized because they can tell us the stories of the people who made them and used them, remind us of the richness of our past, and help us weave together the many threads of our common heritage. Much of the history, experience, and cultural contributions of African Americans and their descendants in Nevada is an understudied topic. This document is only a first step in beginning to recognize that heritage. To build on this work, SWCA also recommends the initiatives listed below.

- Involve the communities in the following ways:
  - Prepare and distribute pamphlets describing the properties identified to date and ask for assistance in identifying additional significant properties.
  - Conduct public meetings.
  - Conduct oral interviews of individuals and families and train community members to conduct oral histories by preparing a basic set of questions as a starting point. Transcribe interviews and distribute copies to family members and archive copies in public repositories.
  - Identify significant individuals and associated properties.
  - Ask the community to identify the top five properties or property types that are significant to it.
- Continue research as follows:
  - Contrast demographic and ethnographic data from Nevada with that of the West in general, and especially the Pacific Coast, in order to place historic demographic patterns in a broader regional context.
  - Foster research from within Nevada's African American communities by creating a scholarship or internships for students to pursue research on their own communities.
- Identify, record, and evaluate African American civil rights–related historic properties for listing in the NRHP in the following ways:
  - Provide electronic access to this historic context and list of property types.
  - Encourage archaeologists, historians, and descendants of community members to identify, document, and list all types of properties eligible for the NRHP

2.4 Methods

Our goals for the context were to outline the history of the African American civil rights movement in Nevada and discuss historic resources that may represent that history. Throughout the narrative, we have

attempted to weave in information relating to property types that may be associated with civil rights activism, areas where African Americans historically lived and worked, and how patterns evolved or changed during the study period and in response to social, political, and economic events.

Producing this report also required the development of strategies for research and writing. This section discusses the methods used in constructing this narrative, including repositories visited, the use of resources in writing, and a discussion of primary source documents.

Before conducting any research, we clearly defined the geographic area of the study: the entire state of Nevada. Although national trends in history are discussed when relevant, the establishment of this boundary provided a clear guide during research.

A report of this scope required casting a wide net when conducting research. Targeted resources consisted of secondary literature relating to a variety of topics such as African American history, politics, the divorce trade, religion and religious institutions, casinos and the gambling industry, and military history in Nevada and the American West. Secondary sources included published histories, scholarly articles, masters theses and doctoral dissertations, and NRHP nomination forms. No single document exists that presents a general history of the topic. Research also included a limited number of primary research sources, particularly oral histories and newspapers. Census data filled in the historic record for geographic areas with little or no information, such as the northeast region. Although census data did not relate specifically to civil rights, it did provide otherwise unavailable information about the lives of African American residents in all three regions. A detailed discussion of the research design is provided in Section 2.4.1.

The SWCA project team began by working with the NVSHPO to search its architectural files and the Nevada Cultural Resource Information System (NVCRIS) as well as searching the NRHP database for previously documented properties associated with African American heritage in Nevada. SWCA then conducted a general literature search for relevant primary and secondary source documents and created a preliminary bibliography of potential sources for review. Using the results of the search, SWCA also created a preliminary list of property types and a list of known resources that are or may be eligible for NRHP listing. The project team used the bibliography to conduct targeted research in primary source material at archives around the state, such as the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR); the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), and the Nevada State Library and Archives.

Writing the report followed the same pattern. First, a basic timeline of the civil rights movement was constructed from the more general sources; events in specific regions and locales and the experiences of individuals and communities were added to the timeline with as much detail as possible. The overview is organized chronologically and is divided based on general periods in the history of African American civil rights in Nevada. Although the periods are based on the state's history, they often heavily mirror events on the national level. Civil rights activism in Nevada did not occur in a vacuum, and as a result, the state's history often reflects national events; SWCA privileged state history above national events whenever the two did not correspond. Published research on civil rights history both regionally and nationally enriched the context and placed Nevada's regional and state history within a broader context in order to understand that history's characteristics, both common and unique.

2.4.1 *Research Design*

2.4.1.1 NATIONAL BACKGROUND

It was important to first understand the African American civil rights movement in Nevada within a broader national framework, which was drawn exclusively from secondary sources, including the following:

- Other African American civil rights–related contexts and MPDFs
- Published histories and scholarly articles

2.4.1.2 REGIONAL BACKGROUNDS

The majority of regional research concentrated on existing secondary source documents, including the following:

- Published or unpublished histories
- Scholarly articles
- NRHP or State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) nomination forms
- Masters theses and doctoral dissertations

Regional research also incorporated a limited amount of primary source research. This was directed research, designed to fill in identified gaps in the historic record.

Primary sources that were consulted for each region included the following:

- Digitized newspapers (available through the Library of Congress Chronicling America collection and Newspapers.com)
  - These newspapers were text-searched for key words relating to the African American civil rights struggle.
  - Only digitized newspapers were reviewed; no hard copies were used.
- Transcribed oral histories
  - Oral histories offered important insight into the lived experiences of individuals.
  - Due to time and budgetary constraints, only oral histories that had been transcribed and that had transcriptions available digitally were consulted.
- Census data (available through the U.S. Census Bureau and Ancestry)
  - Historic census data provided information about the locations, growth, and movement patterns of Nevada's Black communities. Census data provided a broad statistical view of changes in communities; it was not used to trace the histories of specific individuals. Only previously compiled statistics were used; census records for specific communities were not reviewed.
- *The Negro Motorist Green-Book*
  - Multiple editions of the book were reviewed to capture a broad view of potentially NRHP-eligible resources in Nevada.
- Newspapers or newsletters published by African American communities and organizations
- Archival records and collections
  - Only collections that had been catalogued and that had finding aids available were considered for review.
  - Due to time and budgetary constraints, only a limited amount of primary source archival research was done using personal papers. Only the papers of significant figures within the history of Nevada's African American civil rights struggle were considered for review.

2.4.2 *Summary of Themes*

As part of the grant, NVSHPO specifically requested that SWCA "determine which subthemes (education, housing, travel, divorce, etc.) are sufficiently documented to be included in the context. Subthemes that are not adequately documented in the historical record, or for which documentation is unavailable, can be identified as areas for future research at the sub-recipient's discretion" (NVSHPO 2018). To do so, SWCA considered the connection between African American civil rights and other themes in history and drew themes from the areas of significance for the SRHP and the NRHP as well as an early version of the Nevada Comprehensive Preservation Plan, in which study units were first outlined for the state (White et al. 1991). The specific themes SWCA considered and their source of origin are listed in Table 1, which also lists the level of coverage for each theme in the historic record that SWCA reviewed and whether each theme was addressed in the context or represents an area for future research. Areas for future research not addressed in the context include art, literature, and the performing arts. Each of these topics had limited related secondary source information available and would benefit from additional research in the future.

Table 1. Summary of Subthemes

Theme	State Register of Historic Places/National Register of Historic Places Area of Significance	Nevada 1991 Comprehensive Preservation Plan Theme	Level of Coverage in Historic Record	Included in Context or Area for Future Research?*
Architecture	X		Limited information	In context; future research
Art	X	X	No information	Future research
Commerce	X	X	Limited information	In context; future research
Community planning and development	X	X	Extensive information	In context
Divorce		X	Limited information	In context; future research
Education	X	X	Extensive information	In context
Entertainment / Recreation	X	X	Limited information	In context; future research
Ethnic heritage	X	X	Extensive information	In context
Federal government		X	Extensive information	In context
Fraternal movements		X	Limited information	In context; future research
Labor unions		X	Extensive information	In context
Law	X		Extensive information	In context
Literature	X	X	Limited information	Future research
Military	X	X	Extensive information	In context
Performing arts	X	X	Limited information	Future research
Politics / Government	X	X	Extensive information	In context
Religion	X	X	Extensive information	In context
Social history	X	X	Extensive information	In context
State and local government		X	Extensive information	In context
Women's movements		X	Limited information	In context; future research

Sources: NPS (1997); White et al. (1991)

3 DEFINITION OF CONTEXT

3.1 Theme

The theme of this context is the African American civil rights movement in Nevada. Although the civil rights movement is perhaps best known in relation to the American South, it is also an important aspect of history on the state level in Nevada. Nevada's unique economic structure (which is oriented heavily around tourism, recreation, and gambling) and the unique history of the state's African American population (which initially made up only a small proportion of the general population but that increased rapidly during and after World War II) also resulted in specific regional patterns of civil rights protest and advocacy. This context also connects African American civil rights in Nevada to 16 sub-themes with which it intersects and under which properties relating to the primary theme may also be significant (see Table 1).

3.2 Geographic Parameters

For the purposes of the context, Nevada was divided into three geographic regions, each of which was considered individually as well as for its relationship with patterns of history on the state level (see Figure 1). These areas are the northwest (encompassing Washoe, Storey, Churchill, Carson City, Douglas, Lyon, and Mineral Counties); the northeast (encompassing Humboldt, Pershing, Lander, Eureka, Elko, and White Pine Counties); and the south (encompassing Esmeralda, Nye, Lincoln, and Clark Counties).

3.3 Temporal Limits

The first African Americans arrived in Nevada in the mid-1800s, but the state's African American population remained very small in size until World War II. And while Nevada's African American residents have undertaken efforts to achieve social and political equality since their first settlement in the state, the most significant and widespread efforts occurred during the twentieth century. Nineteenth century civil rights–related heritage resources were likely to be transitory in nature (such as businesses established as part of early mining camps) or limited in their length and depth of association with African Americans. Those nineteenth-century resources are therefore less likely to remain, be readily identifiable, or retain their level of significance in association with African American civil rights to be eligible for the NRHP. As a result, and based on the associated NPS grant, this context concentrates on the period between 1900 and 1979. Extending the temporal limits of the context to 1979 increases the range of resources for which it may potentially be useful in evaluating properties for NRHP eligibility.

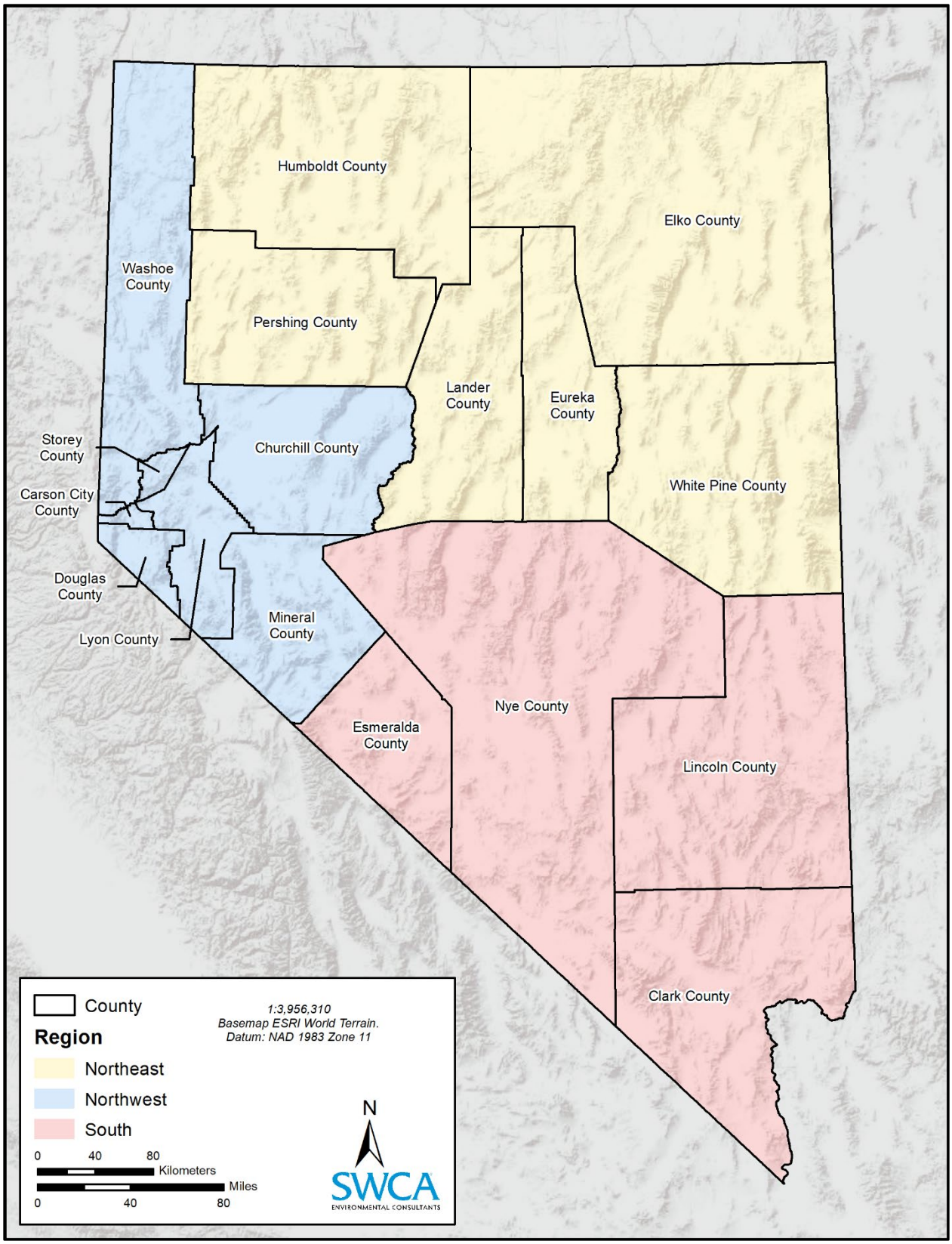

Figure 1. Geographic regions in Nevada.

4 HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Nevada has a unique history in respect to the African American civil rights movement, although the state's patterns of historic development were greatly influenced by trends on regional and national levels. Considered at various times a bastion of economic opportunity for African Americans and "the Mississippi of the West," Nevada often both conformed to patterns of racism found elsewhere in the United States as well as represented a land of potential opportunity. Nevada's history is rich with events, people, and patterns specific to the state. This history includes early patterns of immigration and settlement, the legislative record, local and state-wide protests, and the lives of important civil rights figures.

4.1 Timeline of African American Civil Rights History at the National Level

The movement for African American civil rights in Nevada took place within a broader national context. The history of this movement at the national level is complex and multifaceted, and often related to other historic themes, such as economic factors, industrial development, military history, and agriculture. Because an in-depth history of civil rights on the national level is outside the scope of this context, a general timeline summarizing key events in American history relating to African American civil rights is provided here to serve as a background for the more specific study of Nevada (Table 2).

Table 2. Significant Events in African American Civil Rights, ca. 1600–1979

Date	Event	Citation
1619	First recorded Africans brought to Jamestown as indentured servants	Hashaw 2007
1705	Slavery legalized by the Virginia General Assembly	PBS 2020
1739	Stono Rebellion, an early slave revolt in Stono, South Carolina	NPS 2020b
1793	Cotton gin invented by Eli Whitney, increasing demand for slaves in the American South	NPS 2020b
1808	Importation of slaves into the United States banned	NPS 2020b
1831–1861	Underground Railroad helps 75,000 slaves escape to the North	NPS 2020b
1850	Compromise of 1850, in which California was admitted to the Union as a free state and the Utah and New Mexico Territories were created and slavery decided by popular sovereignty	History 2009
1850	New version of the Fugitive Slave Act passed, mandating government support for the capture of escaped slaves	NPS 2020b
1854	Kansas-Nebraska Act opens up the possibility of slavery in any land included in the earlier Louisiana Purchase	History 2019a
1854-1861	Bleeding Kansas, a series of violent confrontations in the Kansas Territory between pro- and anti-slavery factions	History 2018a
1857	Dred Scott Decision determines that slaves remain enslaved regardless of the free- or slave-state status of the state or territory	History 2019b
1859	John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry; tensions between North and South increase before 1860 presidential election	History 2019c
1861-1865	American Civil War, caused by ideological, economic, political, and social conflicts over slavery	NPS 2020b
1863	Emancipation Proclamation, declaring all slaves in the rebelling states free	–
1865	13th Amendment, which prohibits slavery, ratified	NPS 2020b
1865	Ku Klux Klan formed in Tennessee with the goal to resist Reconstruction, becomes common throughout South	History 2019d

Date	Event	Citation
1865–1877	Reconstruction Era. The Reconstruction era saw the passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, which abolished slavery and involuntary servitude, mandated citizenship rights and equal protection by law, and provided the right to vote regardless of race. At the conclusion of Reconstruction, a deal is struck between Southern white leaders and Northern Democrats in which Rutherford B. Hayes became president in exchange for the withdrawal of federal troops from the South, functionally ending efforts to protect the rights of African Americans in the region	NPS 2020b
1868	14th Amendment ratified, defining citizenship and overturning the Dred Scott decision	NPS 2020b
1870	15th Amendment ratified, giving African American men the right to vote	NPS 2020b
1881	First Jim Crow segregation law passed in Tennessee; many additional Jim Crow laws passed across the South between 1881 and 1896	NPS 2020b
1896	*Plessy v. Ferguson* case decided by the Supreme Court, racial segregation is considered constitutional	NPS 2020b
1915	*Birth of a Nation* released; the longest film produced when it was released and a commercial success, it portrayed the Ku Klux Klan as heroic	History 2019d
1915	Ku Klux Klan revived, the second generation of the Klan was not only anti-Black but also anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic, and against organized labor and immigration; at its peak in the 1920s, the Klan claimed 4 million members nationally	History 2019d
1914–1918	World War I	–
1916–1970	Great Migration results in the relocation of approximately 6 million African Americans from the American South to the North and West	History 2020
1929–1939	Great Depression	–
1939–1945	World War II	–
1941	Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, United States enters World War II	–
1947	Major League baseball integrated	Armour 2007
1948	Executive Order 9981 signed, integrating U.S. military	National Archives 1948
1954	*Brown v. Board of Education* case decided by the Supreme Court, racial segregation declared unconstitutional	NPS 2020b
1957	Southern Christian Leadership Conference, a regional civil rights organization, established to coordinate civil rights protest activities in the South	NPS 2020b
1964	Civil Rights Act of 1964 is passed, outlawing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; its sweeping effects included the removal of biased voter registration requirements and racial segregation in schools, employment, and public accommodations	NPS 2020b
1965	Voting Rights Act of 1965, outlawing practices in the South used to disenfranchise African American voters	NPS 2020b
1968	Martin Luther King, Jr. assassinated	NPS 2020b
1968	Fair Housing Act of 1968 passed, prohibiting discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, or sex	History 2018b

4.2 Summary of African American History in the American West, ca. 1800–1970

The role of Black pioneers in the American West is often neglected within the national context of African American history. Specific geographic definitions of the West can vary widely; for the purposes of this report, the West will generally be defined as any land in America west of the 100th Meridian, which passes through the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. It is a common misconception that

settlers in the West were universally white; many explorers, trappers, traders, cowboys, and farmers were people of color (Billington and Hardaway 1998:1). African Americans on the frontier sought and built community, whether in Black towns or in segregated neighborhoods. As Billington and Hardaway point out, the West often offered African Americans more equality, freedom, and economic opportunity than other regions (Billington and Hardaway 1998:5). While an in-depth discussion of this aspect of history is beyond the scope of this context, a general summary of the role of African Americans on the western frontier in America is provided.

African Americans were a part of the Euro-American colonization of the West nearly from the beginning. In the late nineteenth century, large numbers of Black soldiers were also employed by the U.S. Army throughout the West often fighting Native Americans; they were well known for their valor, low desertion rate, and exemplary performance (Billington 2001). These Black soldiers, who served in the Ninth and Tenth Cavalries and the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantries, were known as Buffalo Soldiers. The regiments were segregated and frequently led by white officers (although three Black officers, all graduates of West Point, did also lead them). Although best known for their service in Kansas, Texas, and Oklahoma, the Buffalo Soldiers were stationed in areas as diverse as San Francisco, Yosemite Park, and other areas in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. In addition to enforcing federal policy and engaging in military campaigns against Native American tribes, the Buffalo Soldiers also assisted with building roads and trails that facilitated westward expansion and acted as some of the first national park rangers to prevent poaching and monitor livestock. Military service provided Buffalo Soldiers with both employment and a strategy to obtain the rights often denied to African Americans through the respect garnered by their brave and effective work. The last Buffalo Soldier units were disbanded in 1951 (Smithsonian Institution 2020).

African Americans also played a role in the ranching industry. Prior to the Civil War, African Americans served as cowboys in Texas. Those cowboys were often slaves but many continued in that role during and after the Civil War (Durham and Jones 1983:13–19). The end of slavery brought increasing racial antagonism from white settlers toward Black cowboys, even in more remote areas of Texas and the surrounding states. But those same cowboys also worked side-by-side with whites and often assumed minor roles of responsibility (although they were not permitted to become foremen) (Durham and Jones 1983:23–24):

> It would, of course, be ridiculous to say that there was no discrimination when men of different races worked together, particularly when most of them were Texans during the bitterness of Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction. But the demands of their job made them transcend much of their prejudice. On a drive, a cowboy's ability to do his work, to handle his share and a little extra, was far more important than his color. (Durham and Jones 1983:44)

By 1867, emerging rail transportation routes had opened new beef markets (beyond previous markets such as mining towns in Colorado and California) (Durham and Jones 1983:120). As a result, Black cowboys became common fixtures of trail crews in Texas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Kansas, Wyoming, South Dakota, New Mexico, Colorado, and Montana (Durham and Jones 1983). They may have made up as much as approximately 25 percent of all cowboys (approximately 8,000–9,000 cowboys) (Porter 2001). African Americans also occupied other roles associated with the ranching industry, such as railroad employees and even hotel owners (Durham and Jones 1983:127). These patterns of employment continued through the 1880s, during which a cattle boom occurred. But in 1886, a drought followed by a record-breaking, harsh winter killed off many range cattle and functionally ended open range ranching, ending that traditional way of life for many cowboys, Black and white (Durham and Jones 1983:150).

African American women also played key roles in the West during the late 1800s and early 1900s. They worked in a wide range of occupations: nurses, midwives, real estate developers, cooks, boardinghouse

operators, beauticians, nannies, servants, laundresses, restauranteurs, farmers, church and community leaders, prostitutes as well as homemakers, homesteaders, and pioneers. As a result of social isolation due to the proportionately small number of women on the frontier, compounded with the isolation due to their race, many African American women chose to live in towns or other developed areas. This concentration allowed them to develop social groups and organizations, such as literary clubs and religious or political societies (Hardaway 1997).

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the West's African American population continued to grow, albeit slowly. Between 1860 and 1910, the African American population of the Rocky Mountain region increased from 235 to 21,467 (Forbes 1966:34). Despite that population growth, by 1910 African Americans continued to make up less than 1 percent of the total population in the West. In some cases, African Americans moved within the region because of local social conditions; during the 1860s and 1870s, for example, some African Americans emigrated to Nevada to escape racism in California (Rusco 1975:8). The African American population in the West continued to grow slowly from 1910 to 1940, although overall migration patterns within the region shifted. Prior to World War I, the majority of African Americans traveling West had settled in Colorado and Washington, and, to a lesser extent, California; but after World War I, California (and, to a lesser extent, Arizona) became their primary destination (Forbes 1966:34). Many of these immigrants moved to towns and cities because of community-building and employment opportunities.

On a national level, the Republican Party, led by the Radical Republicans, dominated politics during the decade following the Civil War. The Radical Republicans aggressively supported policies of racial equality and integration in the South, a policy commonly referred to as "Radical Reconstruction." Although Radical Reconstruction was primarily focused on the American South and therefore neglected the West to some degree, it still created a political environment throughout the country in which the white establishment was increasingly willing to entertain racial equality, giving African Americans in the West the ability to successfully advocate for equality to an extent they had never been able to before. For example, from between 1865 to 1867 in the Colorado Territory, Black settlers advocated for their right to vote and public education (Berwanger 2001).

By the end of World War II, the Black population in the West surpassed 170,000. The majority of individuals lived in California, with the next largest populations in Arizona and Colorado. This growth was in part due to extensive outmigration from the South during and after the war (Forbes 1966:34). African Americans still made up only a small proportion of the total population, however (approximately 2 percent of the total population in the case of California).

Demographic shifts prior to and during World War II led to significant changes in the racial makeup of inner-city populations, which in turn often resulted in the rapid expansions of Black neighborhoods. African Americans living in the West during and after World War II encountered a range of social and economic barriers, particularly in cities. Access to equal schooling was often an issue (Forbes 1966:39). African Americans were often heavily constrained in the areas of cities where they could live as a result of redlining and racially exclusive covenants governing the sale of property. Redlining is a discriminatory practice in which loans and other financial services are denied to potential property owners on the basis of race to prevent them from purchasing property in specific areas; historically it was common in many cities in the West, including Salt Lake City, Spokane, Los Angeles, and Phoenix (University of Richmond Digital Scholarship Lab 2020). The areas where the would-be property owners were allowed to live and purchase property were generally poorer neighborhoods with less access to key resources such as medical care, public spaces like parks, and even places to purchase food. Restrictive covenants attached to specific properties confined the sale of those properties to only white purchasers, preventing African Americans and other people of color from buying property. Historically, African Americans in urban areas were most commonly afflicted by these practices; although now technically illegal, redlining and discriminatory lending continue to be an issue in the present.

When moving West, African Americans were frequently forced to live in a limited number of neighborhoods in a given city, often designated by real estate developers.

> The West's real estate industry has widely adopted the philosophy of discouraging the development of integrated neighborhoods for reasons not fully explainable in terms of pressure from white residents. In several urban areas unethical white real estate brokers have been instrumental in guaranteeing a solid expansion of the ghetto by "block-busting" and openly intimidating whites who might otherwise have remained in the neighborhood. (Forbes 1966:40)

African Americans in these growing neighborhoods were quite cognizant of the discrimination they faced, and issues such as redlining and access to equal education were often at the forefront of civil rights efforts. By the 1960s, fair housing laws, campaigning by civil rights groups, and the expansion of the Black middle class had led to "token" integration in many metropolitan areas of the West (Forbes 1966:41).

Throughout the nineteenth century and for much of the early twentieth century, the number of African Americans on the western frontier was much smaller than the number of whites; generally, African Americans made up less than 1 percent of the total population in western states through the 1890s, and that number remained low for several more decades. Additionally, due to economic drivers that heavily favored male workers, such as the growth of the mining and ranching industries, the numbers of African American men in the West frequently far exceeded the number of African American women. But regardless of their numbers, African Americans played an integral part in all aspects of the settlement and development of the West, from homesteading to military campaigns to the growth of agriculture and mining (Hardaway 1997).

4.3 Background History of African American Civil Rights in Nevada

This context for African American civil rights in Nevada is divided into four major periods: African American Civil Rights in the Nineteenth Century (1848–1899), Jim Crow in the Early Twentieth Century (1900–1941), World War II (1941–1945), and the Activism and Advocacy Era (1946–1979). While the major periods also encompass specific events and sub-periods, they reflect the key turning points in African American history in the state.

4.3.1 *African American Civil Rights in the Nineteenth Century (1848–1899)*

African Americans have played important roles in Nevada history since Euro-American exploration began. Black explorers came along with various trappers and exploring parties, including Jedediah Smith in the 1820s and John Fremont in the 1840s. Blacks also owned and worked at early ranches in Nevada, traveled with immigrant parties, and worked as guides for immigrants starting in the 1840s and 1850s (Rusco 1975:4–6). But as with many white explorers and settlers, these African Americans often did not settle permanently. It was the discovery of the Comstock Lode in 1859 that resulted in the first significant recorded permanent African American population in the state.

The Comstock Lode was a massive silver lode located near Virginia City, Nevada, that produced $305,779,612.48 in ore between 1859 and 1882 (Figure 2) (Edwards 2011). The 1860 U.S. Census, taken shortly after mining began, recorded 44 African Americans in areas that would become Nevada. All of

these residents lived in Carson County, near the Comstock.[1] The area in which they lived also housed the vast majority of the soon-to-be state's white population (Rusco 1975:14).

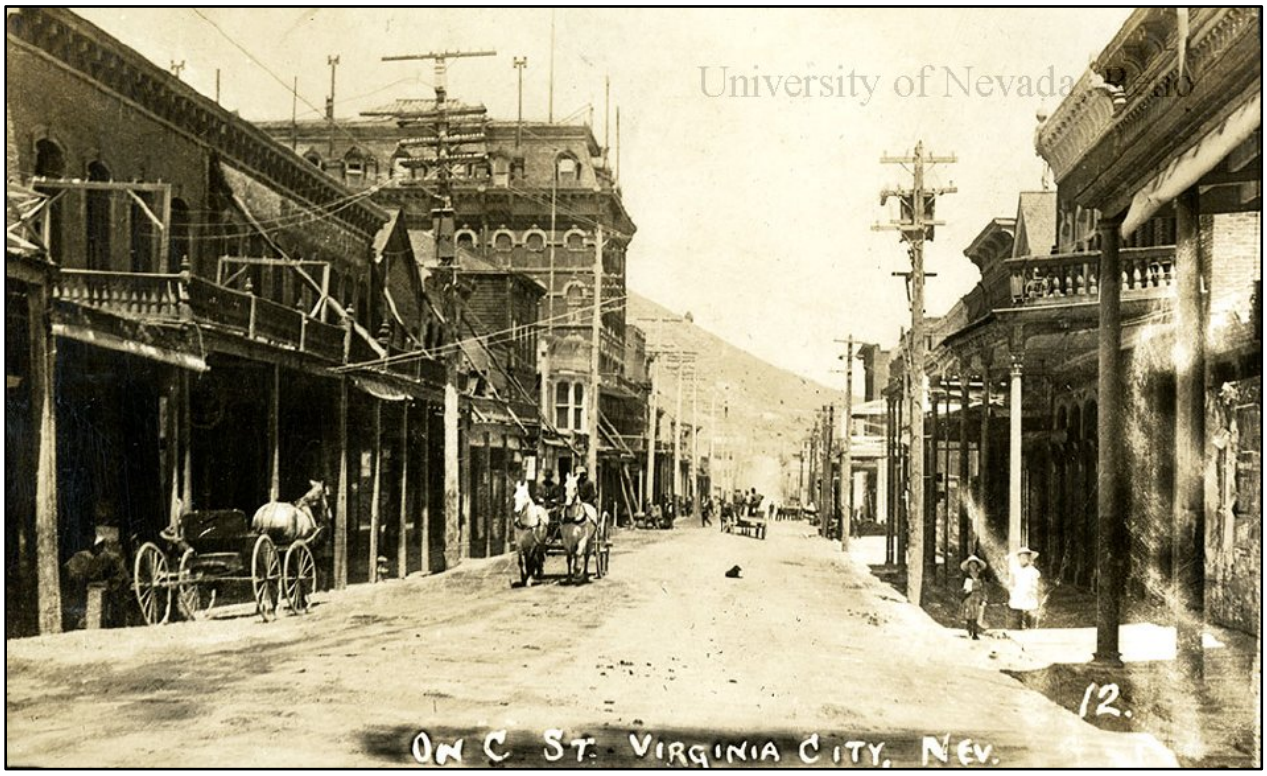

Figure 2. C Street in Virginia City, no date. Nevada Images, UNRS-P2001-01, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

The 1870 census indicates African Americans in Nevada came from a wide range of places. Many were born in the state itself or in the territory prior to Nevada being granted statehood. Immigrants came from both northern and southern states, although Virginia and West Virginia were the most common birthplaces. It therefore can be assumed that during the 1870s, African Americans in Nevada were not simply relocating from the South but arriving from many different areas of the nation to seek opportunity (United States Census Bureau 1870).

Throughout Nevada during the nineteenth century, African Americans worked in a wide range of occupations, including service positions, craftspeople, agricultural workers, and miners (Figure 3). In the 1870 and 1880 censuses, the most common positions were barbers, cooks, and unskilled laborers. A smaller number of African Americans also held jobs that were positions of authority or that required professional skills, including a physician and managers of boardinghouses, lodging houses, and restaurant and saloon keepers. One known example was William Brown, who owned and operated his own saloon—the Boston Saloon in Virginia City—from 1864 to 1875 (Rozen-Wheeler 2017). African American women were employed in skilled craft positions such as seamstresses or milliners as well as service workers (e.g., chambermaids, nurses)—even as midwives. A significant number of women ran their own households (Rusco 1975:136–137).

[1] Storey County, for which Virginia City became the county seat, was created in 1861, the year after the 1860 census (James and Rose 2009).

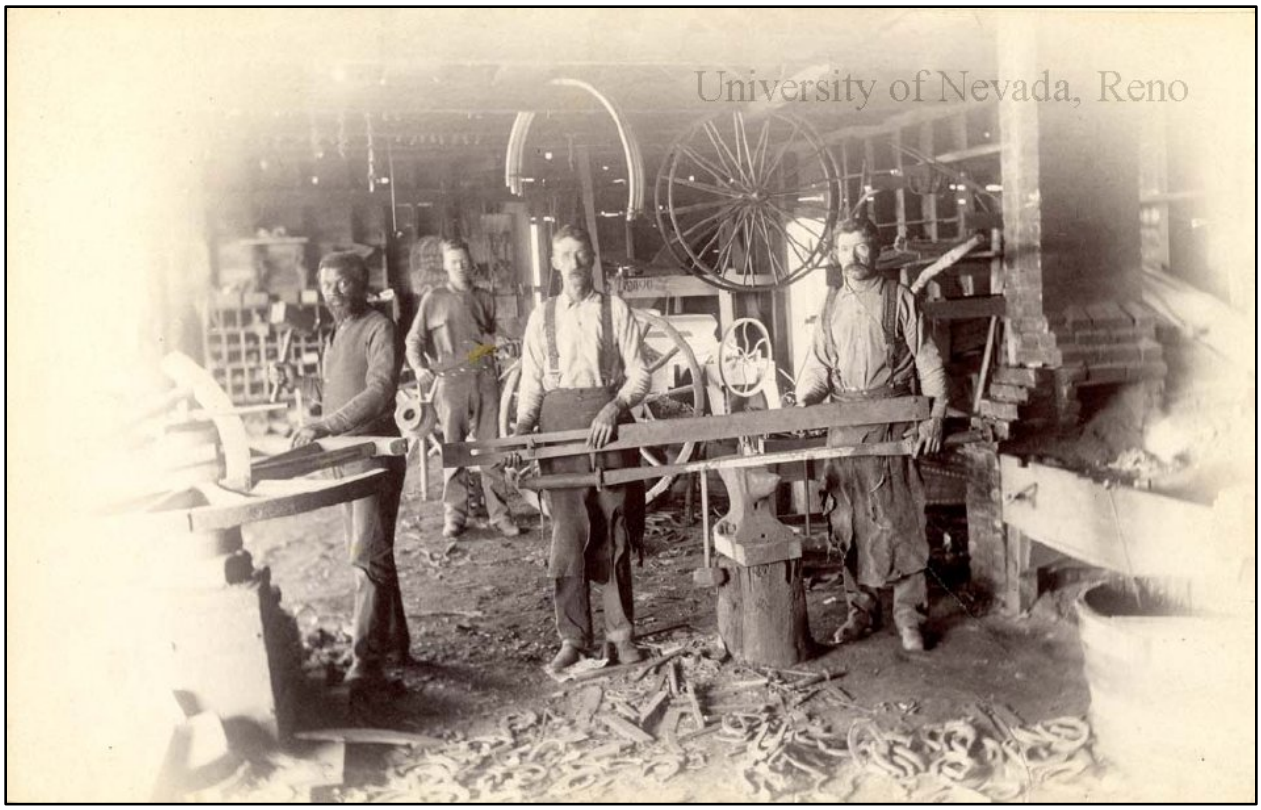

Figure 3. Blacksmith shop in Sheridan or Centerville, including African American worker, no date. Beatrice Fettic Jones Collection, UNRS-P1988-25, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

In general though, the majority of African Americans were employed in "low-income and low-status occupations," typically unskilled labor for men and domestic service for women. African Americans also frequently owned small businesses such as barbershops or retail shops. They were infrequently miners due to their exclusion from miners' unions until 1879 (Coray 1992:240; Rusco 1975:134). But this did not preclude African Americans in Nevada from enjoying a relative degree of economic success:

> [A] significant number of blacks achieved more economically than the bulk of their group and were doing well even by comparison with the average white person. While there seem to have been only two black professionals in the state in the nineteenth century, there were several black businessmen, ranchers, and miners who were earning significant incomes and acquiring some property . . . there apparently was improvement in the economic standing of the black community of Nevada from the 1860s through the 1880s. The black business group apparently increased slowly in numbers and income during this period. (Rusco 1975:134)

One such example is Ben Palmer, an African American farmer and rancher in the Carson Valley. He and his brother-in-law took out land claims for 320 and 400 acres, respectively, in 1853. By securing water rights, constructing irrigation systems, and selling grazing rights to immigrants bound for California, Palmer quickly became economically successful. By the late 1860s, he paid the tenth highest amount of taxes in the county. After the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment, he became a registered voter and continued to be an important leader within the community until his death in 1908 (Larsen 2009; Visit Carson Valley 2020).

The opportunity to profit from the rapidly growing population was not the only reason African Americans emigrated to Nevada. Disillusionment in the face of ongoing racism in California during the 1860s and 1870s may have also encouraged African Americans to emigrate to Nevada (Rusco 1975:8). But Nevada

offered little respite from racism. Rusco is unequivocal in summarizing race relations in Nevada in the nineteenth century:

> Nevada was racist during the territorial and early statehood period. Its constitutions and laws clearly placed blacks, along with other nonwhites, in an inferior position; they were not entitled to participate in any way in the political system, but they were nevertheless required to obey the laws white men made. (Rusco 1975:21)

Prior to Nevada achieving statehood in 1864, numerous race-based restrictions existed for nonwhites in the state. African Americans were denied suffrage and could not hold political office, serve on juries or in the militia, testify in legal cases or work as attorneys, or marry whites (Rusco 1975:38). Although Gov. James N. Nye urged a change to the law preventing nonwhites from testifying in 1862; the territorial government ignored his views (Rusco 1975:25).

The first state legislature made minor changes to some laws, such as allowing African Americans to testify (although still not on an equal basis with whites), but also excluded African American children from public schools unless they used separate facilities from white students. Throughout the 1860s, white constituents also continued to oppose voting rights for nonwhites (Rusco 1975:35, 38).

From 1863 through the 1870s, African Americans in Nevada mounted vigorous challenges to legal discrimination. Their efforts included petitioning against racist laws and challenging the laws through the courts. Although these efforts saw little success until the passage of U.S. constitutional amendments between 1865 and 1870 made them moot, Nevada's African Americans did successfully overturn laws preventing Black children from attending school with whites during the 1870s (Rusco 1975:71, 79, 81).

Despite rampant discrimination, by the end of the 1860s and throughout the 1870s, African Americans in Nevada experienced a gradual diminution of racist sentiment (Rusco 1975:42). This was likely due in part to the domination of the Republican Party in the state for most of the nineteenth century along with the state's embrace of Radical Reconstruction (Rusco 1975:51).

Understandably, African Americans in Nevada almost universally supported the Republican Party and the policies it endorsed during this period (Rusco 1975:51). But many white Nevadans also supported the party. This support was often, consciously or unconsciously, hypocritical:

> It was quite common for Nevada politicians or newspapers to applaud national actions without advocating action to deal with similar racist laws or practices in Nevada. Part of the reason for this attitude was probably simple hypocrisy, but it also seems that racial practices of the South were more visible to Nevada leaders than racial practices at home. It was a common assumption that racism was confined to the South. (Rusco 1975:45)

For example, white Nevadans prevaricated about accepting a state-specific Civil Rights Act proposed in 1866, allowing many racist laws to remain in place for years (Rusco 1975:52). During this period, white Nevadans also debated whether Black residents should be admitted to the state (Rusco 1975:60). Presumably, neither of these debates were perceived to conflict with the Republican sympathies of many white residents, who also made the state the first to ratify the 15th Amendment while simultaneously keeping laws on the books preventing the full enfranchisement of Black residents (History 2018c). Nevada's legislature enacted legal changes to racist laws at a slower rate in comparison to many other states (Rusco 1975:42).

Despite the frequently myopic views of racism held by white Nevadans, the 1870s and 1880s were decades of improvement for the state's African Americans, and Black communities in the state were optimistic. With the passage of the 15th Amendment, African American men could vote in 1870, although laws restricting Black voting rights were not formally repealed until 1877 (Rusco 1975:46, 58). By 1882,

all of Nevada's racist laws had been repealed with the exception of the law criminalizing interracial marriage (Rusco 1975:xiii, 42).

> The continuing success in changing these laws, accompanied by an apparent improvement in their actual treatment, led to a change of emphasis for these leaders. In the 1870s there were celebrations of their victories; observances of the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment were important events in the Nevada black community, and they received attention from white Nevadans. Some participants in these events even believed that racism had been defeated and that American blacks had gained the same rights as white people, with the important exception of "social equality." (Rusco 1975:111)

Although most of the racist laws had been repealed by the early 1880s, the Nevada legislature failed to enact any laws intended to prevent racial discrimination. This left African Americans in Nevada vulnerable to discrimination in a myriad of social and economic areas (Rusco 1975:65).

On the national level, Reconstruction ended in 1877 with the loss of power by Radical Republicans and the removal of federal troops from the former Confederacy. The backlash by racist whites, throughout the South in particular in addition to the rest of the United States, was rapid and extreme. African Americans, who throughout Reconstruction had enjoyed a measure of protection and support from the federal government, abruptly found themselves exposed to discrimination and rapidly escalating violence. White racists employed terrorist tactics, such as lynching, to prevent African Americans from asserting their recently secured civil rights. The period from the late 1880s to after World War I is often described as the nadir of race relations in the United States (Rusco 1975:xiii).

Although African Americans in Nevada retained legal rights established during Reconstruction, they still experienced a variety of setbacks, such as diminishing economic power and racial hostility, during the post-Reconstruction period (Rusco 1975:xi). During the 1870s and 1880s, Nevada's African Americans were often middle class and commonly owned and operated their own businesses; some served important professional roles. This changed during the late 1880s and 1890s and continued through much of the early twentieth century, during which period the Black middle class declined in size and economic success. One historian attributes the decline in the Black middle class to the loss of white customers due to rising racial hostility (Rusco 1975:211). This economic decline was so severe that "the status of black Nevadans vis-à-vis white Nevadans was lower in the 1950s than it had been in the 1870s, particularly in an economic sense" (Rusco 1975:196).

Acts of racism by Nevada communities included the intentional exclusion of Black residents and public performances by whites in blackface. In addition,

> [t]here appears to have been an increase in derogatory terms applied to blacks when newspapers reported news about them. The use of such terms appears to have been routine for several decades in contrast with the situation in the nineteenth century. (Rusco 1975:207)

It did not help that throughout the nineteenth century, the African American population in Nevada remained small in size both proportionately and in sheer numbers. The number of African Americans statewide never increased beyond 500 before the end of the century. In 1890, Nevada's African American population made up just 0.5 percent of the total state population and was "numerically smaller than that of any other western state or territory except Idaho" (Rusco 1975:xii).

These demographic trends were related to national economic troubles. The Panic of 1893 resulted in a rapid drop in silver prices, which disproportionately affected Nevada's mining-based economy and led to a national depression. Black populations in both Virginia City and Carson City declined significantly: "In 1890 there were 37 blacks in Storey County and 56 in Ormsby County; in 1900 the totals were: Storey, 9;

Ormsby, 12" (Coray 1992:243). These numbers reflected an overall statewide trend. In 1880, the state's Black population was 396; in 1890 it was 242; and by 1900, it was just 134 individuals, a population decline of 38.9 percent between 1880 and 1890, and 44.6 percent between 1890 and 1900 (Coray 1992:243).

Ultimately, African Americans found themselves in a disadvantageous social, economic, and legal situation that would persist through the first half of the twentieth century; they would describe Nevada as "The Mississippi of the West" (Rusco 1975:196). But African American communities in Nevada endured in the face of these challenges.

4.3.1.1 NORTHWEST NEVADA (1848–1899)

During the nineteenth century, the northwest region of Nevada was, by a large margin, the leading center of both Euro-American and African American settlement. As a result of mining rushes, most notably associated with the Comstock Lode, the area's non-native population spiked rapidly. African Americans joined Euro-Americans, Europeans, Asians, and others from around the globe in settling and establishing business ventures there. Northwest Nevada, particularly the areas near the Comstock, saw extensive social, economic, and political development by African Americans during this period.

> [Storey, Orbmsby, and Washoe Counties] together accounted for 45 percent of the total black population of the state in 1870 [which was a total of 324] and 52 percent in 1880 [a total of 396]. This is not surprising; Virginia City, located on the Comstock lode, was the largest city in Nevada during the nineteenth century, and therefore Storey County was the largest county; Ormsby County was the site of the state capital from territorial days on; and Reno, in Washoe County, was a relatively large city primarily because it was on the transcontinental railroad at the nearest point to Virginia [City]. (Rusco 1975:125)

In those counties, the largest African American populations were in Virginia City and Gold Hill (near the Comstock) as well as Carson City.

4.3.1.1.1 Locations of Residences and Businesses

Despite the frequently racist attitudes of white Nevadans, no formalized restrictions regarding African American dwelling places existed in Virginia City, although such restrictions did exist for Chinese residents. Despite this, Virginia City's African American population was concentrated "by custom or economic necessity" along B and C Streets in the center of the city (Figure 4) (Coray 1992:242). This put them "between the white miners and the prostitutes, in the commercial heart of the city" (Rusco 1975:125–128). Census data from 1870 does not provide readily interpretable information about the locations where African Americans dwelt in Carson City and Reno. Data from the 1880 census indicates that the African American population of Carson City lived almost exclusively on 2nd Street and Spear Street. For Reno in 1880, African Americans most frequently lived on Lucom Street, Lake Street, and Commercial Row (Ancestry 2010).[2]

[2] Census data reviewed consisted of data relating to heads of household only; this data therefore reflects where African American families lived and likely excludes information relating to domestic servants who would have lived with their employers and any African American lodgers living at white-owned boardinghouses.

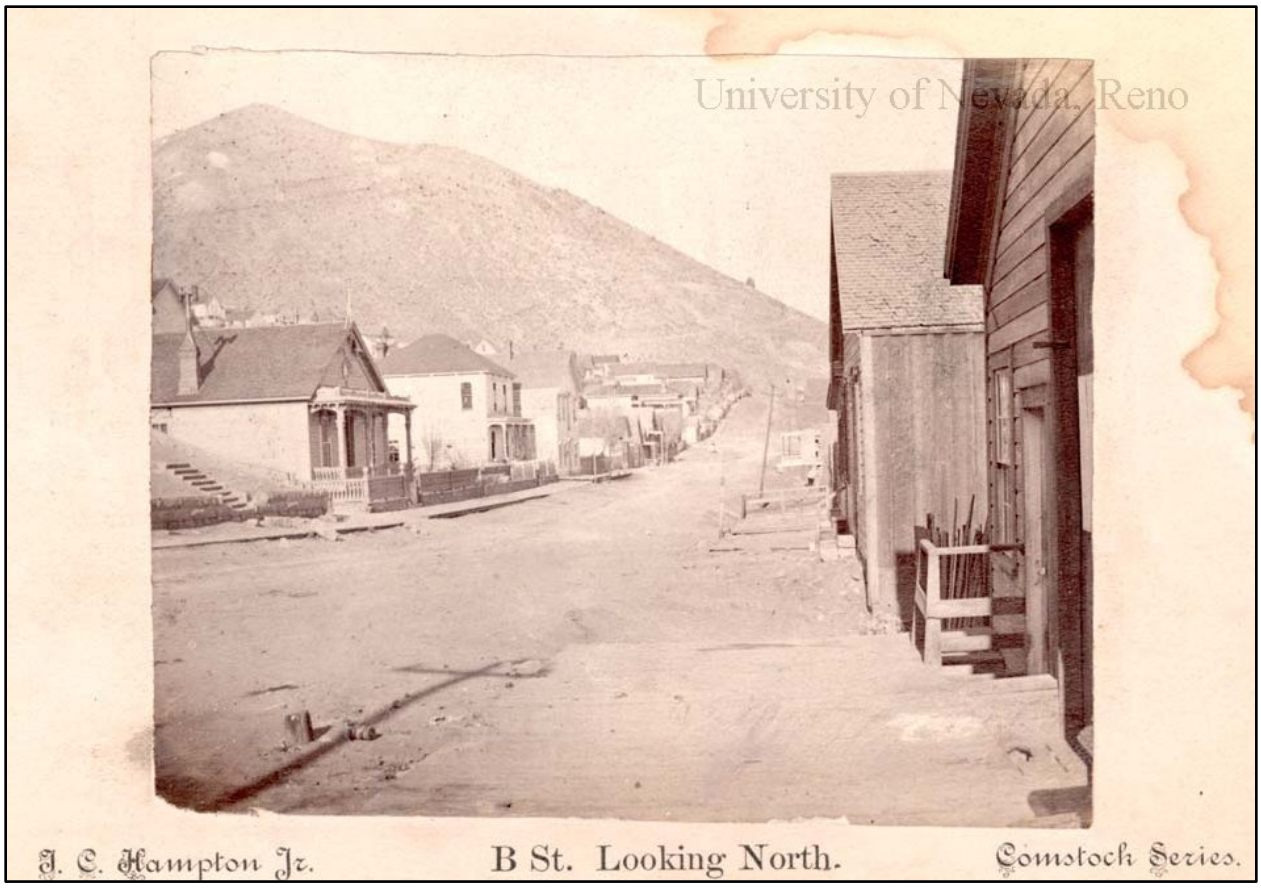

Figure 4. View of B Street in Virginia City, no date. Crissie Andrews Caughlin Collection, UNRS-P2000-06, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

4.3.1.1.2 Churches

This section does not discuss specific churches and denominations in detail, but it is important to note the key role of religious institutions in African American communities during the nineteenth century. Social institutions such as churches and fraternal organizations formed the center of the African American community. As Rusco observes,

> The few hundred blacks in the nineteenth-century Nevada, scattered among a number of locations although with concentrations in Virginia City and Carson City, managed to found and maintain a number of institutions to serve the needs of their community. At least four churches representing the three major black denominations existed during the nineteenth century, two lodges of the Prince Hall Masons were in existence for at least one or two decades, and there were literary and social groups and organized balls at various times during the forty years from 1860 to the end of the century. Probably there were also some other organizations that existed but have not yet been discovered. (Rusco 1975:191)

African American religious institutions generally existed before they were introduced to Nevada and were usually brought to the state by African American settlers (Rusco 1975:173). Churches established during this period included the first Black Baptist Church in Nevada and the first African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, both of which were founded in Virginia City (Emerson 2012; Rusco 1975:174).

4.3.1.1.3 Social Organizations

Along with churches, fraternal organizations and social clubs served a key role within African American communities in northwest Nevada. Beyond the opportunity to create social connections with other African Americans, social organizations (along with religious institutions) also provided connections on the national level and a basis for civil rights organizing.

> Such linkage, and the wider feeling of community that it encouraged, aided the exchange of information and strategies. It helped to bring focus to other group activities, ranging from literary and social clubs to celebration balls commemorating the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. Black churches and lodges were social centers that lent institutional support to the pursuit of social, political, and economic advancement by individuals and groups. (Coray 1992:243)

Two Black Prince Hall Masonic Lodges were established in Carson City and Virginia City during the nineteenth century (Rusco 1975:63). These were Ashlar Lodge No. 9 in Virginia City, which operated from 1867 to ca. 1888, and St. John's Lodge No. 13 in Carson City, which operated from 1875 to ca. 1886 (Rusco 1975:180–183). In addition to fraternal organizations, groups with "educational, cultural, or social aims" were also popular among African Americans in northwest Nevada during the nineteenth century (Rusco 1975:191). For example, the Lincoln Union Club, established in Virginia City in the 1870s, became a place for political organizing (Rusco 1975:xv).

4.3.1.2 NORTHEAST NEVADA (1848–1899)

While the majority of African Americans lived in Storey, Ormsby, and Washoe Counties, a comparatively large African American population lived in White Pine County (totaling 66 individuals in 1870). They, as with white settlers, were drawn to the area by a mining boom that hit the region in the late 1860s and early 1870s. Some worked as prospectors or miners, although this was uncommon due to their formal exclusion from mining unions until as late as 1879. Like white settlers, the northeast's African American population mostly left after the ore ran out and mining dried up during the 1870s (Coray 1992:240; Rusco 1975:125, 157).

A small population of African Americans also lived in Elko during the nineteenth century (Coray 1992:240). At least one historic source (likely written by Charles H. Wilson, an individual who supported African American civil rights) reported conditions of relative equality in Elko, including an African American man serving on a jury there (Rusco 1975:204). Elko's schools were desegregated due to early advocacy work, which was generally supported by the white population, and across political lines. "Whiskiyou [Charles Wilson] also reported that there was general support in Elko for this position of the school board with no 'protest' by either Republicans or Democrats" (Rusco 1975:81). There is little record of African American social organizations in this region during the nineteenth century with the exception of the Elko Republican Club. It was founded in 1870 and served as a literary and political club for African Americans; it hosted regular weekly meetings and debates on political issues such as women's suffrage (Rusco 1975:95). One early African American writer, Thomas Detter, lived in Elko during the 1860s (Rusco 1975:100)

4.3.1.3 SOUTHERN NEVADA (1848–1899)

Historic research revealed little information on the history of African Americans in southern Nevada during the nineteenth century. While this to some extent reflects a very limited African American population in the area, the primary reason is because non-native settlement as a whole was extremely limited in southern Nevada during this period. What is now Las Vegas started as a mission run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) in the 1850s (Hulse 1991:62–63). It was

subsequently abandoned but later purchased by Octavius Decatur Gass, serving as a ranch over the coming decades and slowly growing. By the 1880s, it had expanded to a small business and communication center but would not truly take root until after 1905, when the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad (SPLA&SL) was built through it (Hulse 1991:146, 148). Other settlements, such as those established by members of the LDS Church in areas like Moapa and St. Thomas near the Virgin River, were also limited in scale, particularly when compared with the booming mining settlements in Virginia City and Carson City. Census information confirms that the African American population in southern Nevada during this period was very small. In 1880 in Lincoln County (which also included what is now Clark County until 1909), there were only 16 African American residents; 14 lived in Nye County, and only five lived in Esmeralda County (Rusco 1975:127). One notable Black resident of southern Nevada during this period was John Howell, a rancher, gold prospector, and freight business owner. He was the first Black man to own property in southern Nevada, including a ranching enterprise at Las Vegas Spring (now known as the Springs Preserve) (Spring Mountain Ranch State Park 2017).

4.3.2 *Jim Crow in the Early Twentieth Century (1900–1940)*

The late nineteenth century was characterized by the briefly rising socioeconomic status of African Americans, followed by an extended period of oppression both nationally and statewide. By the 1890s, the majority of racially discriminatory laws in Nevada had been overturned, with the exception of a statewide anti-miscegenation law prohibiting interracial marriage that remained on the books until it was overturned in 1959. But in place of those laws, the state's African Americans faced increasing racial hostility by white residents. As previously noted, this hostility often manifested through the use of racist language in newspapers as well as whites actively not patronizing Black-owned businesses (Rusco 1975:207, 211). The worsening social environment between 1890 and the 1940s likely reflected broader national trends, particularly for African Americans (Coray 1992:244). During the early twentieth century, this racism not only continued but expanded in scope and violence.

4.3.2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE (1900–1940)

Throughout the early twentieth century, African Americans comprised less than 1 percent of the total population in Nevada (Table 3). At this time, however, African American populations began to increase in areas away from the mines of the Comstock, drawn by physical and economic development, including new mining districts, new transportation routes and methods, and other industries such as ranching.

Table 3. Population of Nevada by Race, 1900–1940

Year	African American Population	Total Population	Percentage of Total Population African American	Citation
1900	134	42,335	0.3	Bureau of the Census 1904:101–102
1910	513	81,875	0.6	Bureau of the Census 1913:26; Coray 1992:243
1920	346	77,407	0.4	Bureau of the Census 1922:6–7; Coray 1992:243
1930	516	91,058	0.6	Bureau of the Census 1932: 129; Coray 1992:243
1940	664	110,247	0.6	Bureau of the Census 1943:721; Coray 1992:243

In 1900, a total of 134 African Americans out of a population of 42,335 lived in Nevada (0.32 percent of the state's population) (Table 4, Figure 5). The concentration of the African American population varied between counties, from none in Churchill, Esmeralda, or Nye Counties to 0.65 percent of the population in Lander County. And although Washoe County had a proportionately smaller African American population than other counties, it held the largest African American population in the state (33

individuals). The small and comparatively unstable population would likely have made maintaining social institutions difficult (Coray 1992:243).

Table 4. African American Population by County in Nevada, 1900

County	African American Population	Total Population	Percentage of Population African American
Churchill	0	830	0.00
Douglas	6	1,534	0.39
Elko	17	5,688	0.30
Esmeralda	0	1,972	0.00
Eureka	10	1,954	0.51
Humboldt	20	4,463	0.45
Lander	10	1,534	0.65
Lincoln	15	3,284	0.46
Lyon	1	2,268	0.04
Nye	0	1,140	0.00
Ormsby	12	2,893	0.41
Storey	9	3,673	0.25
Washoe	33	9,141	0.36
White Pine	1	1,961	0.05
Total	**134**	**42,335**	**0.32**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1904:212

Between 1900 and 1910, the African American population in Nevada began to rebound (Table 5, Figure 6). It increased from 134 to 513, a 383 percent increase likely linked to improving economic circumstances that drew African Americans from out of state. For example, the population of African American residents in Nye County went from zero in 1900 to 74 in 1910; similarly, White Pine County went from one African American resident in 1900 to 46 in 1910. Both counties experienced mining booms during the early twentieth century, which likely drew African Americans there. Similarly, although Lincoln and Clark Counties did not separate until 1909, by 1910, Clark County had a population of 12 African Americans, almost as many as in the two combined counties a decade earlier. This was likely as a result of the construction of the SPLA&SL Railroad through Las Vegas in 1905, which brought additional railroad workers, including African Americans, to the county (White 2004:72). The population rebound also likely contributed to the recovery of social institutions for the African American population during the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s.

> The recovery of the population in 1910 may have led to the resurrection of such institutions, particularly where the African-Americans settled in concentrated numbers. If such concentration continued, then the decline in 1920 still left a community large enough to maintain key social institutions such as churches. The increase in 1930 marked a return to the general level of population persistence (at 0.6 percent of the total state population) that was characteristic of the peaks of African-American population before World War II. It may have also provided the stable critical mass necessary to sustain the broader range of social institutions that has become typical of the modern African-American community. (Coray 1992:243)

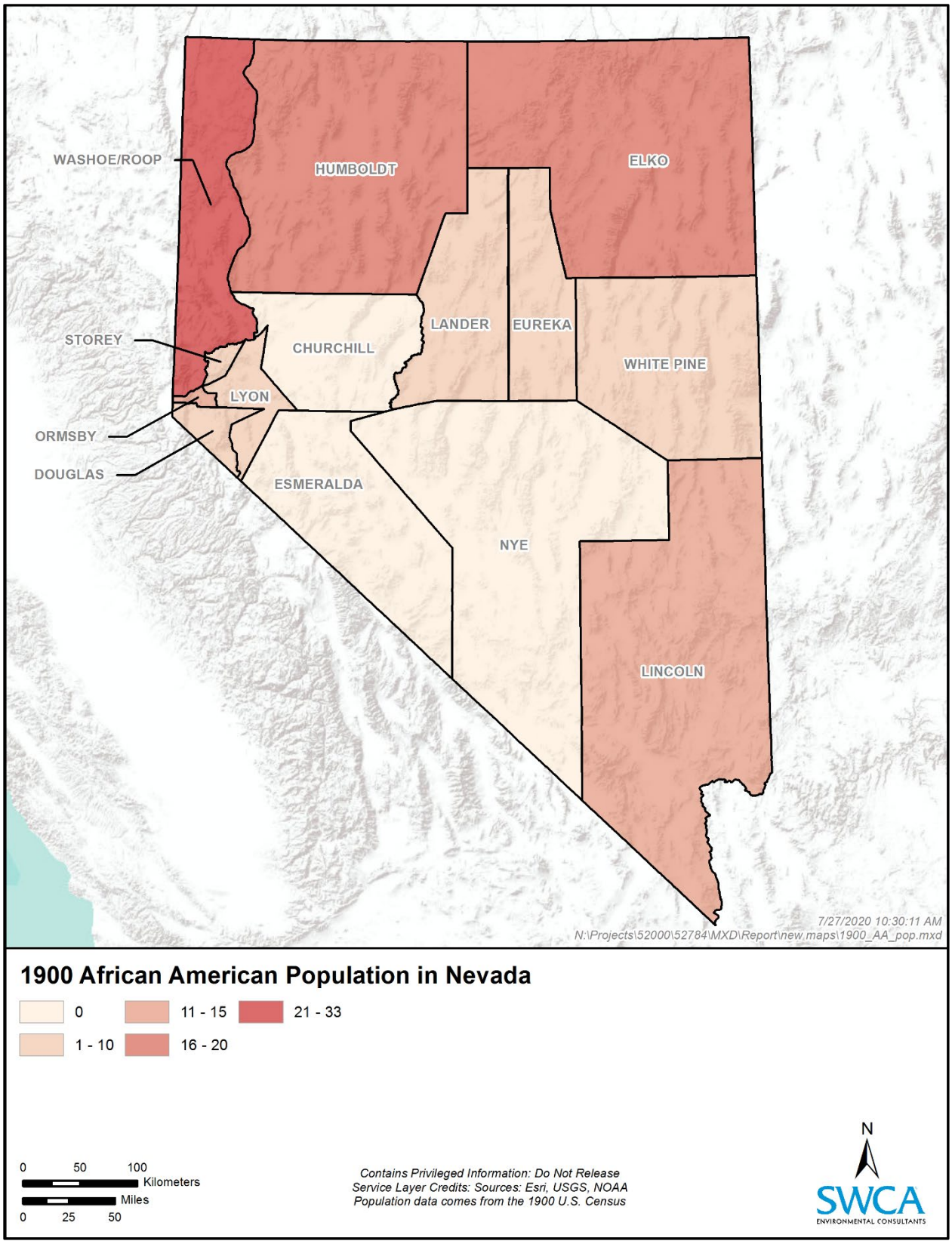

Figure 5. African American Population by County in Nevada, 1900.

Table 5. African American Population Growth by County in Nevada, from 1900 to 1910

County	African American Population	Total Population	Percent of Population African American, 1900	Percent of Population African American, 1910
Churchill	1	2,811	0.00	0.04
Clark*	12	3,321	Not applicable*	0.36
Douglas	7	1,895	0.39	0.37
Elko	38	8,133	0.30	0.47
Esmeralda	99	9,369	0.00	1.06
Eureka	1	1,830	0.51	0.06
Humboldt	36	6,825	0.45	0.53
Lander	7	1,786	0.65	0.39
Lincoln	7	3,489	0.46*	0.20
Lyon	4	3,568	0.04	0.11
Nye	74	7,513	0.00	0.98
Ormsby	66	3,415	0.41	1.93
Storey	10	3,045	0.25	0.30
Washoe	115	17,434	0.36	0.66
White Pine	46	7,441	0.05	0.62
Total	**513**	**81,875**	**0.32**	**0.63**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1913: 239

* Clark County was separated from Lincoln County in 1909. The 1900 population statistics include what later became Clark County with Lincoln County.

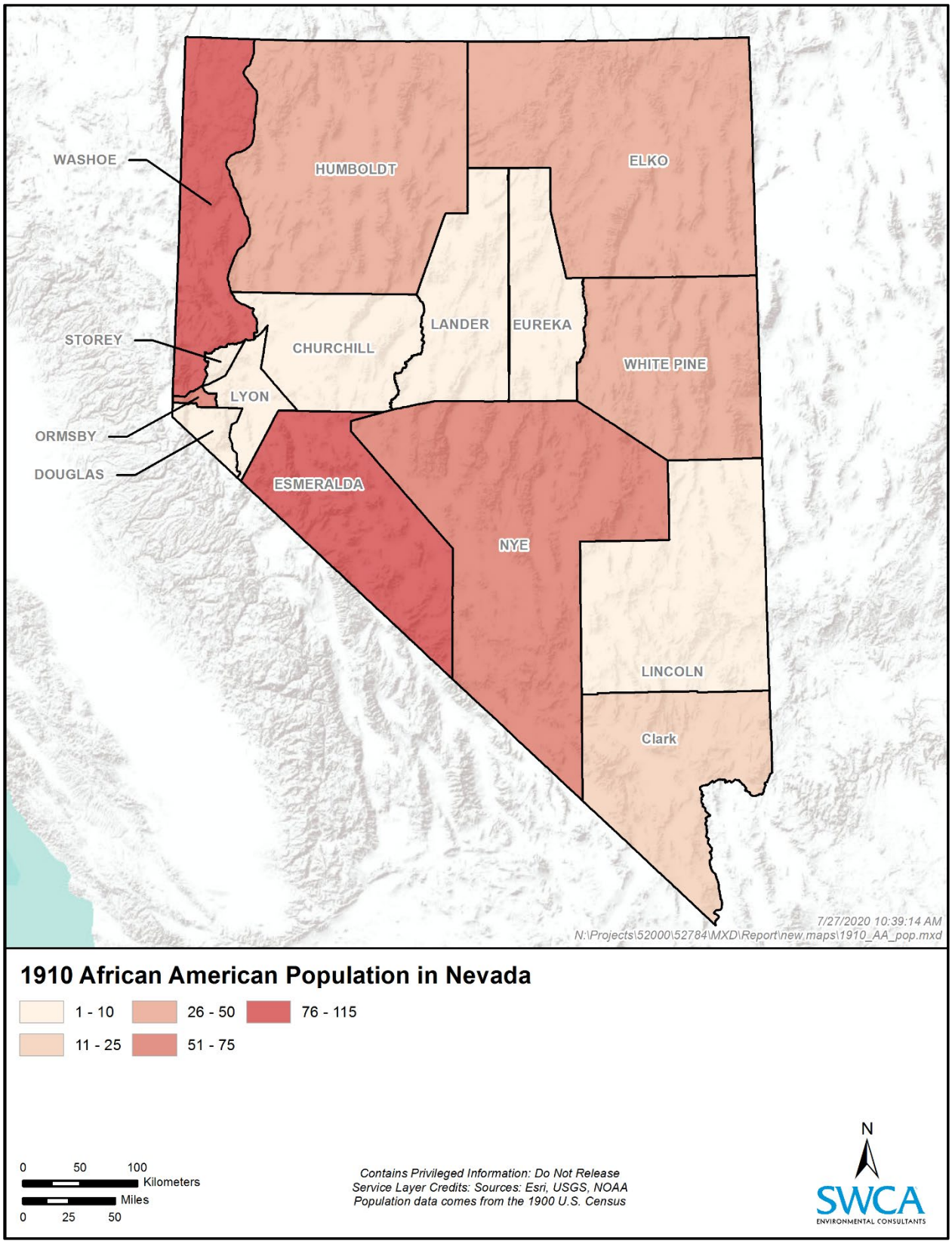

Figure 6. African American Population by County in Nevada, 1910.

This pattern of growth reversed between 1910 and 1920, dropping from 513 to 346 (Table 6, Figure 7). The reasons likely relate to economic downturns, particularly in the mining industry following the end of World War I. But Clark County's African American population notably continued to grow between 1910 and 1920 (from 12 in 1910 to 60 in 1920). Along with this, the proportion of African Americans in Clark County also increased relative to the general population, rising from just 0.4 percent in 1910 to 1.23 percent in 1920. This growth, in contravention of the overall trends, may reflect the growth of Clark County in general during the early twentieth century.

Table 6. African American Population Growth by County in Nevada, from 1910 to 1920

County	African American Population	Total Population	Percent of Population African American, 1910	Percent of Population African American, 1920
Churchill	12	4,649	0.04	0.26
Clark	60	4,859	0.40	1.23
Douglas	4	1,825	0.40	0.22
Elko	34	8,083	0.50	0.42
Esmeralda	21	2,410	1.00	0.87
Eureka	0	1,350	0.06	0.00
Humboldt	34	3,743	0.40	0.91
Lander	10	1,484	0.40	0.67
Lincoln	1	2,287	0.20	0.04
Lyon	12	4,078	0.10	0.29
Mineral*	4	1,848	N/A*	0.22
Nye	24	6,504	1.00	0.37
Ormsby	11	2,453	1.60	0.45
Pershing*	7	2,803	N/A*	0.25
Storey	0	1,469	0.30	0.00
Washoe	69	18,627	0.70	0.37
White Pine	43	8,935	0.60	0.48
Total	**346**	**77,407**	**0.63**	**0.45**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1922:6–7

* Mineral County was separated from Esmeralda County in 1911. Pershing County was separated from Humboldt County in 1919.

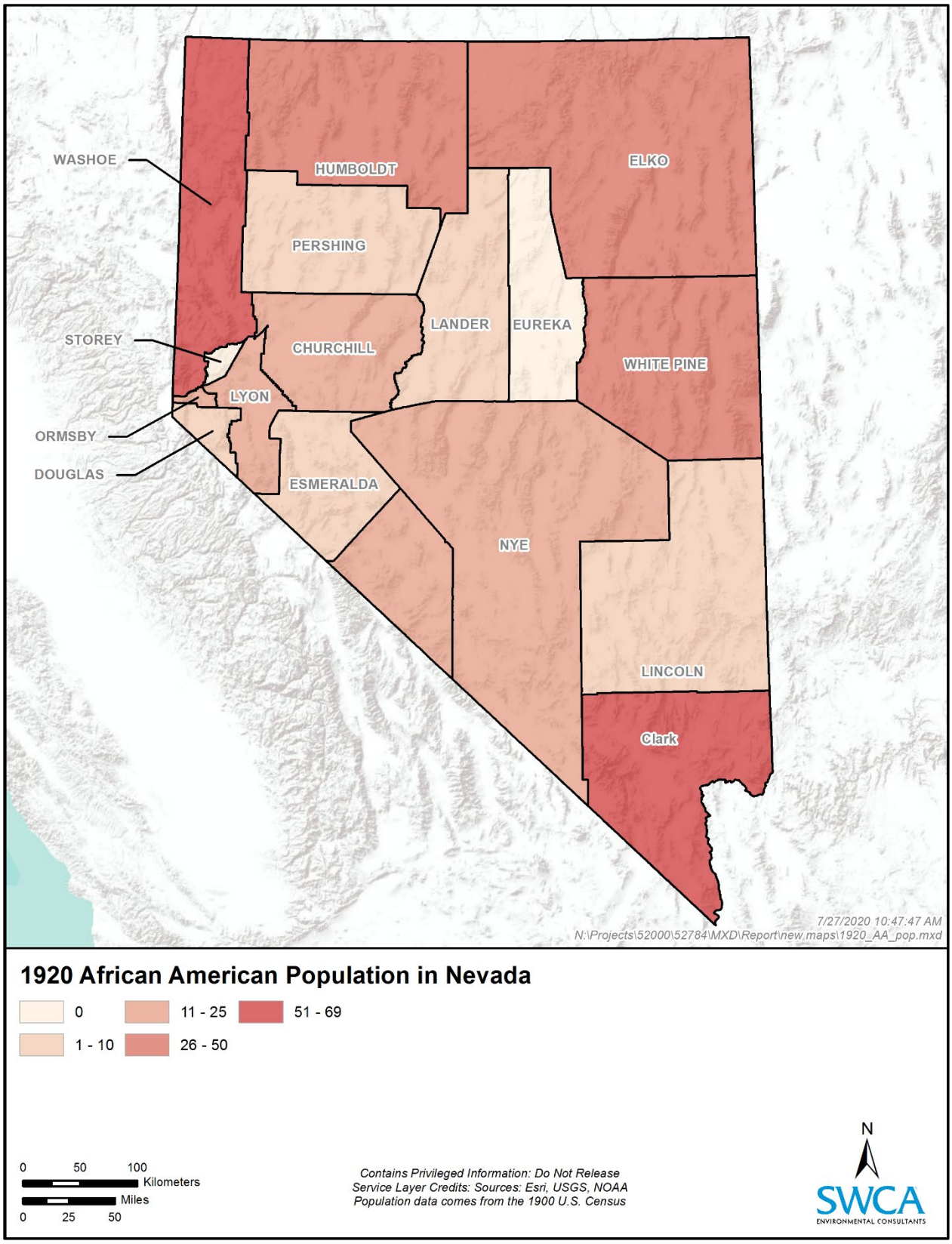

Figure 7. African American Population by County in Nevada, 1920.

By 1930, Nevada's African American population had rebounded to its 1910 levels: from 346 in 1920 to 516 in 1930 (Table 7, Figure 8). The most significant population growth occurred in Clark and Washoe Counties. Clark County's African American population grew from 60 in 1920 to 150 in 1930 (a 250 percent increase); by 1930, African Americans made up almost 2 percent of the total population of Clark County, the highest proportion in the state. Washoe County's African American population grew from 69 in 1920 to 143 in 1930 (a 238 percent increase). The growth in Clark County likely related to the construction of the Boulder Dam (later renamed the Hoover Dam), which was authorized by Congress in 1929. The onset of the Great Depression that same year brought thousands of workers to Nevada; although African Americans were largely excluded from dam work, they may also have sought relief in southern Nevada's comparatively healthy economy (Coray 1992:245). The reasons for population growth in Washoe County are less obvious. It is possible that the economic health of the state (which benefited from high federal relief spending as well as resilient economic drivers, such as the divorce trade, that continued to bring in out-of-state money) may have been an incentive for African Americans to move to northwestern Nevada. The presence of wealthy white residents and the divorce industry contributed to the availability of jobs in the service industry, such as maids, cooks, janitors, and chauffeurs. Census data also suggests that the transportation industry, in the form of both the automobile (due to the establishment of the Lincoln Highway) and the railroad, created jobs as well. African Americans in Washoe County were frequently employed as railroad porters, machinists, and automobile washers (Ancestry 2002).

Table 7. African American Population Growth by County in Nevada, from 1920 to 1930

County	African American Population	Total Population	Percent of Population African American, 1920	Percent of Population African American, 1930
Churchill	1	5,075	0.26	0.02
Clark	150	8,532	1.23	1.76
Douglas	2	1,840	0.22	0.11
Elko	75	9,960	0.42	0.75
Esmeralda	5	1,077	0.87	0.46
Eureka	0	1,333	0.00	0.00
Humboldt	36	3,795	0.91	0.95
Lander	10	1,714	0.67	0.58
Lincoln	3	3,601	0.04	0.08
Lyon	7	3,810	0.29	0.18
Mineral	4	1,863	0.22	0.21
Nye	19	3,989	0.37	0.48
Ormsby	13	2,221	0.45	0.59
Pershing	6	2,652	0.25	0.23
Storey	0	667	0.00	0.00
Washoe	143	27,158	0.37	0.53
White Pine	42	11,771	0.48	0.36
Total	**516**	**91,058**	**0.45**	**0.57**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1932:140–141

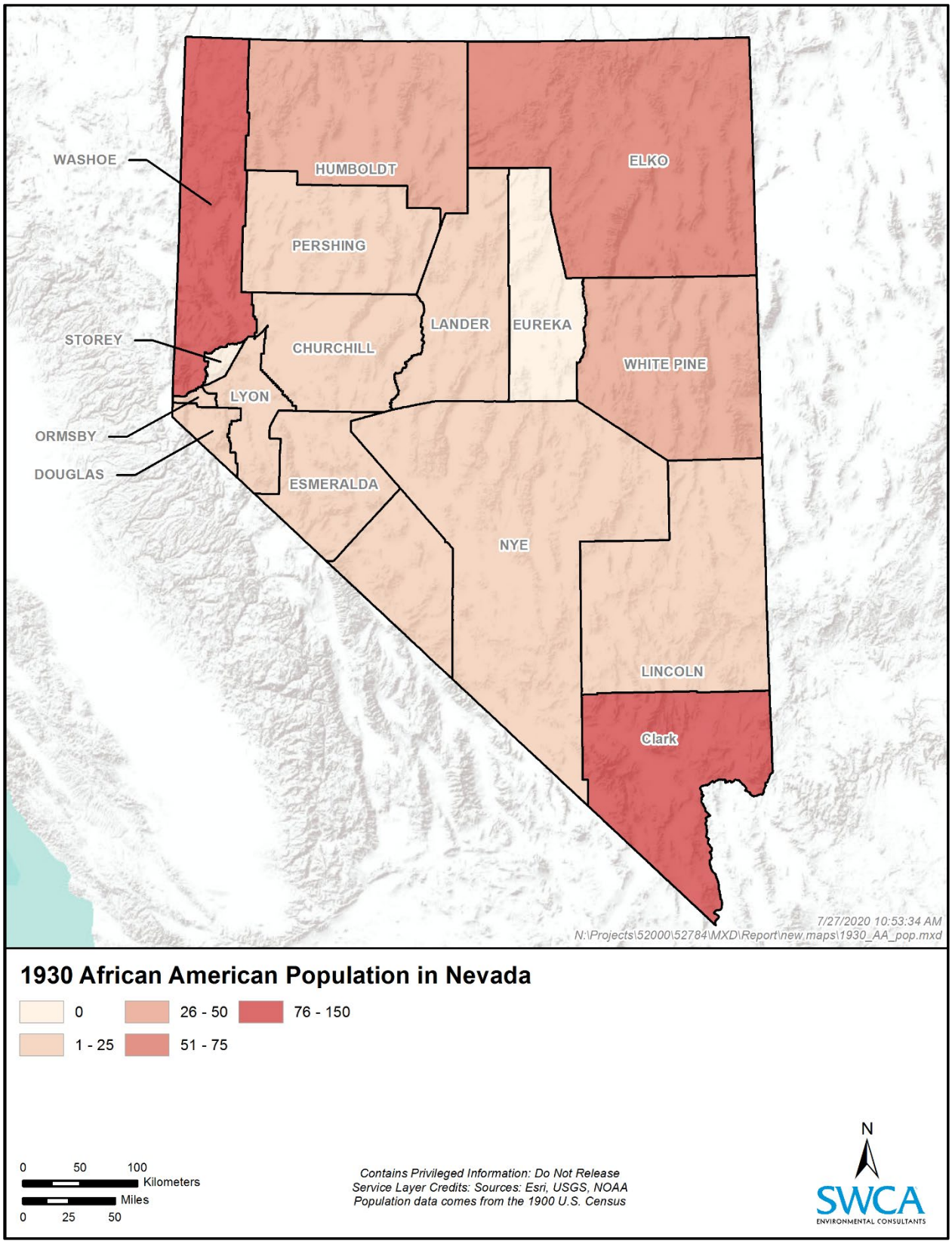

Figure 8. African American Population by County in Nevada, 1930.

By 1940, Nevada's African American population was the largest it had ever been, increasing from 516 in 1930 to 664 in 1940 (Table 8, Figure 9). During the 1930s, Washoe County experienced the greatest African American population growth, from 143 to 284 (a 199 percent increase). The causes for this are unclear but likely relate to a strong economy throughout the Great Depression. By 1940, African Americans continued to make up less than 1 percent of the total population in all counties except Clark County, where they comprised 1.08 percent of the total population.

Table 8. African American Population Growth by County in Nevada, from 1930 to 1940

County	African American Population	Total Population	Percent of Population African American, 1930	Percent of Population African American, 1940
Churchill	1	5,317	0.02	0.02
Clark	178	16,414	1.76	1.08
Douglas	0	2,056	0.11	0.00
Elko	78	10,912	0.75	0.71
Esmeralda	2	1,554	0.46	0.1
Eureka	0	1,361	0.00	0.00
Humboldt	42	4,743	0.95	0.88
Lander	6	1,745	0.58	0.34
Lincoln	1	4,130	0.08	0.02
Lyon	5	4,076	0.18	0.12
Mineral	1	2,342	0.21	0.04
Nye	15	3,606	0.48	0.42
Ormsby	17	3,209	0.59	0.53
Pershing	6	2,713	0.23	0.22
Storey	2	1,216	0.00	0.16
Washoe	284	32,476	0.53	0.87
White Pine	26	12,377	0.36	0.21
Total	**664**	**110,247**	**0.57**	**0.60**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1943:746

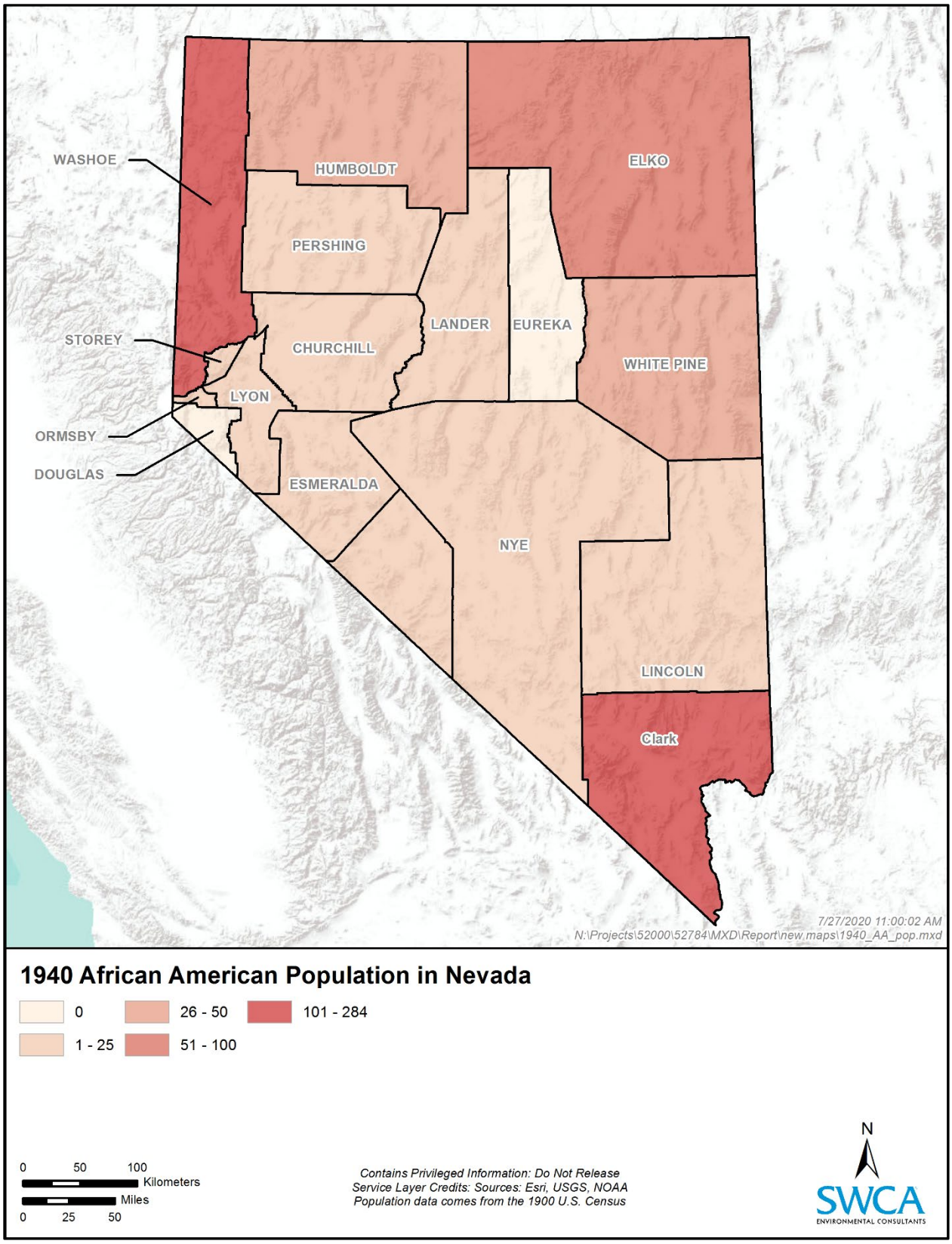

Figure 9. African American Population by County in Nevada, 1940.

4.3.2.2 PATTERNS OF DISCRIMINATION (1900–1941)

4.3.2.2.1 Restrictions on Property Ownership and Dwelling Places

Perhaps the most significant difference between race relations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the ways in which African Americans were increasingly excluded from land ownership and residence on the municipal level. As Rusco notes, this exclusion was much more limited in scale in the preceding century and reached an unprecedented level of antagonism during the twentieth century (Rusco 1975:207, 210).

As with much of the racism during this period of history, attempts to prevent African Americans from living in or even visiting specific communities likely had their basis in the rise of racist, xenophobic, and religiously intolerant attitudes in white society on the national level. "Evidently this development, for which there is no known nineteenth-century precedent (although there was similar treatment of the Chinese) reflected a rising white Anglo-Saxon Protestant [WASP] ethnocentrism directed against various non-WASP groups" in Nevada (Rusco 1975:207). These efforts reflect a common trend throughout much of America during the nineteenth and twentieth century: the "sundown town." A sundown town was an all-white town that actively and intentionally prevented African Americans or other people of color from living there; the term *sundown* refers to the common practice of posting signs in these towns warning people of color not to remain there after nightfall at the peril of violence, harassment, or even murder (Loewen 2005:4).

Although sundown towns were not present in Nevada during the nineteenth century, by the early twentieth century, attempts to enforce those policies were widespread, particularly throughout northern Nevada. The towns of Rawhide and Fallon aggressively sought to prevent African Americans from living in the municipalities and even from visiting (Rusco 1975). The exact number of sundown towns, or the scope of the policies themselves, is unknown. But they were certainly common throughout much of Nevada by the 1910s:

> It is not known how widespread the policy of forcing blacks out of Nevada cities was, but in 1914 a newspaper in eastern Nevada reported that "all along the Southern Pacific railroad the Nevada towns are making war upon unemployed negroes. The attacks are directed principally against unemployed blacks in the restricted districts." (Rusco 1975:209)

Reno was particularly aggressive in this respect. With the support of both the white public and the Reno police, unemployed African Americans were frequently forcibly removed under city vagrancy laws. Reno's policies will be discussed in greater detail in Section 4.3.2.9.

Racial animosity by whites was not always consistent, nor did it always target African Americans. For example, Goldfield specifically excluded Asians but also had a number of permanent African American residents (Rusco 1975:208). Other ethnicities were commonly included in racial exclusion policies, such as when the superintendent of the state orphans' home in 1915–1916 urged the state legislature to exclude Chinese, Black, and Native American children from the orphanage (Rusco 1975:211).

Even when not actively excluded from residing in a given community, African Americans faced discrimination. Many communities that accepted African American residents still maintained geographic restrictions on where they could live. White Nevadans frequently relegated their Black neighbors to small, generally un- or underdeveloped neighborhoods and smaller and poorer quality company housing or even separate company towns (Coray 1992:245–247; Rusco 1975:210). Similarly, areas in which African Americans were permitted to live and work were frequently underserved by municipal services. In Las Vegas, racial discrimination prompted city officials to not only force African American–owned businesses to relocate from the downtown area to the Historic Westside, a Black neighborhood, during the

1930s, but it also allowed them to justify not providing municipal services such as street paving, sewer systems, streetlights, and sidewalks that existed for other, white-inhabited areas in the city (Anderson 2012; Moehring and Green 2005:162).

4.3.2.2.2 Legal Discrimination

Nevada's African Americans also contended with ongoing legal discrimination during this period. As noted in the previous section, by the 1880s, the majority of Nevada's statewide racially discriminatory laws had been struck from the books. But one key law remained: a statute banning interracial marriage between nonwhites and whites. In 1912, this law was expanded to specifically prohibit marriage "between 'any person of the Caucasian or white race' and 'any person of Ethiopian or black race, Malay or brown race, Mongolian or yellow race, or American Indian or red race'" (Anderson 2012:9). In 1919, the law was again amended to permit interracial marriage between whites and Native Americans (Anderson 2012:9). Given the racist political climate in the United States as a whole, as well as in Nevada specifically, the affirmation of an existing law banning interracial marriage by the legislature is hardly surprising. But it is significant not only as an artifact of preexisting prejudice but for its expanded scope, which reflects the ongoing racism faced by African Americans and other people of color in Nevada at the time. A second legal defeat also occurred during this era. In 1939, African Americans in Las Vegas introduced Assembly Bill 88, which mandated equal rights for all races in Nevada, but it was rejected by the state assembly (Anderson 2012:10; White 2004:77).[3]

4.3.2.3 JOHNSON-JEFFRIES FIGHT (1910)

On July 4, 1910, Reno hosted one of the most famous boxing matches in history, billed at the time as the "Fight of the Century." The match featured Jack Johnson, an African American boxer who won the heavyweight championship in 1908, and Jim Jeffries, the former heavyweight champion who had retired undefeated in 1904 but had been convinced to come out of retirement for the 1910 fight. Many white Americans, influenced by racism, felt that Jeffries was the "Great White Hope" who could defeat Johnson and symbolically reestablish the superiority of white athletes. Because Jeffries had retired undefeated, those same white spectators felt that he still deserved the title of heavyweight champion (Barber 2020). The fight was preceded in 1906 by another massively publicized boxing match between the African American Joe Gans and the white Oscar Matthew "Battling" Nelson in Goldfield, Nevada, for the world lightweight boxing title, which Gans won (Christie 2018).

The Johnson-Jeffries fight was originally meant to occur in San Francisco, but the governor of California cancelled it just 2 weeks beforehand due to fears of racial strife. In response, Reno heavily advocated for the fight to be held there instead. The city successfully won the bid to host the fight and had 2 weeks to prepare. Johnson and Jeffries arrived in town to train, Jeffries at Moana Springs and Johnson at Rick's Resort. The arena for the fight was built at East 4th Street, near the tracks of the Southern Pacific Railroad and the streetcar line between Reno and Sparks (Barber 2020).

The level of press coverage was unprecedented. More than 20,000 spectators attended and live telegraph coverage and nine cameramen documented the fight for the rest of the world. The fight itself quickly established the fact that Johnson was stronger and nimbler than Jeffries, and by the fifteenth round the promoter, George Lewis "Tex" Rickard, called the fight before Jeffries collapsed. Johnson was declared the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world, ending the expectation of racist white boxing fans for a Jeffries victory. In areas of the United States, particularly the American South, whites rioted over the results, and film footage of the fight was banned in many cities and states. But African Americans through the country celebrated his success. In October, the arena was torn down and the lumber sold to pay creditors (Barber 2020).

[3] See Section 4.3.2.6 for more information on Assembly Bill 88.

4.3.2.4 WORLD WAR I (1914–1918)

World War I began as a general war between European nations in 1914 but quickly escalated to include much of the world. The United States, following its historic policy of isolationism, did not become involved in the conflict until 1917, by which time Germany's policy of attacking passenger and merchant ships had sufficiently shifted public opinion in favor of involvement. Unquestionably, World War I represented a turning point in the United States' place in global politics, with a curtailment to its historic policy of isolationism and its role in implementing the Treaty of Versailles. But it also sparked a new national debate on the social position of African Americans.

Although African Americans had served in the U.S. military before World War I, the implementation of the draft brought unprecedented numbers of African American men into service. Draft quotas were based on overall population census data and mandated numbers of men regardless of the racial demographics of specific states. This functionally forced states with large Black populations, like those in the South, to either allow their African American residents to serve in the military or to disproportionately draft white men. Ultimately, more than 350,000 African Americans served in World War I (Library of Congress 2008). This, however, did not result in equality. Black troops were forced to serve in segregated military units, which were often billeted in areas with Jim Crow laws far more stringent than those the troops were used to.

The placement of Black units in racially segregated cities was a source of considerable tension. In Houston that tension boiled over in 1917 into a riot that rocked the country. Houston's police arrested a Black soldier in the Twenty-fourth Infantry and later fired at his officer when he tried to get information about the arrest. Black soldiers responded by mutinying and confronting the policemen, who were killed. By the time the riot ended, 20 individuals (of various races) had been killed (Taylor 1998:179–181). Eventually, 13 soldiers of the Twenty-fourth were executed for their participation in the riot, and the War Department introduced a policy limiting Black regiments to menial tasks and excluding them from combat (Taylor 1998:181).

The Houston riot is referenced frequently in Nevada newspapers from the time. These articles generally portray the riot as the fault of the Black troops, but it is unclear to what extent the riot influenced race relations and perceptions of African American service members in the state. An article from the *Tonopah Daily Bonanza* makes it clear that some Nevadans were sympathetic to the Black soldiers forced to endure systemic racism as a part of their military service.

> The outcome of this [racial] hostility found expression in the riots at Houston, Texas. . . . It was exactly what was to be expected from conditions that an outbreak would ensue but it is also told by the military investigators that the cause was the unwarranted arrest and shooting of a negro soldier by special policemen. . . . The mistake has been in sending these troops to the south and the next mistake of the war department will be in toadying to the south by removing these soldiers from that section. In the eyes of the country a soldier is a soldier wherever he is found. A black man wearing the uniform of his country is entitled to as much protection and consideration as a man of yellow or white skin. (*Tonopah Daily Bonanza* 1917).

This article is unusual amongst those consulted. No other news articles from Nevada actively advocating for the equitable treatment of Black troops were found during research. Indeed, another article published in the *Carson City Daily Appeal* in 1917 voices active support for the segregation of military camps as a result of the Houston riot and attempts to excuse the segregation in southern cities.

> There are relative sociological conditions in the two sections of the country [North and South] which must be considered in the interest of the negro soldiers, as well as the communities in the south in which they may be stationed. There is no more prejudice against the negro in the south

> than there is in the north, probably considerably less, for the south is the negro's natural home, and it is here that he is best understood and most appreciated, and his status here is so well fixed and so generally recognized that there is friction only when it is brought about by such as are not willing to conform to local usage. . . . The service of the negroes who have been enlisted to help win the war is as much appreciated in the south as elsewhere, and so long as they deport themselves becomingly they merit and will receive the utmost appreciation. (*Carson City Daily Appeal* 1917)

During research, no information was located relating to the experiences of African Americans from Nevada who served during World War I; the number of African American service members in the state was also unclear.

4.3.2.5 THE KU KLUX KLAN (1921–CA. 1930)

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK or Klan), a white supremacist organization, was originally founded by Confederate veterans in response to Reconstruction in 1865 in Pulaski, Tennessee. It sought to prevent Blacks and white Republicans from gaining political power as part of Radical Reconstruction, primarily through ongoing campaigns of violence and what we would define today as terrorism. The organization rapidly expanded in membership; by the 1870s, it was entrenched throughout most of the former Confederacy. Although Congress passed several laws in the early 1870s intended to combat the Klan, the waning power of Radical Republicans by the mid-1870s resulted in the return of the South to the control of Democrats, a key goal of Klan members. Although racist violence continued in the South after the end of Reconstruction, the Ku Klux Klan of the post–Civil War era had largely achieved its goals and began to diminish in importance during the 1880s through the early 1910s. No evidence was located during research that suggested that the Klan operated in Nevada during the nineteenth century or early twentieth centuries (Rusco 1975:200).

By the 1910s, immigration to America had increased, particularly Roman Catholics and Jews from southern and eastern Europe. This was accompanied by ever increasing migration by African Americans from the rural South to cities in the North and Midwest, who were fleeing high levels of violence and deeply limited economic opportunities. Known as the Great Migration, it would continue until the 1970s. These patterns of immigration and migration sparked the racist and nativist fears of many white, Protestant, native-born Americans.

In response to the demographic changes caused by the Great Migration, as well as the publication of *The Clansman* by Thomas Dixon in 1905 and the opening of the film *Birth of a Nation* by D. W. Griffith in 1915 (both of which heavily romanticized the Antebellum South and the KKK), white Americans revived the Klan. Unlike the previous iteration of the KKK, this incarnation was both deeply anti-Black and opposed to immigrants, Catholics, Jews, and organized labor. While the Klan's activities had largely been limited to the former Confederacy, the second iteration of the KKK was present throughout the North, Midwest, and West, in addition to the South.

Nevada posed problems for Klan organizers. As with much of the Mountain West, Nevada's population was often widely dispersed throughout small, isolated rural communities. Nevada's lack of an immigrant population, compared to many other states, as well as the very small size of its minority populations and the respected position of Catholics in many municipalities, posed issues for the nativist, racist, and religiously intolerant Klan, whose scare tactics generally centered around those issues.

> This geographic regionalism affected the Klan organizing strategies, because the demographic variations meant that agitational issues would have to be adapted to local characteristics. For example, northwestern Nevada was unique in having a substantial Japanese population and some Nevadans were concerned about the Oriental "menace" to the state. On the other hand, in

> southern Nevada, little attention was paid to the "Yellow Peril," and instead a concern for law and order was the overshadowing factor. (Swallow 1981:204)

Despite this, a significant number of whites in Nevada were susceptible to Klan propaganda, particularly when it centered around themes like patriotism, tradition, moral laxity in society, a rising crime rate, and fears of leftist agitation (Swallow 1981:205). As a result, organizers gained traction in the state, and by the mid-1920s had formed chapters in several cities. To support additional recruiting these chapters were active and vocal about their presence. Public demonstrations included lectures (Reno), church visitations (Elko), cross burnings (Battle Mountain), and parades (Las Vegas) (Swallow 1981:205–206). Between 1924 and 1926, 10 groups ("Klaverns") were established throughout the state in Reno, Gardnerville, Carson City, Fallon, Ely, Elko, Wells, Winnemucca, Las Vegas, and Caliente (Swallow 1981:206).

Despite the organization's racist politics and its active support for acts of terror against nonwhites and non-Protestants, the KKK did little beyond public demonstrations in northwestern and northeastern Nevada. This was certainly true for the Reno chapter, the state's largest Klavern. "The Reno organization made little significant impact on the community, neither participating in political activities nor being involved in vigilante actions. . . . the Klavern served primarily social and fraternal needs" (Swallow 1981:209–211). The KKK had particular difficulty maintaining its membership roles in smaller communities in northern Nevada, where members often quit after the initial excitement sparked by organizers wore off (Swallow 1981:211). In some cases, particularly in Elko, white residents of communities also pushed back against the Klan. KKK recruiters therefore periodically resorted to threats to coerce potential members to join (Swallow 1981:212). "Klan tactics of intimidation led to counter-attacks by alienated Elkoites, and Klansmen found themselves on the defensive. Once the emotional momentum turned against the organization, citizens became vocal in their denunciations" (Swallow 1981:213). Although the presence of the KKK in northern Nevada was evidence of racial and social fears held by some of the WASP residents, the organization achieved few of its broader political or social aims.

The Las Vegas chapter, the most significant KKK chapter in southern Nevada, initially formed in 1921, but membership rolls were quickly leaked to the police. This chapter was dormant until ca. 1924, when it became active in response to perceptions of increasing lawlessness in the community. In 1924, KKK members marched on Fremont Street, a key business area of the city (Figure 10) (Anderson 2012:10; Swallow 1981:214–215). Unlike the northern chapters, the Las Vegas chapter actively sought to influence politics. The next year, it endorsed a mayoral candidate and candidates running for various municipal offices. Despite these endorsements, all Klan-backed candidates lost with the exception of one who ran unopposed. This defeat ended the Las Vegas Klavern's overt involvement in politics (Swallow 1981:214–215). Starting in mid-1926, however, the Las Vegas Klavern began vigilante activities, particularly in reaction to what its conservative members deemed the inaction by law enforcement officials against criminals. The Klan threatened and extralegally punished those it deemed "criminal" or "immoral"; these activities continued until the early 1930s (Swallow 1981:216).

On the statewide level, the KKK reached its peak between 1924 and 1926, and individual chapters then disbanded over a period of several years. With the exception of the southern Nevada chapters, the Klan had ceased public operations by 1926. It never achieved the political power or impact seen in other states, nor did it succeed in igniting racial fears in the populace as it did in other states (Swallow 1981:217–219).

Figure 10. Fremont Street, Las Vegas, Nevada, at night, ca. 1932. Manis Collection 0100 1843. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

4.3.2.6 CIVIL RIGHTS EFFORTS (CA. 1920–CA. 1940)

Little information exists about civil rights efforts by Nevada's African Americans between 1900 and the 1920s. Little formalized civil rights advocacy (through organizations such as the NAACP) occurred in most of the state during the first decades of the twentieth century. Las Vegas's small African American community was one exception. Facing ongoing discrimination in housing, employment, and access to businesses, residents under the leadership of A. B. "Pop" Mitchell founded two civil rights–oriented organizations: "They founded the Colored Progressive Club and the Colored Democratic Club, chaired by Eli Nickerson, which met at First and Ogden Streets at his restaurant, Nick's, which specialized in southern cooking. They also began forming a branch of the NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] in 1918 to help the forty or so African Americans then living in Las Vegas" (Moehring and Green 2005:52). No formal NAACP branch was formed in the state until 1928, when the NAACP organized a branch in Las Vegas (Anderson 2012; Online Nevada Encyclopedia 2020). The exact circumstances under which the first NAACP branch was formed are unclear from the historic record, but given the ongoing activities of the KKK in Las Vegas during the late 1920s and early 1930s, it may have been intended to counter the active and overt racism of the region. Likely as a result of the formation of the NAACP branch, or possibly parallel with its formation, in 1928, the African American community's political influence was significant enough to attract "numerous statewide candidates" to a political barbecue held at Pop Mitchell's ranch (Moehring and Green 2005:71). For most African American communities during this period, churches and houses of worship also formed an important basis for community support and activism (Geran 2006:37).

Advocacy efforts, particularly on the part of the Las Vegas NAACP, continued into the 1930s. The construction of the Hoover Dam near Las Vegas offered new employment opportunities in a job market

recently decimated by the Great Depression. As discussed in Section 4.3.2.6, African Americans were mostly barred from these jobs. The Las Vegas branch responded in 1931 by forming the Colored Citizens' Labor and Protective Association to help find and prepare African American candidates for dam work crews (Anderson 2012:10). Unfortunately, the Association had little success in its advocacy work, and African Americans continued to be excluded from local craft unions and made up only 1 percent of the construction workers hired for the dam (Coray 1992:245; Moehring and Green 2005:164).

In 1939, the Las Vegas NAACP crafted a bill intended to mandate equal rights for all Nevadans, Assembly Bill 88. The Clark County delegation introduced the bill, but it was given a do-not-pass recommendation by the Social Welfare Committee and was ultimately "indefinitely postponed." As Trish Geran observed after the bill's failure to pass, "the racial conditions continued to deteriorate, and blacks in Las Vegas did not have the numerical strength to prevent what was happening. Therefore, the blacks were forced to rely on the good will of those who did not have their best interests at heart" (Geran 2006:34). Despite this setback, the NAACP and other groups joined to advocate with the Las Vegas City Commission to bar discrimination in city-owned facilities. But despite the NAACP's efforts, this advocacy failed to end broader patterns of discrimination by private and public entities (Rusco 2019:73). It took several more decades for any measurable success to follow this activism.

4.3.2.7 GREAT DEPRESSION AND FEDERAL RELIEF PROGRAMS (1929–1941)

On a national level, the 1920s were an era of economic prosperity. Technological innovations, such as increasingly affordable automobiles, radios, and household appliances, encouraged consumerism and buying on credit, which in turn resulted left the average American citizen with an unprecedented level of debt. The Great Depression began with a stock market crash in October 1929, which destroyed investments and the savings of many Americans. At points, up to 25 percent of the American populace was out of work, and many businesses closed.

In contrast with the freewheeling and economically booming image often attributed to the 1920s, the Depression in many ways began early for African Americans and disproportionately affected them when it fully hit on a national scale. "No group was harder hit than African Americans. . . . By 1932, approximately half of black Americans were out of work. In some Northern cities, whites called for blacks to be fired from any jobs as long as there were whites out of work. Racial violence again became more common, especially in the South" (Library of Congress 2020).

Despite the brutal economic reality of the Great Depression, Nevada enjoyed the highest level of per capita federal relief spending of any state. Between 1933 and 1939, the federal government spent $1,130 per resident in Nevada. The majority of those expenditures, 72 percent, went to three federal agencies: the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and its Hoover Dam/Boulder Canyon Project, and the Bureau of Public Roads (Kolvet and Ford 2006:2). But historic records demonstrate that Nevada's Black residents saw little benefit from that federal spending.

The CCC had little ethnic diversity in Nevada. Records show no Black CCC members, despite an enrollment of 1,237 men" (Kolvet and Fort 2006:37). This was no mistake or oversight on the part of the CCC.

> The absence of blacks was obviously intentional. CCC officials went to great lengths to avoid problems with rural communities. Whereas approximately 10 percent of the national CCC workforce was black, a small number of black enrollees were stationed at designated Ninth Corps-area camps in Idaho and Wyoming. By August 1935, however, all black enrollees in the Ninth Corps area were segregated and transferred to five all-black camps in California, despite a nondiscrimination policy. (Kolvet and Fort 2006:37)

CCC officials feared the reactions of rural white communities to nonwhite CCC members in Nevada and attempted to accommodate those racist biases, a common pattern in the establishment of CCC camps throughout the country (Porter 2019). But the complete absence of Black CCC members in Nevada almost certainly reflects deeper discrimination on the part of officials. CCC policy capped African American enrollment at 10 percent (reflecting the racial makeup of the national population). CCC camps were generally segregated, and even when not segregated, they often forced Black enrollees to use the worst accommodations. Opportunities for career advancement with the CCC were also severely limited for African Americans (Traverse 2017). Combined with these aspects of institutionalized racism, the fact that Nevada's African American population was still proportionately small (far less than the 10 percent of the population at the national level) may have helped to justify the lack of Black enrollment.

The construction programs run by the BOR also discriminated against African Americans.

> African-Americans did not benefit directly from the major construction projects of the 1930s, nor do they appear to have received indirect benefits as a result of the boom economy that these projects sustained. Although local unions made efforts to ensure that local laborers received priority in hiring on the massive new projects, African-American workers were not included in such strategies. (Coray 1992:245)

Although the Colored Citizens Labor and Protective Association was formed in 1931 to encourage Six Companies, Inc. (the company overseeing the construction of the Hoover Dam) to hire African Americans and to support their bids for membership in trade unions, it had little success (Figure 11). The in-migration of thousands of whites from out of state looking for work with the BOR resulted in increasing competition for jobs for Nevada's African American residents (Coray 1992:245). These white migrants were frequently from the South, and their cultural background with Jim Crow laws and segregation in the southern states encouraged the introduction of similar standards of segregation as part of the Hoover Dam project. For example, in 1931, the federal government created and managed Boulder City, a company town intended to house dam workers. Boulder City was segregated and initially entirely excluded African Americans (Anderson 2012:10; Coray 1992:246–247). In 1932, federal pressure forced Six Companies, Inc. to hire 10 African Americans for the Hoover Dam project, but this did not represent a significant change in discriminatory hiring policies. Of the 20,000 people who worked on the project during its entire construction period, only 44 were African American (Anderson 2012:10). As with the CCC, Nevada's African Americans were unable to benefit from the high level of federal relief spending on BOR projects due to racial discrimination. No records were located relating to African American participation in the Bureau of Public Roads in Nevada as part of the New Deal.

Federal relief programs certainly helped alleviate the worst economic distress for some Americans, although they frequently excluded African Americans (who suffered disproportionately economically) or allowed them to participate on a limited basis. The New Deal also permanently changed the relationship of citizens to the government. Unlike the previous decades, where economic regulation and personal welfare had been considered outside the purview of government, the New Deal established federal responsibility for the welfare of its citizens and in regulating financial institutions such as banks. Despite these changes, it would ultimately be World War II and the manufacturing and materiel needs that accompanied American involvement that fully repaired the economic damage of the Depression. World War II and the economic boom it brought offered Nevada's African Americans new economic opportunities and new avenues to pursue equality.

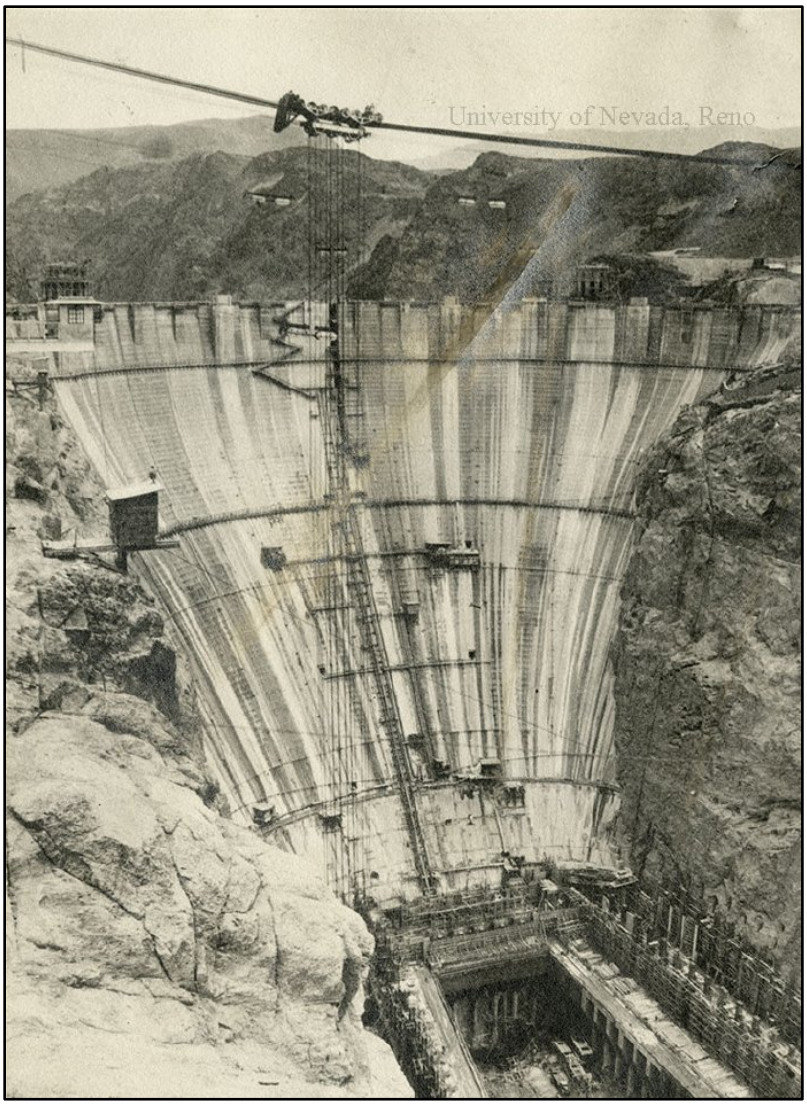

Figure 11. Hoover Dam during construction, ca. 1932. James R. Herz Collection, UNRS-P1992-01, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

4.3.2.8 DIVORCE TRADE (1906–CA.1960)

During much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, divorces were hard to obtain in the United States. States often heavily restricted the grounds for divorce (such as requiring adultery to be proven in court or simply prohibiting divorce outright) or had long residency requirements that mandated those seeking divorces live in a given state for a long period to establish residency before they could take advantage of state laws permitting divorce. From its territorial days, Nevada had some of the loosest divorce laws in the country and only a 6-month residency requirement. In 1906, Laura Corey, the wife of the president of United States Steel Corporation, moved to Reno to take advantage of Nevada's comparatively lax approach to divorce. The divorce was highly publicized and encouraged other dissatisfied couples to follow Corey's example. As a result, Reno quickly became known as the divorce capital, and the divorce trade became an important economic driver in the city. In response to the onset of the Great Depression, the Nevada Legislature passed a law in 1931 decreasing the residency requirement from 3 months to 6 weeks, making it the easiest state in which to get a divorce and encouraging the divorce trade despite the

economic downturn (Harmon 2009).[4] The divorce trade remained an important economic driver in Nevada, and particularly in Reno, until the late 1960s.

African Americans, like their white counterparts, also sought to take advantage of Nevada's lax divorce laws. But "[w]hile The Biggest Little City in the World welcomed divorce seekers from all socioeconomic levels and diverse ethnic origins, it was not progressive in its dealings with racial minorities, a reality that extended to the divorce trade" (Harmon 2011). Reno was deeply segregated, including its hotels and other lodgings. As a result, African American residents in Reno ran boardinghouses or otherwise rented accommodations and assisted divorcees. "Despite the pervasiveness of discrimination, Reno's African American community embraced the divorce trade as vigorously as did white Nevadans. It functioned as a nearly invisible microcosm of the bigger divorce scene as Reno's black population opened their homes to temporary visitors and made them welcome in a town that was not welcoming of their race" (Harmon 2011). Although the divorce trade tapered off in the late 1960s as other states eased limitations on divorce, it remained an important precursor to the modern gambling and tourism industry today.

4.3.2.9 NORTHWEST NEVADA (1900–1940)

During the early twentieth century, northwest Nevada was the most populous region of the state, largely because of Reno, which in 1940 had twice the population of Las Vegas, the next largest city. Similarly, Reno's African American population was numerically larger than that of Las Vegas, although the African American population there was growing much more rapidly. Several important patterns characterize civil rights history in northwest Nevada during this period, including ongoing civil rights efforts at the local level, the establishment and growth of African American churches, the growth of the divorce trade, and the establishment of Black Springs (Section 4.3.4.4.2).

4.3.2.9.1 Demographics

Census data offers insight into the geographic distribution of African Americans in northwest Nevada during the 1930s and 1940s.[5] As in most regions of the state during the 1930s, African Americans in northwestern Nevada tended to live in more populous communities while other areas had very small and highly dispersed African American populations (Table 9). In 1930, Reno had the largest African American population by a factor of ten, when compared with the next most populous towns, Sparks and Carson City.

Table 9. African American Population by Minor Civil Division in Northwest Nevada, 1930

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Churchill			
West Side precinct	1	308	0.32
Total	1	5,075	0.20
Douglas			
Centerville precinct	1	481	0.21
Gardnerville precinct	1	658	0.15
Total	2	1,840	0.12

[4] The residency period was originally set at 6 months in the 1860s but was later decreased to 3 months (Harmon 2009).

[5] No summarized information relating to African American populations in specific precincts for 1900, 1910, or 1920 was identified during research.

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Lyon			
Canal precinct	1	400	0.25
East Mason Valley precinct	2	605	0.33
Simpson precinct	1	225	0.44
Smith Valley precinct	1	511	0.20
Wabuska-Thompson precinct	1	234	0.43
West Mason Valley precinct	1	752	0.13
Total	7	3,810	0.18
Mineral			
Hawthorne precinct	1	757	0.13
Mina precinct	2	395	0.51
Mount Montgomery precinct	1	42	2.38
Total	4	1,863	0.21
Ormsby			
Carson township	13	2,221	0.59
Total	13	2,221	0.59
Storey			
Total	0	667	0.00
Washoe			
Reno township	130	20,469	0.64
Sparks township	13	4,866	0.27
Total	143	27,158	0.53
Total for Region	**170**	**42,634**	**0.40**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1932:147–149

Note: Only census precincts listing African American residents are included in this table; those without were omitted.

Unsurprisingly, by 1940 the vast majority of African Americans in northwest Nevada still resided in Washoe County, particularly in Reno (Table 10). The next largest population of African Americans in northwest Nevada lived in Sparks, followed by Carson City. As in the 1930s, the majority of African Americans in the region outside of the major cities were widely dispersed throughout the other counties and municipalities.

Table 10. African American Population by Minor Civil Division in Northwest Nevada, 1940

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Churchill			
New River township	1	4,644	0.02
Total	*1*	*5,317*	*0.02*
Douglas			
Total	0	2,056	0.00

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Lyon			
Dayton and Silver City township	4	773	0.52
Mason Valley township	1	2,103	0.05
Total	5	4,076	0.12
Mineral			
Mina township	1	504	0.20
Total	1	2,342	0.04
Ormsby			
Carson township	17	3,209	0.53
Total	17	3,209	0.53
Storey			
Virginia City township	2	1,009	0.20
Total	2	1,216	0.16
Washoe			
Gerlach township	11	448	2.46
Reno township	245	24,901	0.98
Sparks township	27	5,901	0.46
Wadsworth township	1	755	0.13
Total	284	32,476	0.87
Total	**310**	**50,692**	**0.61**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1943:756–757

Note: Only census precincts listing African American residents are included in this table; those without were omitted.

4.3.2.9.2 Civil Rights Efforts

In 1919, the Reno branch of the NAACP was formed. “The chapter application listed sixty members, and although several of the founding members were white, the membership represented a significant percentage of Reno’s black population” (Harmon 2001:279). Little record exists of the branch’s activist work. It remained active through 1923, but by 1924, its membership had dropped to less than a third of its original number, and in 1927, it was formally shut down by the national NAACP office. Members of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church tried to revive it in December 1933 but were unsuccessful (Harmon 2001:279).

4.3.2.9.3 Churches

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, religious worship and the fellowship it provided was a key aspect of life in African American communities. This section does not discuss specific churches and denominations in detail but focuses on the establishment and importance of houses of worship during the early twentieth century in northwest Nevada.

At least one important church was built during this period, the Bethel AME Church, constructed in 1910 in Reno (Figures 12 and 13) (Harmon 2001:275–276). As the state’s African American population decreased in the early twentieth century, Reno became the city with the largest Black population. A new congregation of the Bethel AME Church was founded in 1907 to minister to that population; the construction of the church was a component of the establishment of the new congregation (Harmon 2001:275–276). But even when engaged in religious worship, African Americans in northwest Nevada sometimes experienced intolerance. When trying to buy a new property for their church, members of the church found that white

neighbors objected to their presence in the neighborhood (Harmon 2001:277). Beyond the importance of religious worship, churches often played significant roles in civil rights efforts by providing a community and even a place to organize civil rights advocacy efforts (Harmon 2001:274). Additional research using city directories, oral histories, and other primary sources may expand the knowledge on this topic in the future.

Figure 12. Bethel AME Float in a parade, ca. 1930. Courtesy Nevada State Museum, Carson City, Nevada Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs.

Figure 13. Cast of the play "Ethiopia at the Bar of Justice," presented by members of Bethel AME Church, 1935 (early twentieth century). Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

4.3.2.9.4 Paul Revere Williams

One of the best-known African American architects of the twentieth century, Paul Revere Williams, designed a number of buildings in Nevada during the 1930s and 1940s. In 1923, he was admitted as the first Black member of the American Institute of Architects. He primarily practiced in Los Angeles and was well known for designing houses for famous individuals such as Lucille Ball and Frank Sinatra. Despite the discrimination common at the time, many of his clients were white. Williams designed a variety of buildings in Reno, including homes, apartment buildings (most notably the El Reno Apartments now found throughout Reno due to the frequency of the buildings' relocation after their periods of construction), and a church. Williams was also active in and around Las Vegas. He designed Carver Park, a planned development for African American munitions workers during World War II, and during the late 1940s, he designed Berkley Square, an African American neighborhood in Las Vegas; he also designed the La Concha Motel and the Guardian Angel Cathedral in the 1960s (see Section 4.3.2.11.2 for more information on Las Vegas) (Barber 2019a; Harmon 2020; PRW Project 2020).

4.3.2.10 NORTHEAST NEVADA (1900–1940)

Little information exists relating to African American history or civil rights in the northeast region of Nevada during this period. This is likely due to the comparatively nascent state of the civil rights movement in Nevada during this time, Nevada's small African American population prior to World War II, and the lack of larger communities of African Americans in the northeast region in particular. Demographic information reflects these trends. The historic themes that characterized northeast Nevada from 1900 to 1940 include housing segregation and the establishment of several chapters of the KKK.

4.3.2.10.1 Demographics

Because so little information exists relating to northeast Nevada during this period, census data from 1930 and 1940 offers important insight into the geographic dispersal of African American populations in the region. In 1930, the counties in northeast Nevada had small African American populations (Table 11). African Americans tended to live in more populous areas—for example, the largest African American population in the northeast was concentrated in Elko County, and in Elko specifically. This is likely due to the economic discrimination that Nevada's African Americans faced: because they were frequently forced into service jobs or unskilled labor, larger population centers would offer more job opportunities and a greater chance of acceptance by a larger and more diverse general population. The population concentration in Elko may also reflect African Americans employed by the railroad, a key industry in the city.

Table 11. African American Population by Minor Civil Division in Northeast Nevada, 1930

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Elko			
Elko precinct	67	3,085	2.17
Jarbidge precinct	2	374	0.53
Montello precinct	1	504	0.20
Mound Valley precinct	1	123	0.81
Shafter precinct	1	25	4.00
Toano precinct	2	51	3.92
Wells precinct	1	700	0.14
Total	75	8,499	0.88

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Eureka			
Total	0	1,333	0.00
Humboldt			
Gold Run township	3	366	0.82
Jungo precinct	10	77	12.99
McDermitt township	1	328	0.30
Paradise township	1	400	0.25
Union township	21	2,109	1.00
Total	36	3,795	0.95
Lander			
Argenta township	10	1,053	0.95
Total	10	1,714	0.58
Pershing			
Lake township	6	2,033	0.30
Total	6	2,652	0.23
White Pine			
Cherry Creek precinct	3	247	1.21
East Ely precinct	4	695	0.58
Ely precinct	19	3,264	0.58
McGill precinct	15	3,017	0.50
U.S. Tungsten precinct	1	82	1.22
Total	42	11,771	0.36
Total for Region	**169**	**29,764**	**0.57**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1932:147–149

Note: Only census precincts listing African American residents are included in this table; those without were omitted.

The African American population in northeast Nevada still largely reflected these patterns of residence in 1940 (Table 12). Once again, Elko County had the largest number of African American residents, who generally clustered in larger cities and towns, likely for the same reasons as a decade earlier.

Table 12. African American Population by Minor Civil Division in Northeast Nevada, 1940

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Elko			
Township 2	2	1,542	0.13
Township 4	1	536	0.19
Township 5	66	5,636	1.17
Township 6	9	2,283	0.39
Total	78	10,912	0.71
Eureka			
Total	0	1,961	0.00

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Humboldt			
Gold Run township	11	640	1.72
Union township	31	2,708	1.14
Total	42	4,743	0.89
Lander			
Argenta township	6	1,165	0.52
Total	6	1,745	0.34
Pershing			
Humboldt township	2	740	0.27
Lake township	4	1,973	0.20
Total	6	2,713	0.22
White Pine			
Township 1, Ely	26	10,883	0.24
Total	26	12,377	0.21
Total for Region	158	34,451	0.46

Source: Bureau of the Census 1943:756–757

Note: Only census precincts listing African American residents are included in this table; those without were omitted.

4.3.2.10.2 Housing Segregation

Despite the comparatively small minority population in most towns in northeast Nevada, and the even smaller proportion of African Americans in those same towns, housing segregation was also common in many of the region's mining towns, such as Ruth, McGill, and Kimberly. After ca. 1905, these towns were segregated both residentially and in terms of professional occupation, generally by company policy. "Employees of English, Irish, German, or Scandinavian ancestry were considered 'whites' and were assigned the better jobs and better housing in these communities; all others were considered 'foreigners' and relegated to an inferior status" (Rusco 1975:210). White residents at the time noted that there were not many people of color residing in any of the towns (Rusco 1975:211).

4.3.2.10.3 Ku Klux Klan

As with much of the state during the 1920s, the KKK organized chapters in several towns in northeast Nevada, including Ely, Elko, Wells, and Winnemucca (Swallow 1981:206). Unlike the rest of the state, the historic record shows that white residents in Elko and Ely actively and vocally pushed back against the Klan's attempts to organize (Swallow 1981:212–213). This included public denunciations of the Klan in press reports in Elko and counterdemonstrations in Ely, such as the lighting of a flaming circle (a symbol of the Knights of the Flaming Circle, an anti-Klan group) on a hill opposite the Klan's fiery cross (Swallow 1981:213).

4.3.2.11 SOUTHERN NEVADA (1900–1940)

During the early twentieth century, the African American population of southern Nevada remained small. Although it would begin to grow during the 1930s and particularly during the 1940s, African Americans made up only a small percentage of the total population for much of this period. The largest African American community by a large margin lived in Las Vegas. Despite the small size of the Black population, issues of racism and segregation came to the forefront during the 1930s and 1940s in Las

Vegas. This was most visible in the process by which white residents forced Black residents to move west of the railroad tracks to what would become the Historic Westside, a segregated Black neighborhood.

4.3.2.11.1 Demographics

Census data offers insight into the geographic distribution of African Americans in southern Nevada during the 1930s and 1940s. By 1930, the largest African American population in southern Nevada was in Las Vegas (Table 13). Census records indicate that no African Americans lived outside Las Vegas in Clark County in 1930. The only other significant African American population in southern Nevada at the time was in Tonopah. Prior to the Great Depression, Tonopah's mines still generated immense amounts of gold, silver, copper, and lead ore, and it is likely that the African American population there either worked at the mines or in support positions for them (Hall 2020). Both Esmeralda and Lincoln County had small and dispersed African American populations.

Table 13. African American Population by Minor Civil Division in Southern Nevada, 1930

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Clark			
Township 5, Las Vegas	150	5,952	2.52
Total	150	8,532	1.76
Esmeralda			
Fish Lake Valley precinct	3	109	2.75
Goldfield precinct	2	684	0.29
Total	5	1,077	0.46
Lincoln			
Precinct 1, Caliente	2	1,026	0.19
Precinct 3, Pioche	1	868	0.11
Total	3	3,601	0.08
Nye			
Pioneer precinct	1	42	2.4
Tonopah precinct	18	2,110	0.85
Total	19	3,989	0.48
Total for Region	**177**	**17,199**	**1.02**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1932:147–149

Note: Only census precincts listing African American residents are included in this table; those without were omitted.

In 1940, Las Vegas still had the largest African American population in southern Nevada by a considerable margin (Table 14). One additional township in Clark County, Nelson, also reported a small African American population; this was likely due to a brief mining boom there. The Tonopah African American population had decreased between 1930 and 1940. This was likely due to a drop in mine production during the 1930s (Hall 2020). As in the 1930s, the few African Americans throughout the rest of the region were widely dispersed geographically.

Table 14. African American Population by Minor Civil Division in Southern Nevada, 1940

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Clark			
Township 1, Nelson	3	2,959	0.10
Township 5, Las Vegas	175	10,389	1.68
Total	178	16,414	1.08
Esmeralda			
District 1, Goldfield	2	554	0.36
Total	2	1,554	0.13
Lincoln			
Pioche township	1	1,605	0.06
Total	1	4,130	0.02
Nye			
Tonopah township	15	2,471	0.61
Total	15	3,506	0.43
Total for Region	**196**	**25,604**	**0.77**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1943:756–757

Note: Only census precincts listing African American residents are included in this table; those without were omitted.

4.3.2.11.2 Las Vegas

In 1902, William A. Clark, a millionaire from Montana, acquired a large ranch property in the Las Vegas area and promoted the construction of a railroad from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles, the SPLA&SL (Hulse 1991:148). By 1905, the railroad was constructed, passing through Lincoln County and Las Vegas, which served as a stop to replenish water (Hulse 1991:185). In 1909, Clark County broke away from Lincoln County, firmly centering Las Vegas as the regional hub. With its connection to the national rail network, southern Nevada quickly began to expand, further accelerating during the 1930s with the construction of the nearby Hoover Dam, which resulted in the substantial in-migration of aspiring dam workers. The establishment of Basic Magnesium, Inc. (BMI) and Nellis Air Force Base during World War II would further spur population growth.

Initially, after the construction of the railroad, Las Vegas was relatively socially integrated. As White states, in 1905, "Black men who migrated to Las Vegas and gained railroad employment were denied the use of the brothels, but their other needs were fulfilled along with those of their white co-workers. This integrated setting, though limited, differed from many small towns throughout the country, especially in the South" (White 2004:72). Although railroad officials like Walter Braken, the land agent for the SPLA&SL, suggested that minority groups should be restricted to purchasing property in Block 17 of the town, that segregation was quickly found to be not economically feasible. And as a result of the abundant jobs created by the railroad, relatively little racial strife occurred in the community until the late 1920s. But during the late 1920s and early 1930s, large numbers of white workers from the American South moved to Las Vegas, bringing their racial biases with them (White 2004:73).

4.3.2.11.3 The McWilliams Townsite and the Beginning of West Las Vegas

The area that would become the segregated Historic Westside began in the early 1900s as the McWilliams Townsite (Figures 14 through 16). In 1904, the McWilliams Townsite was subdivided. It was located near the new SPLA&SL line, and with the influx of new residents to Las Vegas, land sold quickly. But when it

became clear that a rival townsite, the Clark Townsite, was more conveniently located to the railroad and depot, sales quickly dropped for the McWilliams Townsite; a fire in September 1905 destroyed many of its existing buildings (Burbank 2008).

Over the coming years, the McWilliams Townsite languished as the Clark Townsite steadily grew. But this trend reversed in the late 1920s and early 1930s due to the influx of bigoted workers for the Hoover Dam. These workers demanded an end to the integration that had previously characterized Las Vegas's residential areas, and because they provided an important source of economic capital, the city began to pressure African Americans to relocate out of the city. "In 1931, casino-style gambling became legal in Nevada. Neither the new white tourists nor the white dam workers enjoyed the company of blacks as they engaged in the pleasures of Las Vegas. So gradually, African Americans moved to the old McWilliams Townsite that was originally surveyed and used as the early town of Las Vegas" (White 2004:75). City officials intentionally accelerated this process through actions such as their refusal to reissue business licenses to Black businesses in the downtown area but their willingness to license those businesses if they moved to the McWilliams Townsite (White 2004:75). Because of its location west of the railroad tracks, during this period the McWilliams Townsite became known as "the Westside." During the 1930s through the 1950s, the Historic Westside had unpaved dirt roads and little other infrastructure, and houses were frequently of poor or temporary construction (Geran 2006; McKee 2012:16–17).

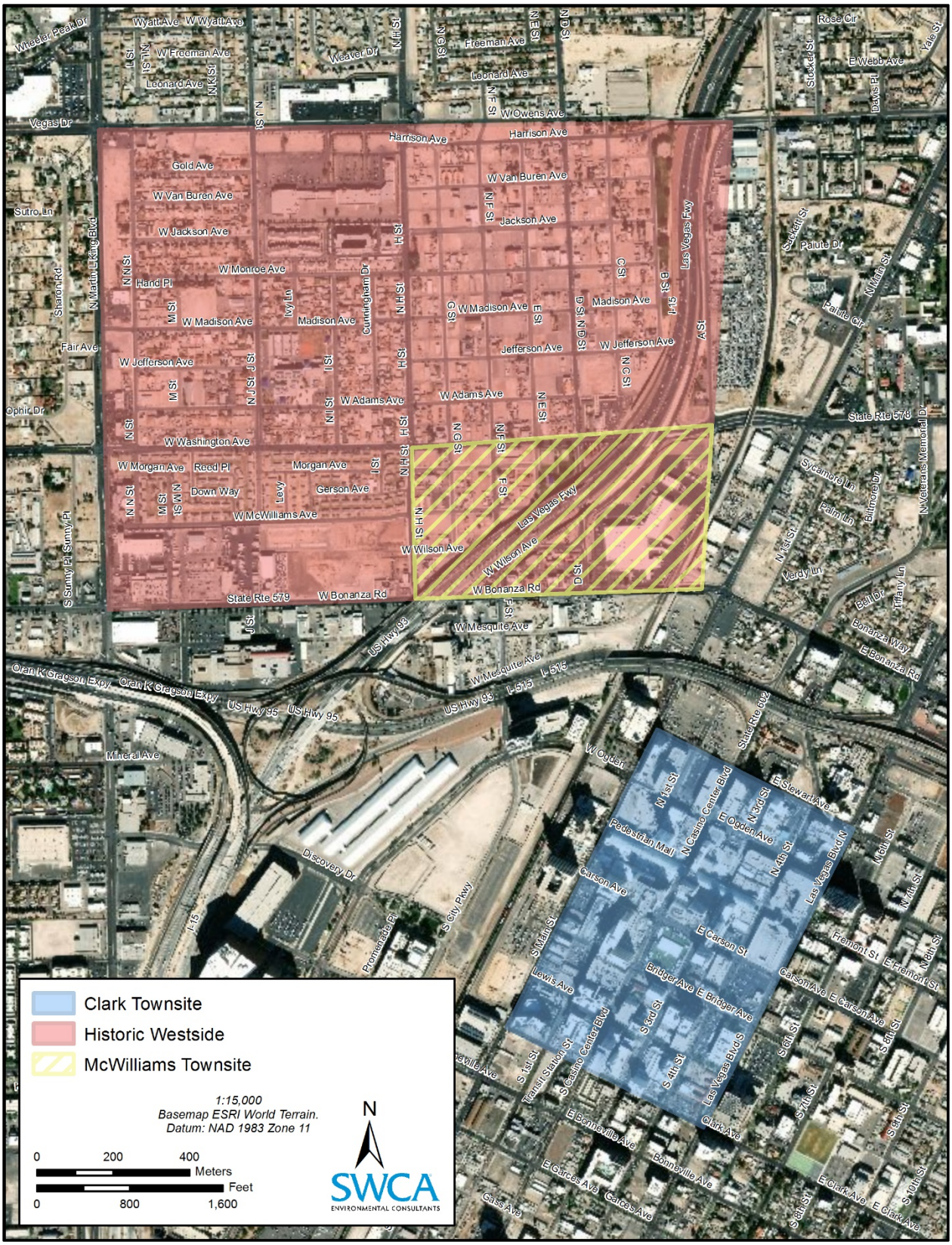

Figure 14. Map showing the locations of the Clark Townsite, the McWilliams Townsite, and the approximate boundary of the Historic Westside.

Figure 15. Group of people standing outside of First State Bank of Las Vegas and Post Office, McWilliams Townsite, Las Vegas, 1905. Ferron-Bracken Photo Collection 0001 Album 1, 82.4. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 16. Photograph of J. T. (John Thomas) McWilliams, the founder of the McWilliams Townsite, Las Vegas, ca. 1930. Elbert Edwards Photo Collection 0214 0186. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

As part of this segregation, white residents still living in the Historic Westside petitioned the city to limit the areas in the Historic Westside where Blacks could purchase land. African Americans responded by

writing to the city commissioners as the "Las Vegas Colored Progressive Club," requesting that no zoning restriction be put in place; their efforts were successful, and no additional limitations on Black property ownership were placed on the Historic Westside (White 2004:77).

4.3.3 *World War II (1941–1945)*

By the late 1930s, the United States was recovering from the Great Depression. The introduction of measures like the New Deal had eased the economic distress of hundreds of thousands of Americans, and the rising conflict in Europe and Asia created an increasing demand for arms and war materiel created in America. World War II began in September 1939 with Germany's invasion of Poland, but the United States did not initially join the conflict. Public opinion heavily favored neutrality, although the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration did strengthen diplomatic ties with allies such as Great Britain through measures such as the Lend-Lease Act. On December 7, 1941, a surprise Japanese attack on the American Naval Base at Pearl Harbor abruptly put an end to American neutrality. The following day the United States entered the war.

As with World War I less than 30 years earlier, African Americans faced service in a segregated armed forces for a country that still refused to embrace racial equality during World War II. Although President Roosevelt articulated four fundamental freedoms that America was to defend in the war, the ongoing discrimination African Americans faced in their own country left many feeling alienated from the war effort (Gates 2013). This presented a stark choice for African Americans: to accept the status quo in the name of national unity or to challenge it and potentially be considered traitors to the war effort. Instead of choosing one option or the other, African American activists instead created the "Double V Campaign" to both support the war effort and advocate with the government to live up to the values of freedom and equality it espoused. Although only limited progress was made during the war, it brought increased attention to the hypocrisy inherent in America's segregated society and set the stage for the civil rights era to come (Gates 2013).

At its entry into World War II, the United States was one of the most industrialized nations in the world, with access to huge amounts of resources and manufacturing capacity. Throughout the war, the country strategically exploited that capacity. As President Roosevelt stated, "It is not enough to turn out just a few more planes, a few more tanks, a few more guns, a few more ships than can be turned out by our enemies. We must out-produce them overwhelmingly, so that there can be no question of our ability to provide a crushing superiority of equipment in any theatre of the world war" (Public Broadcasting Service [PBS] 2007). By the end of the war, more than half of the world's industrial production occurred in the United States (PBS 2007).

U.S. entry into the war wrought massive changes to American society. The military's need for war materiel in turn required raw resources for manufacturing, particularly metals. This demand in turn revitalized Nevada's mining industry, which had undergone a significant slump during the Great Depression. Nevada was rich in many minerals vital to the war effort, and mining, manufacturing, and other industries became an important part of Nevada's economy, particularly for the state's African Americans (Coray 1992:248). Another important pattern in Nevada during World War II was the establishment of military bases and installations in the state, which also had an impact on the lives of African Americans. Throughout the war, however, African Americans in Nevada continued to struggle with the patterns of discrimination and prejudice they had faced during previous decades.

4.3.3.1 INDUSTRY DURING WARTIME (1941–1945)

The 1930s presented many challenges to Nevada, but it weathered the Great Depression better than many states and emerged in a favorable economic position. Innovations by the state to encourage tourism,

including the relegalization of commercial gambling[6] and the active encouragement of the divorce trade, also decreased the economic impact of the Depression.[7] Nevada's highest per capita levels of federal relief spending of any state helped to place it on a relatively firm economic footing when the United States entered World War II.

> Because Nevada's economy was supported by the federal government during the depths of the Depression, the state was poised for a massive growth in population by the beginning of World War II. The decade of the 1930s, a harbinger of trends to come, witnessed a population growth of 21.1 percent. The 1940s . . . saw the state population grow by 45.2 percent. (Coray 1992:248)

African American population growth in Nevada was even more extreme during the 1940s, when the African American population grew by 154 percent (Coray 1992:247). This growth occurred primarily in Clark County and was largely the result of the development of the defense industry in the region, particularly BMI (Coray 1992:248).

4.3.3.1.1 Gaming Industry (1941–1945)

The gambling industry continued to grow during the World War II era. Soldiers on leave and workers off their shifts would frequently turn to gambling as a recreational activity. African American women in Las Vegas economically benefited from the gambling industry's growth: "Las Vegas included black women in the economic prosperity of the World War II era, not in the war industry, but in the lucrative hotel operations of the gaming industry. Hotels and casinos experienced enormous growth as the population increased due to jobs made available by the war" (White 1997:1). Although African American women were barred from many defense jobs, they were still able to find work in the growing number of casinos in the city, particularly as maids and other "back of the house" positions.

4.3.3.1.2 Basic Magnesium, Inc. (1941–1944)

BMI was created in June 1941, prior to the U.S. entry into World War II. It began "as a joint venture between Basic Refractories, Inc. of Cleveland, Ohio, and Magnesium Elektron, Limited of England" (Robinson and Leech 2019:3). The two companies partnered to produce magnesium, a metal required to produce aluminum alloys needed for incendiary bombs, munitions, and airplanes (Robinson and Leech 2019:3–4). In August 1941, the federal government awarded BMI a contract to build a magnesium manufacturing complex near Las Vegas, in what would become Henderson. By October 1942, it had begun producing magnesium; it continued to operate until it was shut down in November 1944 (Coray 1992:250; Robinson and Leech 2019:4).

Operating the magnesium plant required more workers than were available in relatively small Las Vegas, and BMI actively recruited outside of Nevada, particularly in southern states where it hired thousands of African American men who were drawn by the economic opportunity it presented.

> Seeking new opportunities at BMI, African-Americans from the deep South came to Las Vegas in record numbers. Drawn from economically depressed areas, especially from the rural communities of Tallulah, Louisiana, and Fordyce, Arkansas, many blacks followed "migration chains," in which family members and acquaintances already in Nevada convinced those who had remained behind to join them. By the end of the first year of operations, African-Americans would hold nearly sixty percent of all production jobs at the plant. Their impact on the racial

[6] Gambling was first legalized in Nevada in 1869 but was criminalized in 1909 due to Progressive opposition to the industry. From 1909 to 1931, low-stakes social games were legal, but gambling against a central bank (as exists in commercial casinos) was not (Schwartz 2014).

[7] In 1931, the state legislature decreased the residency requirement for the state from 3 months to 6 weeks, making it the easiest state in which to obtain a divorce (Harmon 2009).

> demographics of the Las Vegas valley was nothing less than spectacular. In 1940, [African Americans in Clark County comprised] just over 1 percent of the population. By 1943, that number had climbed to 4,200, with blacks accounting for more than 10 percent of the valley's residents. (Mingus 1995:29)

These African American recruits and the family members and friends they often brought with them required housing, but they frequently faced policies of segregation. BMI operated a limited amount of employee housing by its plant in Henderson; however, African American employees were allowed to live in only a small portion of this housing, in an area known as Carver Park. Carver Park, which was designed by Paul Revere Williams, was geographically isolated from Las Vegas's African American community and the number of units was far below the actual needs of employees. As a result, many BMI employees and their families chose to live in the Historic Westside. As discussed in greater detail in Section 4.3.3.5.1, most African Americans were forced to live in the Historic Westside due to the city's racially restrictive policies. The influx of African Americans during World War II led to the Historic Westside becoming densely populated and the center of Black culture in Las Vegas (Figures 17 and 18) (Moehring and Green 2005:164).

The high proportion of African Americans working at BMI provided an impetus to challenge existing discriminatory pay scales and labor relations. African Americans most visibly advocated for equality during this period as part of a series of labor disputes between the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) that took place at BMI.

Figure 17. The first family in Carver Park, October 13, 1943. Henderson Public Library Collection 0254 0065. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 18. The first black family to move into Carver Park, October 13, 1943. Interior of housing provided; note appliances. Henderson Public Library Collection 0254 0046. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

4.3.3.1.3 Labor Relations and Race (1941–1945)

Unlike in previous decades, African American workers in defense industries had at least marginal support from the federal government in advocating for equality. Even prior to U.S. entry into the war, the materiel needs of the country and its trading partners expanded rapidly during the early 1940s. Manufacturing quickly grew in cities, but African Americans were often excluded from the new jobs created as a result. In response to this pervasive discrimination, in mid-1941, labor leader A. Philip Randolph "threatened to organize a march on Washington to protest job discrimination in the military and other defense-related activities" (Library of Congress 2020). In response, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order (EO) 8802, which stated, "There shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries and in Government, because of race, creed, color, or national origin" (National Archives 1941). In addition, it created the Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC), which was intended to enforce the EO (National Archives 1941). EO 8802 was followed in 1943 by Congress passing the War Labor Disputes (Smith-Connally) Act, which authorized the president to take over "plants needed for the war effort or in which war production had ceased because of a labor dispute" (PBS 2007). The World War II era was therefore characterized by an unprecedented level of federal support for labor organization and equal employment. While this hardly fixed all discrimination in hiring practices outside of federal employment and the defense industry, it provided African Americans with new tools to use when advocating for equal rights in the workplace. In Nevada, those tools would come into play at BMI.

The influx of BMI's workers, particularly African Americans, resulted in significant alterations to historic approaches to unionization in southern Nevada.

> The arrival of the new industrial complex at Basic Magnesium brought with it social dislocations and demographic shifts that profoundly affected the process of unionization in southern Nevada,

> the racial composition and distribution of the work force, and the relationship between politicians, labor leaders, and business elites. From initial construction in 1941 through the cessation of operations in 1944, Basic Magnesium and its warring unions challenged the principle of federal involvement in labor relations and tested the limits of workplace democracy. (Mingus 1995:3)

BMI's active recruitment of African Americans brought large numbers of workers into southern Nevada, most of whom were unaffiliated with unions or labor organizations (Figure 19). At the start of the war the AFL was the preeminent labor union in southern Nevada, but it concentrated its recruitment efforts on craftsmen rather than a broader pool of industrial workers. It was also heavily white and actively excluded most African Americans from membership (Mingus 1995:17).

Figure 19. African American worker at the Basic Magnesium Plant in Henderson, Nevada, January 20, 1944. Henderson Public Library Collection 0254 0146. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Starting in the early 1940s, the CIO began recruitment efforts in southern Nevada. The CIO was a more radical union that was racially inclusive in a way that the AFL was not. Its recruiting efforts were particularly aimed at the growing number of African American workers who were otherwise unrepresented by a union. The CIO enjoyed considerable success.

> Sharp differences in organizational philosophy between the competing unions quickly determined the allegiance of black workers. While the CIO defined itself as "a community project, which aims to benefit everyone, in the plant and out," the AFL maintained that it could only "get justice for its members," most of whom were white. Understandably, most blacks rallied to the CIO

> cause, giving the conflict [between it and the AFL] a racial dimension that invited FEPC involvement. (Mingus 1995:10)

Labor organization was particularly urgent among African American workers at BMI because of the poor working conditions and unfair wage scale. Despite being the most dependable workers (as demonstrated by their low turnover rate), African Americans were disproportionately placed in the most dangerous and least desirable positions; were paid less for performing the same work as white employees; and were largely barred from skilled positions (Figure 20) (Mingus 1995:43). Nevertheless, there is little record of friction between employees of different races at BMI during 1942 and much of 1943 (Mingus 1995:44). Because it recognized the unfair working conditions, the CIO appealed to African Americans, who would eventually make up over 80 percent of the union's membership, compared to just 2 percent of AFL membership (Mingus 1995:43). Throughout the CIO's struggle with the AFL, African American religious and community leaders helped the organization by offering meeting space and organizing meetings on the Historic Westside (Mingus 1995:80).

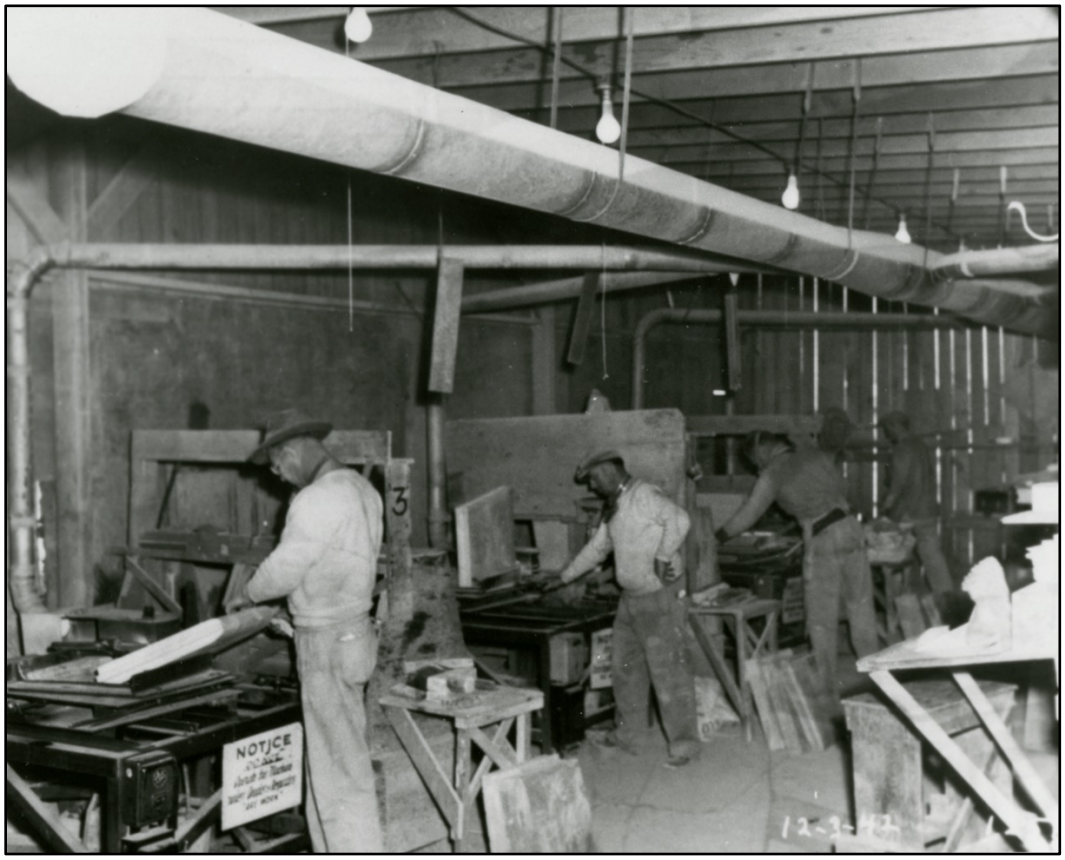

Figure 20. African American workers inside the Basic Magnesium plant, Henderson, Nevada, December 3, 1942. Henderson Public Library Collection 0254 0107. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Threatened by the CIO's recruiting success among the African American workers the AFL refused to support, the AFL allied itself with management at BMI to prevent the CIO from representing workers (Mingus 1995:9). This resulted in a backdoor agreement between the AFL and management functionally guaranteeing the AFL the right to represent workers despite not having the support of many of them. In response, the CIO petitioned the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) for a representation election, which it won in May 1943 (Mingus 1995:40). But because of the backdoor agreement, the AFL was still given the right to a union contract. The contract included many components that workers opposed,

including back-to-back workweeks, the use of "company judgement" in awarding promotions, and a no strike and no lock-out clause (Mingus 1995:49). The CIO again challenged the contract through the NLRB, and it won a second election a second time (Mingus 1995:50, 59).

Despite its success, the CIO experienced great difficulty in establishing itself in the role of the representative union between May 1943 and February 1944.

> First, the AFL utilized new federal legislation that hobbled the enforcement authority of the National Labor Relations Board. Second, with the blessings of management, AFL leaders deliberately provoked interracial hostility to keep the [CIO] off balance as new segregationist policies went into effect at the plant. This combined assault ultimately proved lethal to the beleaguered CIO. (Mingus 1995:65)

Early examples of this deliberately provoked racial hostility are reports of petitions to segregate the plant (Mingus 1995:74). This quickly escalated to BMI instating discriminatory hiring practices, including directing its Medical Department to "reject black applicants for even the smallest physical defect, white applicants were to be accepted regardless of their condition" (Mingus 1995:75). Company guards were tacitly allowed to respond violently to trivial violations by African Americans. By September 1943, the CIO recognized that a racially hostile attitude had become common amongst many white workers (Mingus 1995:75). In late October 1943, BMI segregated the workers' changehouses (where they showered and dressed) through the construction of partition walls. "Black workers were painfully aware of the domino-like pattern of segregationist policies. Their collective experiences under the Jim Crow regimes of the South had made them especially sensitive to the destructive potential of BMI's new tactics" (Mingus 1995:76).

In response to the increasingly intolerant atmosphere, on October 20, 1943, "all the workers in Unit 3, black and white alike, staged a sit-down strike to protest the segregated change houses. This sit-down fever quickly spread to the other predominantly black units, creating a full-blown crisis within the plant" (Mingus 1995:76). This strike violated the no-strike pledge made by both the CIO and AFL when the United States entered the war (Mingus 1995:7–8). Ultimately, 200 African American workers were terminated, and in the following 2 days, 300 workers did not report to work due to the fear of racial violence (Mingus 1995:77). Although the FEPC investigated, without the power of the NLRB (which had been curtailed by having its annual appropriations budget targeted by Senator Pat McCarran in collusion with the AFL), there was little it could do (Mingus 1995:77).

Racial tension caused by the strike spread to Las Vegas, and soldiers were not allowed to go there for fear of a race riot. In time, the federal government pressured BMI to remove the partitions in the changehouses, but the protesters were not rehired (Mingus 1995:77). Ultimately, the AFL won the battle and became the union for BMI.

As Mingus notes, "More than a typical wartime jurisdiction dispute, labor's war at Basic Magnesium came to reveal the political and structural weaknesses of the entire [wartime labor relations system]" (Mingus 1995:9). African Americans had attempted to use the systems created by the federal government that were intended to ensure them some measure of equality, but instead found that the systems, like the NLRB, were either unable or unwilling to truly give them the support they required. But the experiences of Las Vegas's African American community in the BMI conflict would prove formative. At least one key organizer during the coming years, Woodrow Wilson, worked at BMI during World War II (Wilson 1989). The strike at BMI also represented one of the earliest large-scale, well-publicized acts of civil disobedience by African Americans in Nevada and set the stage for increasingly public demonstrations after World War II.

4.3.3.2 MILITARY SERVICE AND FACILITIES (1941–1945)

The armed forces remained segregated through World War II. Beyond being forced to serve in segregated units, African American service members in Nevada also experienced discrimination during their periods of leave. Significant numbers were stationed in Las Vegas and Reno. In both cities, their ability to enjoy their leave as freely as their white counterparts was severely curtailed.

In Reno, the idea of African American military personnel visiting the city was so repugnant to the white population that they were bussed to Sacramento, California (130 miles away) for leave instead. Although Reno had a substantial Black population by the 1940s, the town remained off-limits to Black service members (Reader 2007:25).

In Las Vegas, African American personnel were permitted to visit the city on leave, but this led to considerable tension. The policies of spatial segregation already present in the city dictated the areas in which Black soldiers could enjoy their leave. They were unable to visit the segregated casinos and hotels that were already starting to define Las Vegas during this era. Instead, temporary housing and entertainment and recreation locations were created for Black clientele. In another case, Black men were not permitted to solicit white prostitutes, which resulted in a series of public disruptions caused by the very limited number of Black prostitutes working in Las Vegas. In response, the bordellos were asked to leave downtown, and many relocated outside of town (Geran 2006:63). Geran describes one such bordello established during World War II: "A private, gated small business complex was developed called Formyle [*sic*].[8] It was located exactly four miles from Las Vegas on Boulder Highway. A bar, laundromat and brothel called Roxie's Resort was located on the compound. It was said that most of the hookers from First Street went to work at Roxie's" (Geran 2006:64). Reno's brothels closed in 1942 due to a threat by the federal government to declare the city off-limits to servicemen at the Reno Army Air Base if they were not shut down; they remained closed during the war (Barber 2019b). Despite their military service, African American military personnel were still not free from the racism in the rest of the state.

4.3.3.2.1 Military Facilities

Racism also shaped the military facilities that African American personnel and civilian workers helped to staff during the war. Key military installations established in Nevada during World War II were Nellis Air Force Base (Las Vegas, 1941), Reno Army Air Base (later known as Stead Air Force Base) (Reno, 1942), Naval Air Station Fallon (Fallon, 1942), and Tonopah Army Air Base (Tonopah, 1941) (White 1997:2).[9] Two military facilities particularly significant in African American history during this period are the Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot (HNAD) in Hawthorne and Camp Williston in Boulder City (Figure 21). Although racism did not affect them in the same ways, both sites reflect patterns of discrimination and segregation common throughout the United States and Nevada. Reno Army Air Base will also be discussed briefly in this section due to the often-fraught relationship between the base and the city of Reno due to the presence of African American servicemembers.

[8] Also commonly referred to as "Four Mile" and "4 Mile."

[9] Records were consulted regarding the presence of African Americans at Naval Air Station Fallon, but no information was found relating to the presence of African American military personnel during World War II (personal communication, Marilyn Goble, curator, Churchill County Museum and Archives, January 15, 2020).

Figure 21. View to Northwest showing Thrift Shop (Building No. 195) - Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot, Babbitt Housing Area. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, HABS, HABS NV-23-F.

Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot

HNAD was created in 1930 in response to a massive ammunition explosion in New Jersey in 1926, which demonstrated the necessity of having ammunition depots located in rural areas. Its construction resulted in a population boom in Hawthorne.

> Thanks mostly to the new Naval Ammunition Depot (NAD – dedicated 1930), the population of Hawthorne tripled between 1920 (244 residents) and 1930 (757 residents). The number of new employees at the NAD, both civilian and naval personnel, continued to increase through 1940 (1,229 residents in Hawthorne and at the depot), but the 1940 census still showed only one African American resident. (Reader 2007:16)

As early as its establishment, HNAD embraced racist cultural norms by hosting an annual minstrel show for the depot and the town (Reader 2007:18). This pattern of racism would only expand in scope during World War II, when an increasing number of African American civilian workers came to work at HNAD. This played out most notably through the implementation of segregation policies.

The start of World War II in Europe and rising tensions in the Pacific resulted in an expansion of the depot in 1940, which continued throughout the war. To provide needed housing for the many new personnel, the Navy also created a new town, Babbitt. It consisted of 487 duplexes, built to the west of U.S. Highway 95, approximately 1 mile north of Hawthorne. Its central retail area was Babbitt Court, which also included a United Service Organizations (USO) club and other amenities (Figure 22) (Reader 2007:19).

> The commandant during this construction phase and throughout World War II, Captain Francis Alfred Leopold Vossler, insured from the beginning that housing in Babbitt was segregated. Approximately seventy duplexes at the southwest portion of Babbitt, south of 26th Street, were reserved for black residents and separated from the rest of the community by an open space a block wide. When these houses filled up, black families were forced to look for housing in

> Hawthorne, even though some houses in Babbitt's white area stood empty. The old CCC Camp Jumbo, at the north end of the depot, was used to house single workers, barracks style, but it was also segregated. Because of the increasing demands for housing, a trailer park with full electrical and water hookups, also segregated, was built to the southwest of the duplex housing area. (Reader 2007:20)

There were no enlisted African American naval personnel at HNAD during the war because Captain Vossler refused to accept any, although African American civilian personnel worked there. He argued that prejudice in the town precluded him from accepting any Black sailors; that there were no African Americans in the local population; and that local businesses (he claimed) refused to admit blacks (Reader 2007:23). Vossler used a similar argument to justify his choice to segregate housing and public accommodations in Babbitt (Reader 2007:22).

Figure 22. View to West showing Post Office/Barber Shop, Grocery Store/Meat Market, Thrift Shop and fountain - Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot, Babbitt Housing Area. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, HABS, HABS NV-23.

Most African American workers came to HNAD from the South, following a similar chain migration pattern as at BMI (Reader 2007:21). Although HNAD was forced to accept African Americans as civilian war workers as a result of EO 8802, they were typically placed in segregated work crews (only one integrated work crew did work there). Similarly, they were generally barred from supervisory positions (Reader 2007:21).

> Black civilian war workers in Babbitt were hired into entry-level laboring jobs at the depot, in spite of any prior engineering or manufacturing experience. They found themselves working for white supervisors who were less educated . . . and they were held in entry-level classifications in spite of their experience and abilities. . . . During World War II, armed Marines broke up some

> meetings by black war workers in Babbitt to talk over their grievances and searched the houses of other workers for "subversive" literature. Black workers' anger came to a head in July 1944 regarding a case of discrimination against a newly arrived, black female job applicant. (Reader 2007:32)

Although racist attitudes in Hawthorne were certainly influenced by officials at HNAD, they were also embraced by many businesses in Hawthorne itself:

> Casinos, bars, and restaurants in Hawthorne generally did not accept African American patrons. Some restaurants and bars allowed blacks to take away food and drinks, but not to eat or drink on the premises. Young black men had no place to take a date, except for four hours at the USO club on Wednesday nights, designated as "Negro" night. The USO was closed to blacks at all other times. . . . For a 'night on the town' black citizens of Babbitt had to travel to Sparks, more than one hundred thirty miles away, where all-black clubs existed. (Reader 2007:27)

In one instance in 1943, Jack Rosemont, a Black tavern owner in Sparks, applied for a liquor license in Hawthorne at the behest of Black residents. But county administrative officials procrastinated for 14 months, after which they called a public hearing and informed Rosemont that his proposed location had to be abandoned due to unspecified threats. The Hawthorne Business Men's Association also actively opposed the proposal and threatened to sue Mineral County if the application was approved (Reader 2007:28). An FEPC investigation in 1944 found massive discrimination in public facilities, and the Mineral County Commission chairman made it clear that African Americans were considered temporary visitors who would be encouraged to leave after the end of the war (Reader 2007:30).

These attitudes did not necessarily extend to all of the white community. Unlike other cities, such as Reno and Las Vegas (or nearby Babbitt), no formal policies of housing segregation were ever successfully implemented in Hawthorne, and Black residents lived in integrated neighborhoods throughout the community (Reader 2007:30).

Although far smaller in scope than the strike at BMI, African American workers at HNAD did demonstrate against HNAD's discriminatory employment policies in one instance in 1944. The resistance was sparked by the experiences of one applicant at HNAD. The applicant, Katie Kelly, passed her physical examination, but when placed in a job, her supervisors sent her back for further examinations repeatedly due to her unusual stance caused by a childhood case of polio. She also passed the subsequent examinations. She was referred to the typing pool, but due to threats by white secretaries to quit if she was hired, she was intentionally found not physically fit during yet another physical examination and informed she would be sent back to Baton Rouge. She argued that she wanted to stay and could find work in Babbitt by washing clothes and cleaning, but HNAD staff were adamant that she could not remain. The next day, when she failed to board the train to Baton Rouge, she was arrested and taken to the Mineral County Jail (Reader 2007:33-34).

The African American community quickly met and organized to defend Kelly. After observing the mood of the meeting and the number of attendees, the HNAD official who ordered Kelly arrested agreed to allow her to stay in Babbitt if she repaid the cost of her transportation from Baton Rouge. The meeting attendees took up a collection and paid her expenses, and she was freed (Reader 2007:36). The next day, Rev. Carl Narducci, a white minister with the First Baptist Church serving as an intermediary between the white and Black communities, picked her up:

> Narducci told Kelly he would take her to Reno for a physical by an independent doctor, as some participants had suggested the previous evening at Taylor's house. But Captain Vossler gave Narducci a different agenda. On the drive to Reno the reverend frightened Kelly by telling her she could never go back to Hawthorne, that the black war workers were threatening to strike if she

> was not hired, and that she could be arrested and charged with the death penalty if a riot ensued. Narducci made it clear he had talked with Vossler, who said Kelly would not be hired and the Navy would not build the promised foundation for Narducci's church if Kelly returned. He drove Kelly directly to the Reno Army Air Base and secured her a job as supervisor over the janitors. He also found her a place to stay. (Reader 2007:37)

She returned the next week to pick up her things and told the African American community what had happened. Although she decided she wanted to stay in Reno because she liked her job and received better pay, she was convinced by residents of Babbitt to file a complaint with the Civil Service Commission (Reader 2007:38). The FEPC investigated and found widespread discrimination. In response, Vossler agreed to reprimand those responsible for Kelly's arrest and to hire a Black clerk, and the issue was dropped (Reader 2007:38). But because the FEPC had no enforcement power, Vossler never followed through on his promises and instead took punitive action against two Black employees (Reader 2007:38–39). Throughout World War II, patterns of discrimination remained pervasive in Hawthorne and Babbitt.

Camp Williston (Camp Sibert)

Camp Williston, which was originally named Camp Sibert before the name was changed to differentiate it from Camp Sibert in Alabama, was established in 1941 in Boulder City (Figure 23). As noted in the 1991 Nevada Comprehensive Preservation Plan,

> Camp Sibert in Boulder City, which served as an infantry training center, consisted of a large number of black military police whose job was to guard and protect Hoover Dam. At its height, Camp Sibert had about 135 permanent personnel and 700 trainees. At least one potentially significant property, a clubhouse, remains in situ, while the remainder has been surplussed, sold off and moved to numerous other locations. (White et al. 1991:Section 31, Page 32)

The camp was located between California and J Avenues, adjacent to and south of New Mexico Street (BOR 1950:1169–1171). Very little documentation exists relating to Camp Williston or the experiences of the Black military police posted there.

Figure 23. Camp Williston building, Boulder City, ca. 1940. United States Park Service Collection 0189 0031. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Reno Army Air Base (Stead Air Force Base)

Due to its close proximity to the city, Reno Army Air Base presented particular problems in terms of race relations. During the establishment of the air base, white residents of Reno, including the mayor, expressed concern over the anticipated presence of African American troops. These concerns became such an issue that during the early stages of the base's establishment in 1942 the Army formally assured Reno Mayor August Frohlich that no African American troops would be stationed there and that if plans changed the city would be given advance notice if possible (*Nevada State Journal* 1942). By 1943, African American troops had been stationed at the base, which indeed created tensions with the white residents of Reno. For example, in 1943, the Reno USO Council "held a meeting to decide what to do when the owner of a building rented for a USO center for African American soldiers canceled the rental agreement, returned the rent check, and told Mayor August Frohlich he had received complaints from other property owners" about renting the space for use by African Americans (Myers 2018). African American troops at Reno Army Air Base continued to have issues obtaining accommodations at hotels, in clubs and restaurants, and even for USO events in Reno for the duration of the war and throughout the 1950s (Myers 2018). In some cases, however, African American servicemembers' roles in the armed forces secured them special consideration at otherwise segregated establishments. After the war, former employees of Harolds Club, a casino in Reno, recalled how during the 1950s, a Black sergeant from Stead Air Force Base was the only African American customer allowed to gamble there in deference to his military rank (Kling et al. 2005:267).

4.3.3.3 NORTHWEST NEVADA (1941–1945)

African Americans in northwest Nevada continued their civil rights advocacy during World War II. This was deeply necessary work; like Las Vegas, Reno and the rest of northwest Nevada frequently remained segregated (Figure 24). Alice Lucretia Smith recalled the time that restaurants in Reno typically forbade African Americans as customers (Nevada Women's History Project 2020). In response, African Americans founded the Reno branch of the NAACP in 1945 (Anderson 2012:10).

4.3.3.3.1 Hawthorne/Babbitt

Starting in the 1940s, several churches in Hawthorne and Babbitt also played key roles in the lives of the African American residents of the towns, although they did not generally play a crucial role in their political work (Reader 2007:4). These included Bethel Baptist Church, St. Paul Baptist Church, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Reader 2007:4–5). Bethel Baptist Church often hosted NAACP meetings and several church leaders participated in civil rights organizing, but they generally did not occupy leadership roles (Reader 2007:5).

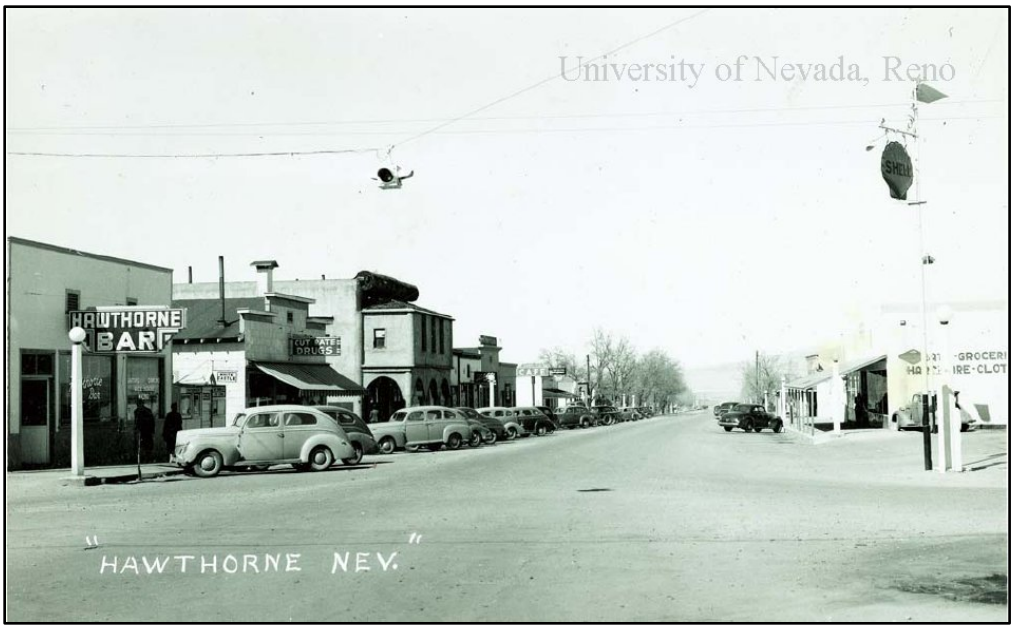

Figure 24. Street view of Hawthorne, Nevada, no date (ca. 1940). UNRS-P1995-34, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

4.3.3.4 NORTHEAST NEVADA (1941–1945)

No information relating specifically to African Americans in northeast Nevada during the World War II era was identified during research. In 1940, the African American population in northeast Nevada was small in size (totaling only 158 individuals in the region) (see Table 12). African Americans in northeast Nevada mostly lived in larger cities in the region, including Elko and Ely (Bureau of the Census 1943:756–757).

4.3.3.5 SOUTHERN NEVADA (1941–1945)

During World War II the African American population of southern Nevada increased significantly. Both Henderson and Las Vegas were part of important events in African American history during this period.

4.3.3.5.1 Las Vegas

Segregation

Segregation had begun in Las Vegas during the 1930s, but the World War II era saw it continue and expand. For example, during the 1940s, Mayor Ernie Cragin's administration began to enforce segregation of public places such as "downtown's retail, residential, and casino districts" (Moehring and Green 2005:164). Similarly, in 1942, the Shamrock Hotel was proposed as the first interracial hotel in downtown Las Vegas but was denied an operating permit due to several weeks of protests by white residents in the area (Anderson 2012:10).

As part of this growing tide of segregation, the Historic Westside expanded exponentially to meet the needs of its Black population. This included the opening of various Black-owned businesses and casinos for African Americans, frequently owned by African Americans themselves. These included the Cotton Club, El Morocco, Brown Derby, and the Elks Club, all of which were located on or near Jackson Street

(Geran 2006:68). New businesses established during World War II included barber and beauty shops, bars, soda fountains, and restaurants (Geran 2006:48).

Figure 25. Housing on D Street in the Historic Westside, 1943. Milton Norman Collection 0259 0007. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

But the growth of the Historic Westside also contributed to what was often described as its ramshackle appearance (Figure 25). Because of the lack of public funding and the denial of loans to African Americans by banks and mortgage companies, homes were frequently made out of cardboard, rags, and wood; tents and cabins commonly constituted dwellings there (Geran 2006:25, 27–28; McKee 2012:12–13).[10]

> A man named Patrick Lisby constructed these dwellings. During his off hours from the magnesium plant and several other subsequent jobs, he would build small 12 × 12-foot cabins. The purchase price was $50 and that included materials. After Lisby sold all his units, his co-workers recognized his efforts. They began to modify the same idea. Larger cabins, measuring 50 × 100, were built and sold for $75. . . .The cabins were not on solid or permanent foundations and could easily be moved from one location to another. (Geran 2006:28)

City officials also neglected the physical infrastructure of the Historic Westside. The roads were unpaved resulting in "dust [that] was six inches or more deep and there was constantly a haze floating in the air"

[10] Redlining encompassed a wide range of racially discriminatory practices by landlords (who would deny rental applications from people of color), lending institutions (who denied loans to African Americans), and even federal agencies such as the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, which created maps designating certain neighborhoods, usually ones with large minority populations, as "declining" or "hazardous." While these activities are now banned by the Fair Housing Act, many issues, such as the ongoing denial of loans to African Americans, persist to the present (Capps and Rabinowitz 2018).

(Geran 2006:27). The Historic Westside may have been a vibrant neighborhood during World War II, but that was due to the tenacity and work of its residents rather than because of any assistance or support from city officials or the white establishment.

Churches

During World War II, in part due to the growth of the African American population in Las Vegas, several churches serving African Americans were founded, including St. James Catholic Church, founded in 1942, and Second Baptist Church, founded in 1943 (Geran 2006:38–39). Other congregations grew, such as Zion United Methodist Church in North Las Vegas, which was founded in 1917 but did not get its first full-time Black pastor until 1945 (Figure 26) (Emerson 2012).

Figure 26. Photograph of Protestant Conference attendees in Carver Park, October 13, 1943. Henderson Public Library Collection 0254 0068. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

4.3.3.5.2 Henderson

In 1941, BMI began operating near Las Vegas. Henderson, a company town intended to house BMI's workers, was founded in 1943 (Anderson 2012:10). Henderson included hundreds of housing units for BMI workers, but those units were segregated. African American workers and their families lived in Carver Park, which consisted of 324 housing units: "64 dormitories with no bedroom, 104 one-bedrooms, 104 two-bedrooms, and 52 three-bedrooms" that could house less than two-thirds of all African American workers (see Section 4.3.3.1.2) (Geran 2006:55). The school for the children of workers was also segregated (Geran 2006:55–56). African American residents of Carver Park also found themselves isolated and with little to do for recreation (Rayle and Ruter 2015:96–97).

As a result of the insufficient and isolated housing in Henderson, many African American BMI employees chose to live in the Historic Westside. Although the Historic Westside was underdeveloped and lodging there was often crowded and crudely built, it offered a greater sense of community and more recreational and cultural opportunities outside work (Geran 2006:57).

4.3.4 *Activism and Advocacy Era (1946–1979)*

From the end of Reconstruction through World War II, African Americans in Nevada had confronted racism in almost every area of life: segregated areas for housing and working, exclusion from jobs and the denial of promotions on the basis of race, economic inequality, the use of racist epithets in newspapers, and the formation of overtly racist organizations like the KKK. During the World War II era, African Americans in various communities throughout the state became more active in asserting their right to equality and more visible in doing so. Although these early challenges to systemic racism had mixed degrees of success, they represented some of the first large-scale organizing by the African American community outside of advocacy by the NAACP or Colored Citizens' Labor and Protective Association. From 1946 to 1979, this early advocacy would be followed by increasingly visible—and successful—efforts by African Americans in Nevada to assert their rights. Because of the widespread changes that occurred during this era, this section has been divided into three subsections: Post–World War II Period (1946–1953), Early Civil Rights Period (1954–1965), and Late Civil Rights Period (1966–1979).

4.3.4.1 POST–WORLD WAR II PERIOD (1946–1953)

As part of the "Double V" campaign during World War II, African Americans throughout the country joined in the war effort. This advocacy had only limited impact during the war years, primarily limited to the mandated hiring of people of color for federal jobs and the creation of the FEPC. But these efforts did not stop with the end of the war. Instead, the rising tensions of the Cold War and aggressive U.S. posturing as the defender of freedom brought unprecedented international scrutiny to issues of racial inequality, which prompted action on the federal level unmatched in history. In 1946, President Harry S Truman created the President's Committee on Civil Rights, which conducted a national investigation of race relations and eventually published a report titled "To Secure These Rights," detailing a civil rights agenda for the federal government (President's Committee on Civil Rights 1946). In response to those findings and the continued advocacy of African Americans, President Truman integrated the armed forces in 1948.

4.3.4.1.1 Demographic Change (1940–1950)

In Nevada, the Post–World War II Period also brought change and opportunities for advocacy. Post–World War II Nevada was very different from the preceding periods, primarily as a result of population growth during the war years. "The 1940s, 50s, 60s, and 70s, saw the state population grow by 45.2, 78.2, 71.3, and 63.8 percent, respectively. Increases in the state's African-American population made even these healthy figures appear pale. In the decades between 1940 and 1980, this population grew by 154, 319, 49, and 54.2 percents [*sic*]" (Coray 1992:247). This can be seen in census statistics from 1940 to 1980 (Table 15).

Table 15. African American Population of Nevada, 1940–1980

Year	Black Population	Total Population	Percentage of Total Population	Citation
1940	664	110,247	0.6	Bureau of the Census 1943:721; Coray 1992:243
1950	4,302	160,083	2.7	Bureau of the Census 1952:12–13
1960	13,484	285,278	4.7	Bureau of the Census 1961:17
1970	27,762	488,738	5.7	Bureau of the Census 1973:3, 7.
1980	51,203	800,493	6.4	Bureau of the Census 1981a:7, 1981b:13.

Prior to the start of the war, African Americans made up 0.6 percent of the state's population as a whole. By 1950, they made up 2.69 percent of the state's population, the highest in Nevada history up to that point. An examination of population by county in 1950 further illustrates these shifts (Table 16, Figure 27). In 1940, African Americans made up less than 1 percent of the population in all counties in Nevada. By 1950, they made up 1 percent or more of the population in five counties. The change was most extreme in Mineral County, where Blacks made up just 0.04 percent of the population in 1940 but 5.07 percent of the population in 1950. This came after the massive population influx in southern Nevada during World War II.

Table 16. African American Population Growth by County in Nevada, from 1940 to 1950

County	African American Population	Total Population	Percent of Population African American, 1940	Percent of Population African American, 1950
Churchill	10	6,161	0.02	0.16
Clark	3,174	48,289	1.08	6.57
Douglas	3	2,029	0.00	0.15
Elko	153	11,654	0.71	1.31
Esmeralda	1	614	0.1	0.16
Eureka	10	896	0.00	1.12
Humboldt	62	4,838	0.88	1.28
Lander	13	1,850	0.34	0.70
Lincoln	9	3,837	0.02	0.23
Lyon	8	3,679	0.12	0.22
Mineral	282	5,560	0.04	5.07
Nye	12	3,101	0.42	0.39
Ormsby*	35	4,172	0.53	0.84
Pershing	12	3,103	0.22	0.39
Storey	0	671	0.16	0.00
Washoe	483	50,205	0.87	0.96
White Pine	35	9,424	0.21	0.37
Total	**4,302**	**160,083**	**0.60**	**2.69**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1952:36

* Prior to 1969, Carson City (now an independent city) was designated as Ormsby County.

As a result of the large-scale in-migration that occurred during the war, African Americans in the late 1940s and early 1950s made up a far larger proportion of the state's population than ever before, particularly in southern Nevada. As Coray observed, this pattern would continue through the 1970s.

> The African-American experience at Basic Magnesium proved to be more than a case study of the conditions facing blacks in Clark County during the early war years. It provided, in fact, a model of the three elements that would be central to the African-American experience in Nevada until the early 1970s. First, the lure of available jobs ensured continuous population growth. Second, racial discrimination in the marketplace limited African-American employment prospects to the most menial and poorly paid jobs. Such practices were a constant threat to the economic viability of members of the African-American community, be they employees or small business owners. Third, and perhaps most crucial, the dismantling of segregation, and the economic, social, and residential discrimination that it sanctioned, would require the active involvement of Nevada's African-American community. (Coray 1992:250–251)

Although the growing African American population meant a competitive demand for jobs open to Black applicants, the growth of the tourist industry (particularly in Las Vegas) meant that demand for the services typically provided by African Americans, such as cleaning or laundering, was also growing exponentially, providing job opportunities unavailable in earlier eras and promoting continued in-migrations. Much in-migration followed the same patterns established during World War II, in which African Americans from small towns in the South moved to Nevada, lured by opportunities for better pay and better jobs (Geran 2006).

Nevada's white establishment might not have accepted African Americans on an equal basis, but because of important roles played by Black workers in key industries in the state and the growing size of the community, they had considerably more bargaining power than in previous decades.

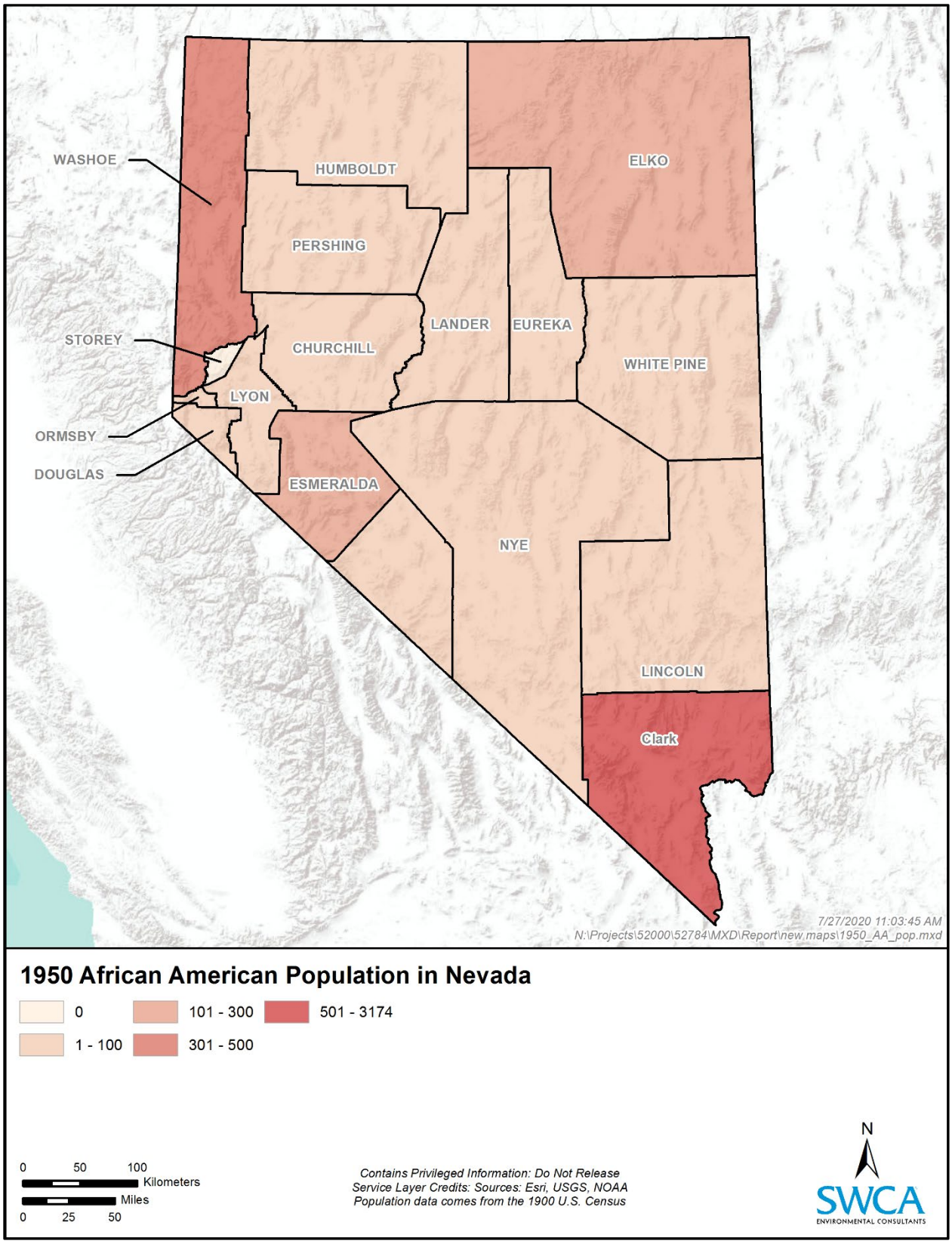

Figure 27. African American Population by County in Nevada, 1950.

4.3.4.1.2 Postwar African American Civil Rights Advocacy (1946–1953)

The most pressing civil rights issue for African Americans in the immediate aftermath of World War II was the lack of a comprehensive legal mandate for equality. But other issues came to prominence during this period, including the lack of public utilities in Black neighborhoods and the segregation of public accommodations.

During the preceding decades, African Americans in Nevada had tried various methods to combat the state's ingrained racism. These culminated in 1939 with the introduction of Assembly Bill 88 to the Nevada State Assembly by African Americans from Las Vegas. Although the bill failed to gain traction, the idea it presented—a law mandating equal rights—did not go away. In 1947, E. R. "Boots" Miller of White Pine County introduced Assembly Bill 5, which was designed to outlaw racial discrimination in public accommodations.[11] Unfortunately, Miller lost a vote to reassign the bill to a different committee by a vote of 12 to 23. The bill died in the Committee on Social Welfare (Anderson 2012:11; Rusco 2019:73–74).

But securing a comprehensive civil rights bill was only one aspect of a broad struggle to combat a widening racial divide in Nevada society. During World War II, racist attitudes by the white population, particularly in Las Vegas, had grown increasingly strident. This may have been as a result of the increasing number of southern whites who had also relocated to Las Vegas during the war. Whereas African Americans interviewed on their experiences recalled a relative level of flexibility in accessing public accommodations until ca. 1943, by the middle of World War II, white attitudes had mostly changed to support segregation (White 2004:78–79). An example was the closing of the Star Bar because it was catering to Black and white clientele. Not only could African Americans not access white establishments in much of the state, but white individuals were also barred from patronizing businesses owned by African Americans (Our Story, Inc. 2020; White 2004:79). After World War II, white-owned public accommodations throughout the state, such as hotels, casinos, restaurants, and many businesses, had adopted policies of segregation (White 2004:79).

Although the Historic Westside was perhaps the largest segregated neighborhood by this period, residential segregation was ubiquitous throughout much of the state by that time. For example, Babbitt had been segregated since its creation during World War II, and this policy continued through the Post-World War II Period; HNAD did not receive Black military personnel until the 1950s (Reader 2007:20, 23). Two attempts to create racially segregated neighborhoods in Hawthorne also occurred, in 1945 and in the 1950s. Both attempts failed, the first due to lack of demand by white residents for racially segregated housing and the second because Hawthorne's Black residents (who were already spread throughout the town) actively rejected the attempt to move them into a segregated neighborhood by simply refusing to buy houses there (Reader 2007:31). Black Springs, outside of Reno, was another African American community that grew due to discrimination in land sales elsewhere in the area.

In addition to physical segregation of residences and businesses, African American neighborhoods like Black Springs and the Historic Westside had unequal access to public utilities. After World War II, Black Springs streets remained unpaved and the community did not have access to electricity, water, and sewer (Our Story, Inc. 2020).

The Historic Westside was similarly undeveloped. During World War II, the community unsuccessfully advocated with city officials for the construction of better infrastructure. "The refusal did not stop the community from asking for additional improvements. In 1946, Rev. Cooke appealed to the mayor once more. This time, the list increased with the verbal petition for fireplugs, and street lighting. Again, the mayor refused, stating that low property values could not justify the expenditure" (White 2004:79). At the

[11] Miller introduced the bill under his own initiative rather than as a result of outside lobbying (Rusco 2019:73–74).

same time, the city campaigned to remove buildings that did not meet building codes, which specifically targeted the Historic Westside; the lack of infrastructure and the removal of buildings were deeply tied to racism (White 2004:79–80). But residents of the Historic Westside refused to leave. "The city fathers expected a reverse migration as jobs ended, but blacks stayed. First, the black community had been uprooted and relocated, then denied needed improvements for the safety and aesthetics of the area, and finally, homes though pitiable, were destroyed" (White 2004:80). Instead of being uprooted, by the late 1940s, African Americans in Las Vegas saw minor improvements, including the construction of a swimming pool in 1947, the installation of a public pay phone and plans for a nursery school, and the construction of a complete sewer system in 1949. In 1951, the city finally constructed a fire station for the Historic Westside (Moehring and Green 2005:163). The community also formed the Westside Chamber of Commerce in 1948 (Moehring and Green 2005:164).

4.3.4.1.3 Race, Class, and Gender (1946–1979)

Issues of class and gender often intersected with issues of race in Nevada history. But changes to civil rights leadership, as well as alterations to patterns of employment during the Post–World War II Period, made these issues particularly important at this time. The intersection of these factors played out in several ways: the introduction of a new class of civil rights leaders who were primarily highly educated career professionals, the ongoing role of unionism in the lives of African Americans, and changes in patterns of employment along gender lines. While these patterns would continue to play an important part in subsequent periods of Black history, at this time, they significantly impacted the lives of Black Nevadans.

The end of World War II and the subsequent decades saw the participation of new organizers and leaders in advocacy work. In "The March That Never Happened: Desegregating the Las Vegas Strip," White observes of Las Vegas:

> It is my belief that the leaders of the relentless series of pushes for equal rights were outsiders who toiled for civil liberties for a period and would then stepped [*sic*] aside to allow others with new ideas and novel strategies to take the reins of the struggle. Each migratory wave brought new leadership that pushed the black community toward the goal of full integration. (White 2004:74)

The primary civil rights leaders before and during World War II were often working-class individuals with longstanding ties to the state. During and after the war, ongoing patterns of migration brought increasing numbers of middle-class migrants and professionals during the 1940s and 1950s, respectively (White 2004:74). This turnover was important for the civil rights movement. The influx of new African American professionals brought knowledge and experience to the movement while building on the foundations established during earlier periods. The close ties of many participants with organizations like the NAACP also provided connections to a wider support network (White 1997:65). In many cases, these civil rights leaders were also the first to break professional barriers in the state, particularly in the later historic periods (see Section 4.3.4.2.7).

Despite the shift in the class dynamics of civil rights leaders during the Post–World War II Period, many African Americans in Nevada were still working class. Their numbers were bolstered by the rapidly expanding hotel and casino industry, which required an enormous amount of support work in terms of cleaning rooms, doing laundry, cooking, and other staff positions. In many cases, employers actively continued patterns of recruitment among African Americans in small towns in the South. "Jobs for women became more plentiful as hotel construction gained momentum in the late 1940s and in the decade of the 1950s. Jobs for black men slowed with the end of World War II but simultaneously Las Vegas began to pull in black families as labor agents switched their search to women" (White 1997:26). This resulted in strong population growth in places like Las Vegas but also introduced issues of how African American workers could best achieve equal rights as employees.

Unfortunately, the failures of industrial unionism during World War II would continue to haunt African Americans in Nevada.

> The lack of progressive industrial unionism in southern Nevada produced consequences far beyond the shop floor. The political battle over Nevada's right-to-work law provides a telling example. Las Vegas's Westside area, a direct product of industrialization at Basic Magnesium, housed over 70 percent of the state's black population and the largest concentration of CIO members and supporters. In 1952, Westside residents voted 9 to 1 against Nevada's right-to-work proposition. They found themselves politically and socially isolated from other pro-union elements, however. A progressive industrial union would have undoubtedly facilitated a more powerful political alliance between blacks and other working-class constituencies. Right-to-work passed handily and proved immune to subsequent attempts at repeal. Moreover, BMI's closure resulted in downward mobility for many in the black community. The loss of industrial employment, combined with the absence of a strong union, relegated many black men to low paying service industry jobs in area hotels and forced many black women into private domestic service. (Mingus 1995:82–83)[12]

African Americans were faced simultaneously with a shrinking labor market and exclusion from unions due to their race. As a result, they were regularly forced to undertake the most menial, least desirable work (White 1997:27).

African American women faced an even wider array of hurdles. They frequently experienced racism, which in turn resulted in their earning, on average, less than their white counterparts. They also faced sexism from employers and customers (White 1997). Although Mingus states that many Black women were also "forced" into domestic service, this is to some degree a mischaracterization of their historic relationship with their work. As noted above, even as recruitment of African American men ended with wartime industries like BMI, African American women continued to be actively recruited for work in the rapidly growing hotel industry. There was strong incentive to migrate from small towns in the South to Las Vegas during and after the war:

> Women voiced many of the reasons for the wartime migration. There was a general feeling of wanting better conditions for themselves and their children. Women wanted good schools for the children, a better income to ensure improved conditions for the family unit, and in some cases, a sense of excitement and fun for themselves. (White 1997:16)

Promotion of Nevada by friends and family members who had already moved there was another key factor behind many women's decisions to move (White 1997:17). Moreover, the work available to African American women in hotels and casinos was often preferable to that available in the South.

> The gaming industry offered service jobs but preferred that black workers remain in the kitchen, linen rooms, and housekeeping departments—positions where whites were accustomed to seeing blacks. . . . Because of the job configuration available to African Americans, black working class women found that work was abundant. . . . They discovered mobility, a freedom that they had not previously experienced, and used it as a strategy to work in the hotels that they preferred. (White 1997:31)

Not only was the work preferable to the types of work available in the South, it paid far better (White 1997:17–18). Starting in 1948 in Las Vegas, African American women unionized in a way that had been barred to their male counterparts (Figure 28) (White 1997:40). The Culinary Workers Union Local 226

[12] Right-to-work laws prohibit agreements between employers and unions that make union membership a condition of employment (Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau 2016).

actively recruited African American women (particularly after 1954, when Al Bramlet entered a leadership role), and membership had many benefits (White 1997:40).

Figure 28. Hattie Canty marching in a union strike, no date. The African American Experience in Las Vegas ohr000123. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

The Culinary Union represented workers in kitchens and on gaming floors as well as housekeeping staff and hotel lobby workers. The union negotiated contracts that provided "job protection, adequate wages, paid holidays and vacations, sick leaves, accident and life insurance, disability, medical insurance, unemployment compensation and retirement income" (White 1997:41). It also administered a collective bargaining agreement that offered remedies for on-the-job problems (White 1997:41). The union also provided members with information about potential openings and helped with job searches (White 1997:35). Although African Americans often had a contentious relationship with union membership in much of the West, African American women in Las Vegas were enthusiastic about it (White 1997:iv).[13] As Claytee White points out, "The Culinary Worker Union, Local 226 was the transforming agent for women who thought of themselves as maids but became professional career women" (White 1997:45). This would prove true into the late 1960s and 1970s, particularly after the Consent Decree in 1971, as

[13] African American women had been involved in unions since the 1880s. "It was not until the 1940s, however, that women were involved in significant numbers and began to garner and execute power as a result of union membership" (White 1997:37). The relationship was not always positive; even when allowed in unions, African Americans often suffered from discriminatory policies (White 1997:37–39).

African American women used their clerical skills and work experience to enter mid-level management positions (Section 4.3.4.3.3) (White 1997:57–61, 69).

4.3.4.2 EARLY CIVIL RIGHTS PERIOD (1954–1965)

On the national level, 1954 marked a turning point in the civil rights movement due to the landmark Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (I)* (*Brown I*). This case challenged the historic precedent set in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896 that upheld the constitutionality of racial segregation and created the doctrine of "separate but equal." In *Brown I*, the racial segregation of public schools was challenged on the basis that it violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. The Court ruled unanimously that separate but equal schools were inherently unequal, thereby overturning *Plessy v. Ferguson* (Oyez 2020a). Because the ruling did not include any guidance for desegregating schools, it was followed by a second decision, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (II)* (*Brown II*) in 1955 in which the Supreme Court issued a directive to implement desegregation "with all deliberate speed" (Oyez 2020b). The ruling struck the first major blow against racial segregation and represented a successful challenge to Jim Crow laws throughout the United States. It also invigorated the civil rights movement, which would soon take increasingly visible action against discrimination and segregation through protests such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955–1956), the Greensboro sit-ins (1960), and the March on Washington (1963).

The year 1954 was also a key turning point for African Americans in Nevada on several fronts. Black Nevadans, of course, had successfully thwarted legislative attempts to segregate the state's schools in the late nineteenth century, although in some cases they were still de facto segregated. But the rising tides of the civil rights movement heralded by *Brown I* also extended into Nevada. African Americans in the state were additionally galvanized by a key publication in *Ebony* magazine in 1954 titled "Negros Can't Win in Las Vegas." James Goodrich, the author, discussed his experiences as an outsider while on a trip to Las Vegas. It included descriptions of finding lodging and transportation, and trying to access public spaces, starkly outlining the racial inequality in Las Vegas and much of Nevada (Goodrich 1954). As Geran recalled in *Beyond the Glimmering Lights*, "Aunt Mac [an oral history interviewee] said that although the article painted a horrific picture of the black experience in Las Vegas, it was the spark they needed to move them out of their comfort zones" (Geran 2006:139). In response, the African American community increased both its support for the NAACP and lobbying efforts through means such as the Nevada Voters League, which African Americans in Las Vegas formed in 1957 and which operated as a sister organization to the NAACP (Geran 2006:140).

Also in 1954, a new cadre of career professionals moved to Nevada and began to take on leadership roles.

> At the urging of Count Basie, Dr. Charles West, the first medical doctor and Alice Key, international dancer, community activist, and later Deputy Labor Commissioner of Nevada, migrated to Las Vegas. The following year, Bob and Anna Bailey, along with Dr. James McMillan, the first black dentist, moved to the city almost simultaneous to the opening of the first integrated hotel casino, The Moulin Rouge. The Baileys came as a result of positions at the famed resort. As the black leadership changed at this point . . . the previous guard were not ready to step aside. They found ways to accommodate, integrate, and incorporate the talents of the professional newcomers. (White 2004:81)

Under Dr. McMillan's leadership, the Las Vegas NAACP embarked on new and increasingly visible advocacy efforts that would prove far more effective than in previous eras. But as White argues, the community as a whole brought about change during this period; that change was also contingent on the new leadership. Because McMillan and the new leadership cohort did not have deep connections to the community, they could pursue more confrontational strategies, such as threatening a march on the Las Vegas Strip, whereas longtime residents were more constrained by their existing social relationships with

both Blacks and whites. At the same time, these strategies were only successful because of the growing African American population in Las Vegas and that community's active support for their work; without that visible support, the NAACP's confrontational strategies would not have been credible. And without supporting work by the previous leadership, such as voter registration drives, the new leadership's strategies would have been far less effective (White 2004:81).

Civil rights efforts were hardly limited to Las Vegas during this period. Although the actions taken by the Las Vegas NAACP to combat discriminatory hiring practices by casinos made it particularly visible, the Reno NAACP was also actively protesting and performing acts of civil disobedience to combat discrimination in northwest Nevada and throughout the state.

4.3.4.2.1 Demographic Change (1950–1960)

One of the greatest limitations on civil rights efforts during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was Nevada's extremely small African American population; African Americans made up only a fraction of a percent of the state's total population. Because of this "residents could do little until their numbers reached a critical mass to support an effective protest movement" (Moehring and Green 2005:164). This began to change during the 1930s with the arrival of significant numbers of African Americans in southern Nevada, a trend that continued through World War II. During and after World War II, Nevada's growing African American population became increasingly concentrated in a small number of areas.

By 1960, the state's African American population primarily lived in three counties: Clark (in which 8.66 percent of the total county population was Black), Mineral (in which 6.62 percent of the total county population was Black), and Washoe (in which 1.92 percent of the total county population was Black) (Table 17, Figure 29). As Rusco observes, the concentration of African American populations was closely tied to activism. "NAACP branches were organized only in the three counties with significant black populations. The 1950 census of population, for example, reported that 91.6 percent of the state's black population lived in Clark, Washoe, and Mineral Counties. The concentration of the black population in these three counties has continued to this date" (Rusco 2019:73). For this reason, the activism and advocacy discussed in this section occurred primarily in these three counties. Although activism likely occurred elsewhere in the state, the limited population of African Americans would have made protests or other direct action less effective and therefore less likely to succeed in creating measurable change. While additional primary source research may reveal civil rights activism in other areas of the state, the secondary sources consulted for this context dealt foremost with activism in these three counties.

Table 17. African American Population Growth by County in Nevada, from 1950 to 1960

County	African American Population	Total Population	Percent of Population African American, 1950	Percent of Population African American, 1960
Churchill	64	8,452	0.16	0.76
Clark	11,005	127,016	6.57	8.66
Douglas	0	3,481	0.15	0.00
Elko	121	12,011	1.31	1.01
Esmeralda	0	619	0.16	0.00
Eureka	3	767	1.12	0.39
Humboldt	82	5,708	1.28	1.44
Lander	1	1,566	0.70	0.06
Lincoln	1	2,431	0.23	0.04

County	African American Population	Total Population	Percent of Population African American, 1950	Percent of Population African American, 1960
Lyon	5	6,143	0.22	0.08
Mineral	419	6,329	5.07	6.62
Nye	51	4,374	0.39	1.17
Ormsby*	71	8,063	0.84	0.88
Pershing	12	3,199	0.39	0.38
Storey	0	568	0.00	0.00
Washoe	1,628	84,743	0.96	1.92
White Pine	21	9,808	0.37	0.21
Total	**13,484**	**285,278**	**2.69**	**4.73**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1961:32–33

* Note: Prior to 1969, Carson City (now an independent city) was designated as Ormsby County.

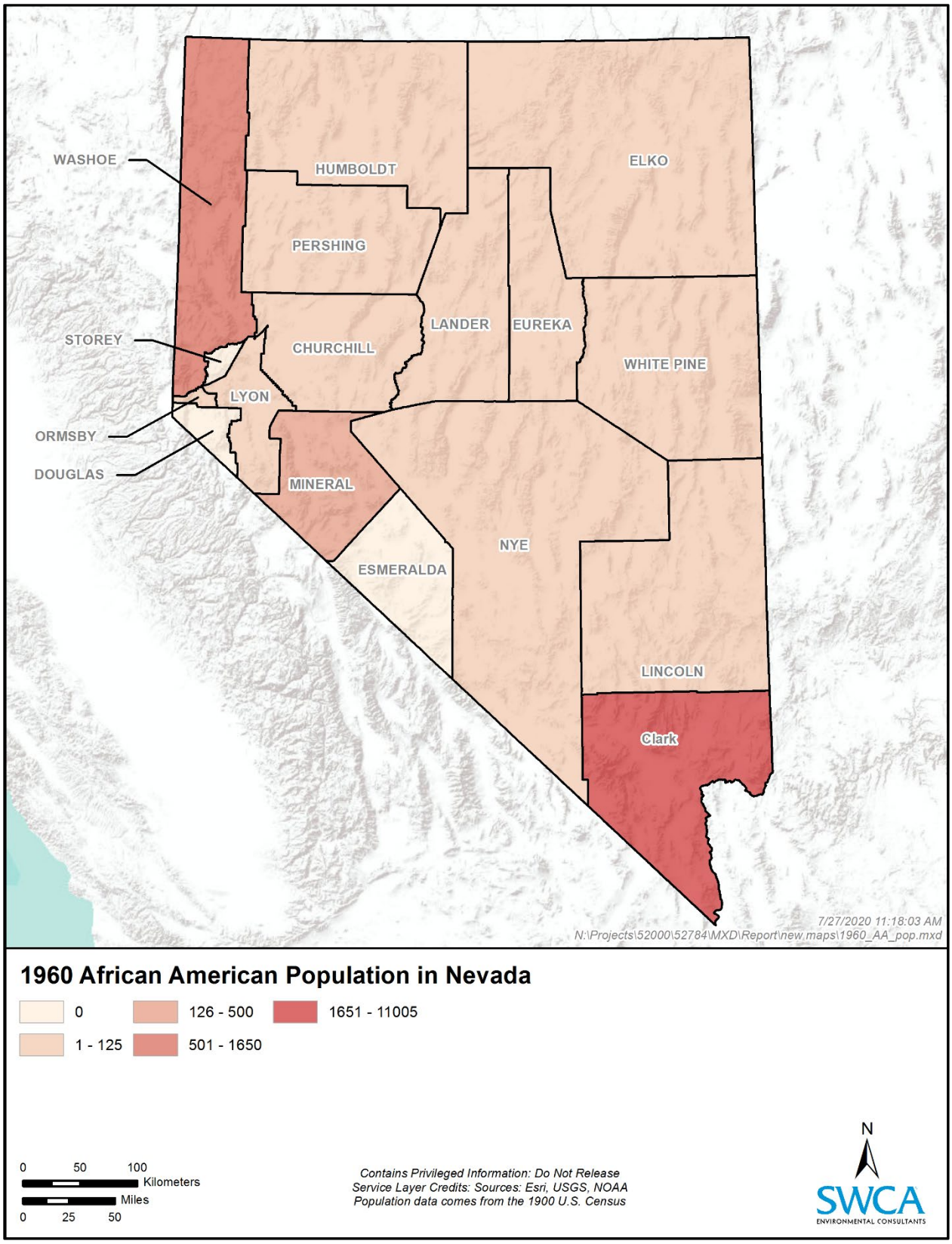

Figure 29. African American Population by County in Nevada, 1960.

4.3.4.2.2 March on the Las Vegas Strip (1960)

During the Early Civil Rights Period, African Americans in Nevada significantly changed the methods they used to pursue equality; White characterized them as bold and aggressive (White 2004:81). In earlier eras, advocacy often consisted of circulating petitions or lobbying politicians. But the growth of Nevada's African American population (particularly in Clark County) and the key roles that African Americans held in the state's gambling and tourist industries gave them unprecedented power. Whereas a strike or boycott by African Americans in previous eras might have had relatively little impact on the white population or its businesses, by the mid-1950s, Las Vegas depended on African Americans to make its economy work. As a result, more confrontational strategies, such as the one used by McMillan in 1960 to desegregate casinos on the Las Vegas Strip, became effective tools (Figure 30) (White 2004:81).

Figure 30. Photograph of the meeting at Moulin Rouge Hotel Coffee Shop to end segregation on the Las Vegas Strip, March 1960. From left to right: Woodrow Wilson (NAACP), Lubertha M. Warden Johnson, Bob Bailey (NAACP), Clesse Turner (county commissioner), Butch W. E. Leypoldt (sheriff), Hank Greenspun (Las Vegas Sun), Dr. James B. McMillan (president of the NAACP), Oran Gragson (mayor), Dr. Charles I. West, Ray K. Sheffer (chief of police), Art Olsen (county commissioner), a man who could possibly be David Hoggard, and Donald Clark (NAACP). Marie McMillan Collection 0334 0008. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Dr. McMillan was elected as president of the Las Vegas branch of the NAACP in the late 1950s. As he recalled, his election occurred after he attended only a few meetings; he speculated that his willingness to confront the severity of segregation in Las Vegas got him elected (White 2004:81). Not only were casinos (particularly those on the Strip) segregated, they also did not allow African Americans to work in "front

of the house" positions—those positions that required interacting with customers. Beyond whatever opinions about race the casino owners and operators may have held, this segregation was deeply tied to a desire to profit from white customers.

> Civil rights advocates in Las Vegas operated in a unique setting of a budding tourist mecca. Vast financial investments in lavish hotel casinos that catered to the wealthy visitors from across the country, but especially California, caused businessmen to seriously contemplate every civil rights decision. They weighed the impact on business of blacks as customers against the outcome of a massive march on the Strip. They evaluated the employment of blacks in visible, upwardly mobile jobs where they would encounter tourists, many transplanted southerners, who were apt to lose large sums of money to an African American employee. (White 2004:83)

As McMillan and the NAACP understood, this desire for profit also left hotel casinos vulnerable, since public demonstrations had the potential to disrupt business operations. Events also conspired to make integrating the Strip a key goal. In 1959, the speaker at the Las Vegas NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner, Teresa Hall Pittman, gave a keynote address on the topic "Now Is The Time," which "ignited the collective consciousness of the community" (White 2004:82). Several months later, the national headquarters of the NAACP urged its branches to tackle segregation on the local level.

In response to these events, McMillan wrote a letter to Las Vegas Mayor Oran Gragson on March 11, 1960 "threatening a massive street protest if the gaming industry did not end discriminatory practices by March 26" (White 2004:82). When little action occurred on the part of the local government in response to the letter, McMillan publicized his plans to have 300 demonstrators march on the Strip (Geran 2006:142–143). The NAACP hosted meetings at local churches to organize the community. Despite the community's desire to end segregation, McMillan was unsure whether the march would succeed; he also faced harassment and threatening phone calls that necessitated community members guarding his home (White 2004:82).

Although some fellow leaders questioned McMillan's decision to publicize the threat to march, the publicity the letter garnered led to action from the Strip's resort owners, who verbally promised to desegregate the Strip at 6 p.m. on Saturday, March 26. That morning, Mayor Gragson, Nevada Governor Grant Sawyer, Hank Greenspun (NAACP member and owner of the *Sun Newspaper*), and NAACP members met at the Moulin Rouge casino. They discussed and then signed an agreement to allow African Americans to work in front of the house positions (White 2004:82).

The work of McMillan and the NAACP was not done, however:

> McMillan wanted to make sure the hotels and casinos were aware that discrimination against their black patrons was no longer allowed, that integration was the new "understood law." To make sure it was enforced, he decided to form groups of ten made up of NAACP members and test the hotels. The instructions were to visit the assigned casino to see if any discriminatory treatment was displayed. If so, they were to report back immediately to the office. (Geran 2006:145)

In each case, the NAACP members had identical experiences. They were allowed to patronize the casino hotels with two exceptions: Binion's Horseshoe and Sal Sagey Hotel. "March 26, 1960 caused a paradigm shift as barriers between races showed the first cracks allowing blacks to enter the front doors of the pleasure palaces on the Las Vegas Strip" (White 2004:83). The Strip had, for the most part, been desegregated. Subsequently, the City of Las Vegas also agreed to desegregate public accommodations and businesses (Geran 2006:147).

4.3.4.2.3 Civil Rights Efforts in Reno (1954–1965)

Discrimination was widespread throughout the state, and northwestern Nevada was no exception. African Americans were frequently excluded from employment, faced limited housing options, and were often barred from white-owned businesses. As in Las Vegas, African Americans conducted considerable work in the region between 1954 and 1965.

Squaw Valley Winter Olympics (1960)

Although African Americans in Reno conducted civil rights advocacy work throughout the 1950s and 1960s to address inequality, one of the most visible instances of that advocacy occurred as part of the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley, near Reno. Activists and African American community leaders recognized the opportunity offered by the Olympics, which would receive significant media attention nationally and internationally, to pressure the government and local business leaders to address racial discrimination. "Capitalizing on the event, [civil rights advocates] employed passive resistance techniques, including a letter writing campaign designed to instill fear and shame in the city and state leaders" (Miller 2009:62). The campaign not only brought attention to the issue of racial discrimination, it sparked fears on the part of local government and businesses over potential damage to the nation's international prestige caused by the highly visible discrimination in Reno (Miller 2009:62, 67).

During the lead up to the 1960 Winter Olympics, "Nevadan and Californian religious and political groups employed the shaming strategy in letter form" (Miller 2009:67). Local politicians tried to blame federal and state laws for the discrimination and to argue that nothing they could do would combat them. But the advocates, led by the NAACP, persisted in the letter writing campaign and working to attract media attention to it (Miller 2009:67). In June 1959, the NAACP mailed a resolution to Gov. Grant Sawyer of Nevada highlighting the discrimination and segregation faced by African Americans in Reno as part of the Winter Olympics.

The strategy was successful. Government officials in California and Nevada became worried about bad press (Miller 2009:69–70). In December 1959, a meeting was called between California's attorney general, "representatives of the major hotels and casinos, chairmen of the Gaming Commission and Gaming Control Board, city mayors and chiefs of police to discuss discrimination practices" (Miller 2009:70). A second meeting that included representatives from Reno's NAACP branch resulted in an unspoken agreement that casinos and hotels would not discriminate against African American customers during the Olympics, backed by the threat that the Nevada Gaming Commission could make non-discrimination required to obtain a gaming license if hotels and casinos did not uphold the agreement. In return, activists agreed not to attempt to disrupt the event (Miller 2009:75). The Olympics went off without a hitch and African Americans were provided full access to accommodations and the events. But after the Olympics, Reno quickly returned to its previous patterns of discrimination; while the high visibility of the 1960 Olympics allowed civil rights groups to challenge the existing system of racial discrimination, activists did not truly fix the problem (Miller 2009:76).

Protests and Demonstrations (1960–1961)

By 1960, impatience had grown within civil rights circles with the "old guard" in the Reno-Sparks NAACP who still filled leadership roles. "By 1960, the Reno-Sparks branch [of the NAACP] . . . was a confluence of primarily old-timers and a few young bloods. . . . Frustrated that so little was being accomplished, Eddie Scott decided to run for president and won the 1960 election by two votes" (Miller 2009:87). In response to this growing impatience, the Reno-Sparks NAACP adopted new strategies under Scott's leadership. Scott worked with Charles Kellar, the first African American to pass the bar exam in Nevada. Kellar was described as aggressive, impatient, and demanding but also an effective advocate

(Miller 2009:90).[14] NAACP members engaged in picketing efforts at the local Woolworth's, in solidarity with similar picketing in the American South, and at other businesses and government facilities (Miller 2009:81). These efforts could be divisive. In the case of Woolworth's, the store was integrated and hired African Americans (although not as waitresses at the lunch counter), and as a result, some African Americans felt that the NAACP was unnecessarily targeting a store that (on the local level) already welcomed Blacks (Miller 2009:92).

During the 1950s and 1960s, the Reno NAACP also joined up with religious institutions, such as the Unitarian Universalist Church, in support of civil rights (Miller 2009:85). This facilitated other useful connections, particularly with white supporters of racial equality. During the early 1960s, local citizens formed the Society to Underwrite Racial Equality (SURE). "This interracial coalition held a civil rights rally on August 24, 1960 for political candidates, which was attended by Governor Sawyer, and it compiled racial discrimination data for both the Nevada Commission on Equal Rights of Citizens and the U.S. Civil Rights Commission through its Nevada Advisory Committee. . . . The role of S.U.R.E. was to make the white community aware of the racial injustices, identify the 'social, economic and moral' impact of them, and plea to man's 'decency' for peaceful solutions" (Miller 2009:86).

The NAACP remained the key advocacy organization, however. In 1961, the Reno-Sparks NAACP hosted the Forum on Human Relations by the NAACP Coordinating Council. As part of this forum, the NAACP sponsored a bill banning racial discrimination (Assembly Bill 346) and lobbied for its passage. It was watered down significantly in committee, and in response, the NAACP picketed the Nevada Capitol, the first such protest in state history (Figure 31). Ultimately, the bill was defeated by a vote on the Assembly floor. In response to its defeat, the NAACP began picketing popular casinos, including Harolds Club and the New China Club (Miller 2009:93–95). The NAACP conducted a sit in at the Overland Hotel lunch counter after some members were refused service in 1961 (Miller 2009:96–97). As a result of the agitation, a bill was passed establishing the Nevada Equal Rights Commission, although its budget and actual power were insufficient to effect real change (Miller 2009:99, 100).

[14] Unlike Las Vegas, civil rights leaders in Reno and the surrounding areas were, for the most part, not educated career professionals (Miller 2009:91).

Figure 31. Photograph of Nevada State Senator James M. Slattery confronting civil rights protesters at the Capitol in Carson City, 1961. Photograph by John Nulty. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Reno-Sparks Branch, UNRS-P1988-31, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

4.3.4.2.4 Nevada Civil Rights Bill (1965)

Attempts had been made by African Americans and legislators to enact state civil rights bills in 1939, 1949, 1953, 1957, and 1961 (Goodwin 2012). None of these attempts were successful, and the bills commonly died in committee or were otherwise rejected. In 1964, however, the U.S. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act. Previous national civil rights acts had been passed in 1957 and 1960, but these were of limited scope and did not truly address the deep issues of racial inequality. The Civil Rights Act was of unprecedented scope: "The Act outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, required equal access to public places and employment, and enforced desegregation of schools and the right to vote" (National Park Service 2016). Its passage, as well as the election of a Democratic legislature in Nevada in the same year, represented an unprecedented opportunity for African Americans to see a civil rights bill passed on the state level. In February 1965, Mel Close, Jr., a Democratic assemblyman, introduced Assembly Bill 404, which prohibited "discrimination in public accommodations or in employment based on race, color, religion or national origin" and made violation a misdemeanor (Green 2015). The bill was passed by the Nevada Assembly 34 to 2. The Nevada Senate voted 12 to 4 (with one abstention) in favor, and Gov. Grant Sawyer (a long-time advocate of racial equality) signed it into law on April 5, 1965 (Green 2015). Although

the fight for equality was far from over, African Americans in Nevada had finally achieved a statewide victory that was enforceable (Figure 32).

Figure 32. Governor Grant Sawyer with members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Left to right: Dorothy Cager, William Bailey, Charles Kellar (Las Vegas branch), Clara Fells, Governor Sawyer, Tarea Hall Pittman (regional field secretary), James Anderson (Las Vegas branch), and Samuel Baynes. Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

4.3.4.2.5 Other Civil Rights Efforts (1954–1965)

In 1959, the state's anti-miscegenation statutes were formally repealed due to civil action by Harry Bridges and his Japanese American fiancée, Noriko Sawada (Earl 1994). Although not due to action by African Americans, it removed one of the last racially discriminatory laws on the books, the final holdover from the late nineteenth century. Additionally, in 1961 discrimination in state-based apprenticeship programs and employment by state and local governments and agencies contracted with them was outlawed (Coray 1992:252).

In addition to these successes, the Early Civil Rights Period saw the development of new civil rights organizations within the state.

> Significant civil rights efforts were made . . . by organizations centered in the black community, led by three branches of the NAACP [in Las Vegas, Reno, and Mineral County]. There is no evidence of such activities by organizations representing other racial or ethnic minorities in the 1950s and 1960s. A few short-lived interracial groups were organized to lobby for civil rights

(such as Reno's Society to Underwrite Racial Equality—SURE) but chapters of the Congress of Racial Equality, the Urban League, and similar groups were never organized in Nevada. The National Conference of Christians and Jews organized in Southern Nevada in 1958 but was not present in the northern part of the state until 1962. (Rusco 2019:73)

4.3.4.2.6 Housing (ca. 1950–ca.1965)

As a result of its massive growth during World War II and due to long-term economic discrimination against its residents (including denial of loans to build houses until the late 1950s), the Historic Westside of Las Vegas had a large amount of substandard housing, often not meeting city building codes. In response, federal officials worked with city officials in 1957 to conduct an urban renewal project. The project included plans to clear 42 acres and construct 160 new single-family housing units (Figure 33) (Forletta 2012:81). The project began in 1960 and resulted in the displacement of large numbers of residents; although the planned housing units were built, the Historic Westside's population had grown since the project was first announced, and the new units were not sufficient to meet the increased demand. City officials ignored the suggestion to build additional low-income housing elsewhere in Las Vegas to help meet the need (Forletta 2012:82). Although city officials during the late 1950s and 1960s were more willing to address the issues resulting from long-term housing discrimination and segregation, their attempts failed to address the issues of racism and economic discrimination that were at the base of the problem (Forletta 2012:83).

Figure 33. Aerial image of Historic Westside taken for purposes of urban renewal, 1963. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

4.3.4.2.7 Breaking Professional Barriers (1954–ca. 1979)

Throughout the Activism and Advocacy Era, African Americans broke numerous professional barriers. Although an in-depth discussion of the lives and work of all such individuals is beyond the scope of this context, ground-breaking individuals and their professional accomplishments will be discussed briefly here. Many, such as Dr. Charles West, also held key roles within the civil rights movement. Those roles are discussed elsewhere in this narrative; this section focuses primarily on the professional realm.

The era saw several firsts by African Americans in the medical field. Dr. West moved to Las Vegas in 1954 and was the first African American to take the Nevada State Board of Medicine Examination, the first Black medical doctor in southern Nevada, and the first Black surgeon on the staff of Southern

Nevada Medical Center; he also served as a leader of the Las Vegas NAACP and published the *Las Vegas Voice*, the state's first African American newspaper (White 2004:81). Dr. James McMillan also moved to Las Vegas during the mid-1950s and was the first African American dentist in Nevada; he also served as president of the Las Vegas branch of the NAACP (White 2011a).

The realms of law, politics, and public service also saw African Americans break barriers. In 1961, Charles L. Kellar became the first African American to pass the Nevada Bar Exam but the state denied him admission to the bar due to his race; in 1965 the Nevada Supreme Court ordered his admission. In 1964, Earle W. White, Jr. and Robert L. Reid were admitted to the Nevada State Bar and became the first practicing African American attorneys in Nevada (Anderson 2012:13) In 1974, David Dean became the first African American to practice law in Reno; he would eventually serve as a member of the Reno Municipal Court (Miller 2012:34). African Americans also entered local and state politics (Bracey 1999). In 1966, Willie J. Wynn became the first African American to serve in the Nevada Legislature when he was elected to Gov. Paul Laxalt's cabinet as the state director of the Office of Economic Opportunity. J. David Hoggard, Sr. served on the Economic Opportunity Board; in 1967 he became its executive director. He also served as president of the Las Vegas NAACP prior to Dr. McMillan (White 2011b). In 1962, Jesse J. Hall became Washoe County's first Black teacher, and in 1971, he became the county's first Black principal (Toy 1971:1).

African American women also broke professional barriers during this period. In 1946, Mabel Hoggard became the first Black teacher employed by the Clark County School District; she remained in that role until 1970 (White 2010a). In 1950, Las Vegas businesswoman and entrepreneur Sarann Knight Preddy opened a small gaming establishment in Hawthorne that she operated as the first Black woman in Nevada to hold a gaming license; she also helped to organize the Hawthorne branch of the NAACP and served as its president (Goodwin and White 2011; White 2004:79–80). In 1975, Alice Lucretia Smith, a noted civil rights advocate and resident of Reno, served as chairperson of the Economic Opportunity Board of Washoe County (Nevada Women's History Project 2020). In Las Vegas, Alice Key and Bob Bailey started the first all-Black television show in America in which Key interviewed African American entertainers visiting the city (White 2004:81). African American women, such as Hattie Canty and Sarah Hughes, also held important roles in the Culinary Workers Union Local 226. Hughes was the first Black woman to work as a union representative. Canty initially served as union representative and then rose higher, becoming the first president of the Black Culinary Workers Union Local 226.

Nevada Test Site (ca. 1960–ca. 1979)

One place where African Americans in Nevada broke professional barriers during the 1960s and 1970s was the Nevada Test Site (NTS). The NTS is a nuclear weapons testing site approximately 65 miles north of Las Vegas. It was established in December 1950 as the Nevada Proving Ground; its name changed in 1955. The NTS was a testing facility for the Atomic Energy Commission to conduct nuclear weapons development and testing. Starting in 1951, this included atmospheric testing (prior to the passage of the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1962) and underground testing (which continued until 1992) (Atomic Heritage Foundation 2020; Moore 2010).

Initially, Black employees at NTS were constrained by discrimination, as they were in many other places. As Oscar Foger, a longtime NTS employee noted in an oral history, when he began work at the NTS during the mid-1960s, African Americans were largely limited to doing kitchen, custodial, and construction work and as teamsters. But during the mid-1960s, African Americans at the NTS began to take on new, and increasingly skilled, technical roles, including working as miners digging the tunnels required for atomic testing. And despite the discrimination Black employees faced early on, Foger still described working there as "the best job I think a person could ask for," in part because of the economic opportunities it offered (Foger 2005:2).

4.3.4.2.8 Religion (ca. 1954–ca. 1979)

African Americans in Nevada often fought racial tensions through religious fellowship. Individuals and communities relied on it for spiritual renewal as well as a moral compass (Charles 1981:3; Oliver 2006). Religious leadership helped communities find expression and purpose in being African American beyond religious salvation; in some cases, religious leaders also championed civil rights efforts (Miller 2009:71–72; Oliver 2006:50; *Reno Evening Gazette* 1958:6). African Americans were members of a variety of religious orders throughout the state, including Catholic denominations, various Protestant sects, and Islam.

Catholicism, long a fixture of Nevada's religious landscape, grew in its numbers of adherents during and after World War II. This was particularly true of the African American populations in the state. As African Americans moved to Nevada during the war (often from heavily Catholic Louisiana), particularly Las Vegas, both the number and proportion of Catholics in those populations grew. As a result, a new Catholic church, St. James the Apostle, was built in the Historic Westside (Rafferty 2008).

Methodist and Pentecostal congregations were key Protestant denominations to which Nevada's African American populations belonged during this time period. Methodist congregations in particular broke numerous racial barriers. The first African American Methodist bishop, Rev. Charles Golden, was appointed to lead northern Nevada's Methodists in 1968 and remained in that role until 1972. In Las Vegas, Rev. Marion Bennet (who served his congregation from 1960 to 2004) was also elected to the Nevada State Assembly; his church on Revere Street also provided the first daycare center at a Black church in the Historic Westside (Emerson 2012). NAACP meetings were frequently held at Bethel AME in Reno (*Reno Evening Gazette* 1971:3).

Pentecostal churches in northern Nevada during the 1950s and 1960s consisted of a variety of independent groups, including the "historically African-American" Church of God in Christ (Steward 2012).

> African American Pentecostal congregations in the north were generally smaller than in more populous southern Nevada. All of the northern pastors worked at day jobs during the week in addition to fulfilling pastoral responsibilities. While most adherents were African American, one could find a sprinkling of different ethnicities in the congregations. Occupationally, most were economically from the working middle-class. (Steward 2012)

Southern Nevada also had a number of African American Pentecostal congregations. In Las Vegas, Rev. Clyde Cox and his wife, Thelma, took over Zion Rest Mission in 1941. Cox changed the name to The Upper Room and affiliated it with the Church of God in Christ. By the mid-1960s, it had expanded from just six members to over 1,000. Cox organized many other congregations and worked for the civil rights movement in southern Nevada. "He served as a member of the Las Vegas City Planning Commission, the Juvenile Justice Commission, and the Clark County School District Committee of One Hundred on Integration" (Steward 2012). Cox is an example of the way in which religious leaders also filled leadership roles in the civil rights movement.

Islam first became formally established in Nevada during the 1950s. Two main Muslim communities existed in Nevada during the 1960s and 1970s: in Reno and Las Vegas. The Muslim community in Reno began to meet formally in 1967 and continued to expand in size through the 1970s to the present (Marschall 2010). In Las Vegas, the first Muslims "were African-Americans in the 1950s who affiliated with one or another group emerging from the Nation of Islam. They established the first Nation of Islam Temple in the early 1960s at D Street and Jackson Avenue. A split between the followers of Louis Farrakhan and W.D. Muhammad led the latter group to build the mosque, Masji As Sabur, in the late 1980s" (Marschall 2010). The Nation of Islam was both a political and religious movement, with goals related to improving both the spiritual and social lives of African Americans. It remains a contentious

organization socially due to what has been described as a "theology of innate black superiority over whites and the deeply racist, antisemitic and anti-LGBT rhetoric of its leaders" and religiously due to the ways in which its theology differs from traditional Islamic religious beliefs. The Southern Poverty Law Center classifies it as a hate group (Southern Poverty Law Center 2020).

4.3.4.2.9 Social and Fraternal Organizations (ca. 1954–ca. 1979)

African Americans also actively participated in various organizations outside religious assemblies to maintain solidarity with one another and to integrate into a larger American society (Charles 1981:3). In Reno, African Americans participated in affiliations of the NAACP, local committees, youth camps, and the Girl or Boy Scouts of America, among others (*Reno Evening Gazette* 1966:45; 1967:10). In Las Vegas, African Americans organized clubs such as the Jolly Club and La Femme Douze as well as Masonic orders and the Fordyce Club (Figure 34) (White 2013:171). The Delta Sigma Theta Sorority was first founded in 1966 in Las Vegas; the first chartered chapter was the Las Vegas Alumnae Chapter, followed in 1970 by the Eta Chi Chapter at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and then in 2004, by the Tau Mu Chapter at UNR (Figure 35) (Mathis 2019).

Figure 34. Les Femmes Douze career conference at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1971. Clinton Wright Negatives Collection 0379. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 35. Women gathered at the Delta Sigma Theta Sepia Fashion Show, circa 1972. Roosevelt and Gertrude Toston Collection ohr000717. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

4.3.4.3 LATE CIVIL RIGHTS PERIOD (1966–1979)

During the Early Civil Rights Period, issues of equal access to private businesses and public accommodations were at the forefront of the civil rights movement nationally and in Nevada. But with the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Nevada Civil Rights Act in 1965, a legal remedy for segregation and discrimination finally existed. Instead, as Jack D. Forbes wrote in 1966 in *Afro-Americans in the Far West*, "The problem of how to obtain a fair share of America's wealth or at least enough to provide a minimal standard of living is . . . one of the issues becoming more and more important in recent years. Jobs and other economic opportunities are among the key issues today, rather than the desegregation of parks, et cetera" (Forbes 1966:38–39).

But just because equality was legally mandated did not mean that civil rights stopped being an issue in Nevada. During the Late Civil Rights Period, new concerns emerged, including equal access to education, issues related to the intersection of class and race, the 1971 consent decree, and other political issues. Because of the changing targets of the civil rights movement during this period, the strategies used by activists changed in response. "The long civil rights struggle did not stage organized sit-ins or stage marches in the streets but the leadership style of the 1970s became bifurcated as lawyers waged legal battles for jobs, school integration and housing. Simultaneously, Ruby Duncan and her leadership cohort waged a different fight in the dynamic, well-orchestrated movement for welfare rights" (White 2004:83).

4.3.4.3.1 Demographic Change (1960–1980)

By 1970, the African American population in Nevada had approximately doubled from 1960, putting African American population growth slightly above the average population growth of the state, which increased by 171 percent from 1960 to 1970 (Table 18). African Americans now made up 5.68 percent of

the state's total population. As noted in the previous sections, after World War II, the African American population in Nevada was concentrated in Clark, Mineral, and Washoe Counties. This remained the case in 1970 (Table 18, Figure 36). Although the percentage of the general population that was African American dropped slightly in Washoe County (from 1.92 percent in 1960 to 1.64 percent in 1970), it remained steady in Mineral County (6.62 percent in 1960 to 6.71 percent in 1970) and increased slightly in Clark County (8.66 percent in 1960 to 9.06 percent in 1970).

Table 18. African American Population Growth by County in Nevada, from 1960 to 1970

County	African American Population	Total Population	Percent of Population African American, 1960	Percent of Population African American, 1970
Churchill	135	10,513	0.76	1.28
Clark	24,760	273,288	8.66	9.06
Douglas	1	6,882	0.00	0.01
Elko	100	13,958	1.01	0.72
Esmeralda	1	629	0.00	0.16
Eureka	0	948	0.39	0.00
Humboldt	62	6,375	1.44	0.97
Lander	1	2,666	0.06	0.04
Lincoln	7	2,537	0.04	0.28
Lyon	6	8,221	0.08	0.07
Mineral	473	7,051	6.62	6.71
Nye	41	5,599	1.17	0.73
Carson City*	166	15,468	0.88	1.07
Pershing	4	2,670	0.38	0.15
Storey	8	695	0.00	1.15
Washoe	1,987	121,068	1.92	1.64
White Pine	10	10,150	0.21	0.10
Total	**27,762**	**488,738**	**4.73**	**5.68**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1970:3–5

* Prior to 1969, Carson City (now an independent city) was designated as Ormsby County.

The African American population of the state grew by 184 percent from 1970 to 1980 (Table 19). The growth rate still exceeded the average population growth for the state, which grew 164 percent from 1970 to 1980. As in previous decades Clark and Washoe Counties had the largest African American populations in the state (Table 19, Figure 37). In 1980 Clark County's African American population made up 9.98 percent of the total; Washoe County's African American population made up 1.96 percent of the total. Although Mineral County's African American population remained relatively steady (making up 6.71 percent of the total population in 1970 and 6.18 percent in 1980), Carson City's African American population surpassed Mineral County's in size between 1970 and 1980, when Carson City's African American population was 463 (1.45 percent of the total population) compared to Mineral County's population of 384. In general, the demographic records from the Late Civil Rights period reflect the ongoing concentration of African American populations in Nevada in a limited number of metropolitan areas.

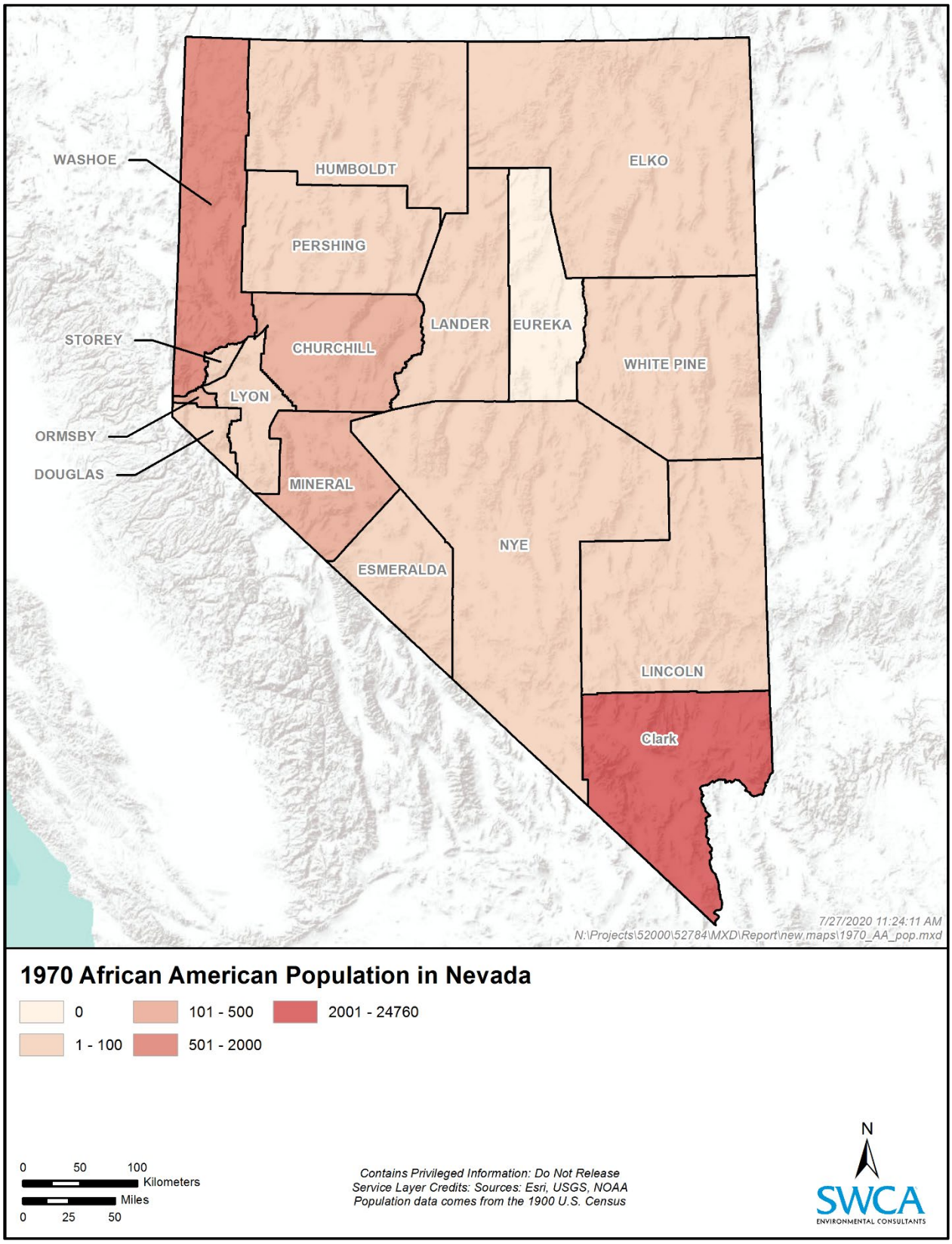

Figure 36. African American Population by County in Nevada, 1970.

Table 19. African American Population Growth by County in Nevada, from 1970 to 1980

County	African American Population	Total Population	Percent of Population African American, 1970	Percent of Population African American, 1980
Carson City	463	32,022	1.07	1.45
Churchill	69	13,917	1.28	0.50
Clark	46,238	463,087	9.06	9.98
Douglas	6	19,421	0.01	0.03
Elko	84	17,269	0.72	0.49
Esmeralda	1	777	0.16	0.13
Eureka	0	1,198	0.00	0.00
Humboldt	35	9,434	0.97	0.37
Lander	9	4,076	0.04	0.22
Lincoln	19	3,732	0.28	0.51
Lyon	24	13,594	0.07	0.18
Mineral	384	6,217	6.71	6.18
Nye	30	9,048	0.73	0.33
Pershing	10	3,408	0.15	0.29
Storey	5	1,503	1.15	0.33
Washoe	3,799	193,623	1.64	1.96
White Pine	27	8,167	0.10	3.31
Total	**51,203**	**800,493**	**5.68**	**6.40**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1981b:14–15

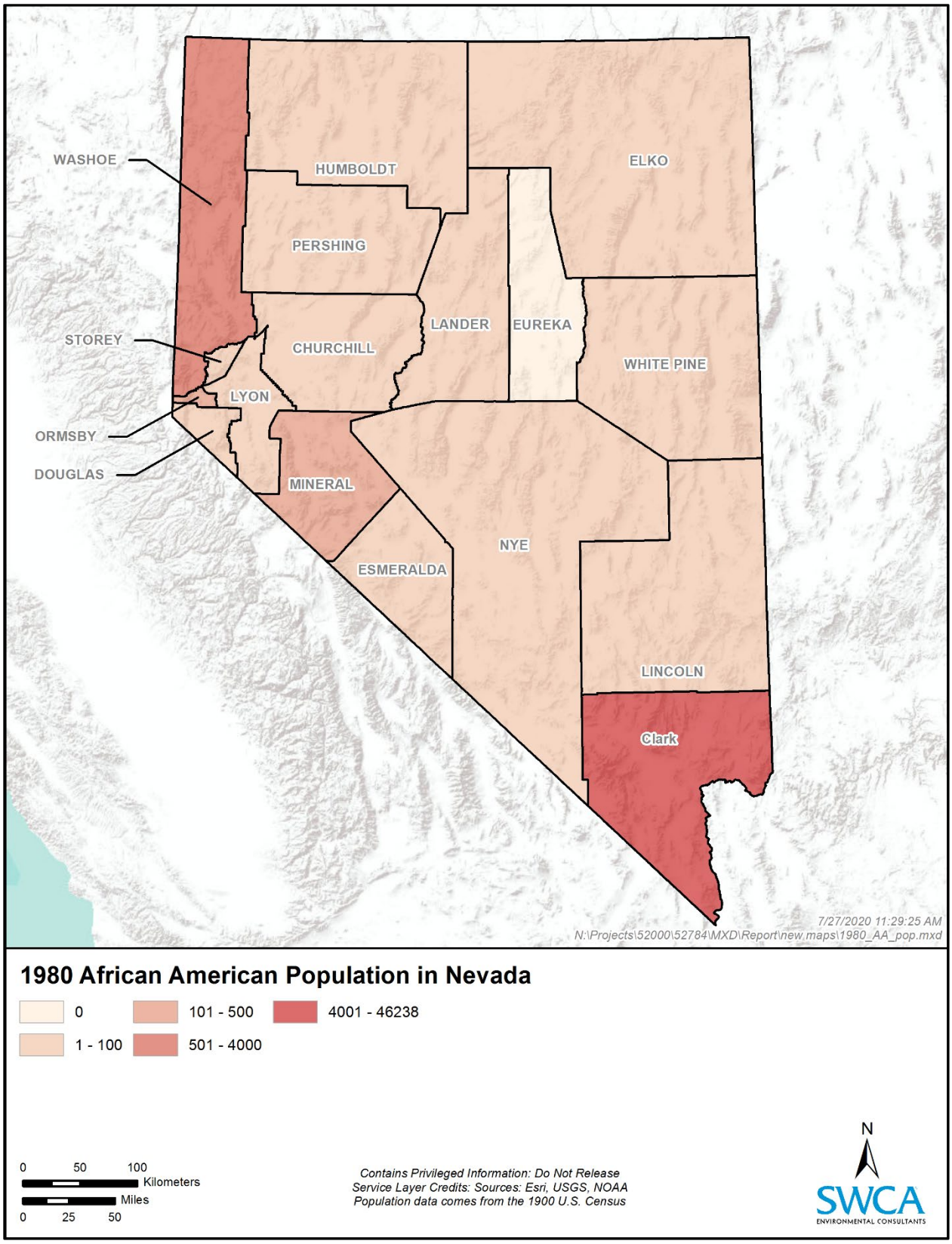

Figure 37. African American Population by County in Nevada, 1980.

4.3.4.3.2 Education (ca. 1960–1979)

One source of ongoing inequality in Nevada during the Late Civil Rights Period was educational access. Segregation in Nevada's schools was outlawed at the state level in the 1870s and Brown I overturned the legal basis for segregated schools on the national level in 1954. But in the subsequent decades, African Americans throughout the United States continued to experience discrimination and segregation. In many southern states, white officials at the local and state level employed a wide range of tactics to prevent or delay integration, ranging from closing schools to calling out the National Guard to try to prevent Black students from attending class. School integration also resulted in "white flight" in which economically privileged white families moved from more integrated cities to suburbs with a much higher proportion of white residents and therefore whiter schools, or enrolled their children in private schools with a high proportion of white students. During the 1960s and 1970s, courts also heard cases relating to de facto segregation in many cities outside the South. In many of those cases, segregated school environments were created in ostensibly integrated schools through the use of mechanisms such as the intentional drawing of school district boundaries, which was found to be unconstitutional.

As with many historically integrated schools outside of the South, schools in Nevada were, in fact, frequently segregated. This was particularly true in Las Vegas, which had the largest African American population in the state (Coray 1992:252). The issue was exacerbated by historic property ownership limitations that forced most African Americans to live in the Historic Westside, resulting in heavily segregated schools. "By 1968, the vast majority of students in Historic Westside schools, including Westside Elementary, were African-American—nearly 98%. Paiute living on the Paiute Colony Reservation, and others were also attending schools on the Historic Westside. The informal actions that created segregated living and working conditions in Las Vegas had also created a segregated school district" (Chute 2014:157). In response to school segregation, Herbert Kelly filed a lawsuit in 1968 against the Clark County School District (CCSD) arguing that the district had required a majority of Black students to attend segregated schools and that in doing so, CCSD had violated their constitutional rights (Chute 2014:158). Although CCSD argued that the preponderance of African American students in the schools of the Historic Westside was due to geographic concentration, the district was required to remedy the segregation (Chute 2014:158).

In 1968, CCSD proposed a voluntary school choice scheme, but this was rejected as an attempt to misdirect responsibility for integration onto individuals rather than the district. In 1972, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals adopted busing as the primary mechanism to integrate the district.[15] Under this policy, CCSD created the Sixth Grade Center Plan (SGCP). The SGCP designated schools in the Historic Westside for use by all sixth-grade students in the district, while students in all other grades would be bused from the Historic Westside to other schools (Chute 2014:159).

The SGCP, which began in 1972, was unpopular with parents for a wide range of reasons. It required African American students who otherwise would attend schools in the Historic Westside to be bused elsewhere for the majority of their schooling, while students outside of the Historic Westside spent the majority of their educations at schools closer to their residences (Forletta 2012:126). This placed the onus of integration on the students it was intended to benefit (Chute 2014:159). Bernice Molten, the only person of color on the CCSD School Board, expressed concerns in 1973 that busing destroyed the sense of community formed by neighborhood schools (Forletta 2012:138). White parents also objected to the policy, and in many cases attempted to subvert integration through protest, lodging complaints with the school board and petitioning for a stay on the implementation of busing (Chute 2014:160). Students at area high schools also perpetrated racially based violence in response to attempts at integration, including brawls, fistfights, and even large-scale outbursts of violence between 1969 and 1970 (Chute 2014:161).

[15] Busing is a practice in which students from various parts of a given school district are bused to schools they would otherwise not attend in order to create an integrated school environment.

White attempts to challenge integration were unsuccessful, and in 1977, the judge overseeing integration determined that CCSD had complied with the mandate for integration and terminated judicial oversight of the process (Forletta 2012:140).

Access to higher education in Nevada also remained deeply divided along racial lines in the 1960s and 1970s. This was certainly the case for UNR. During much of the Post-World War II and Early Civil Rights Periods, Black enrollment remained extremely low (just 33 African American students attended in 1960). Although that number increased due to intentional recruiting, it remained low during the 1960s. In 1968, African American students at UNR founded the Black Student Union (BSU). The BSU actively campaigned for the increased representation of minority students in leadership roles in student affairs and for more representation of minority students on campus; it also unsuccessfully lobbied for office space for the organization (Barber 2018; Cotton 1971:25–32).

When its requests were not met, particularly for office space, the club organized a peaceful sit-in at the offices of the Associated Students of the University of Nevada in 1971. In response to the protest, the university extended an offer for the use of either off-campus space or an unfinished basement. The BSU rejected the offer, since having an office on campus was important in showing African American students that they were a part of the university. When the offer was rejected, university administrators called the police, who arrested 16 protestors (who were released later that night). Despite the arrests, the BSU persisted and conducted additional protests, including picketing the university president's office and connecting with other advocacy organizations such as the NAACP. Ultimately, the actions of the BSU resulted in the group having an on-campus office (Barber 2018; Davis 1972:81–91).

4.3.4.3.3 Economics and Race (ca. 1966–ca. 1979)

African Americans in Nevada had long experienced economic inequality as a result of their race. But during the Late Civil Rights Period the intersection of racial and economic discrimination increasingly came to the forefront. While African Americans now had an assurance of equality in the eyes of the law, they enjoyed no such guarantee from employers. Nor did the state guarantee the welfare programs that some relied on as a result of that economic inequality.

Operation Life and the Fight for Welfare Rights (1971–ca. 1979)

The issue of welfare rights is perhaps best represented by Ruby Duncan, a notable welfare rights activist in Nevada. Duncan worked as a hotel maid in Las Vegas during the 1950s until she was physically disabled by an on-the-job injury, and she was forced to apply for welfare to support herself and her children. "Meanwhile, she began to acquire a political education of sorts after her slow medical recovery. For example, she spoke up about welfare rights when no one else would in the black community; and she attended political meetings to voice her opinion about the inequality of Nevada's meager welfare offerings to the poor" (Bracey 2001:136). Her experiences while on welfare led her to become an advocate for welfare rights.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, an anti-welfare movement grew in the United States, spurred in part by the Richard Nixon administration's policies regarding the cutting of welfare benefits (McKee 2012:24–25). In response to the movement, Nevada cut the welfare benefits of many single mothers during that period. In response, Duncan began to work with other welfare recipients, many of whom were women of all racial backgrounds, to advocate for welfare benefits. Although Duncan was a resident of Las Vegas, her protests took her all over the state, including to the capitol in Carson City, to march with other advocates for their rights. In 1971, she organized a protest march on the Las Vegas Strip in response to the benefit cuts. Thousands of protestors attended the event along with numerous celebrities, including Donald Sutherland and Jane Fonda, and well-known civil rights figures such as Reverend Ralph Abernathy. They then occupied Caesars Palace, disrupting tourism and gambling there. Duncan organized

a second demonstration on the Las Vegas Strip the following year. As part of her advocacy work, she became president of the Clark County Welfare Rights Organization and served as a member of the executive board with the National Welfare Rights Organization; she would also serve as President Jimmy Carter's appointee to the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity in the late 1970s. In 1974, she unsuccessfully ran for election to the Nevada State Assembly. Ultimately, the advocacy of Duncan and other welfare advocates resulted in success in 1975, when the state reinstated the previously slashed welfare benefits (Bracey 2001:137–139, 143).

Figure 38. The Cove Hotel, which later served as the headquarters for Operation Life, ca. 1970. Ruby Duncan Collection 0323-0001. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

As part of her work, in 1972, Duncan founded Operation Life in Las Vegas (Figure 38). Due to various issues with property owners, Operation Life moved several times during the early 1970s but eventually settled in what had previously been the Cove Hotel in the Historic Westside. Operation Life was a community self-help organization for impoverished individuals. It consisted of a variety of programs, including a "reliable day-care center for poor working mothers, recreational facilities. . . a youth program, and a black-run, locally written, community newsletter" as well as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children and the area's first library (Bracey 2001:140; personal communication, Claytee White, Director of UNLV Oral History Research Center, 2020). It would also eventually provide health care for those who could not afford it (Bracey 2001:142). Duncan became an expert grant writer, fund raiser, and lobbyist, which provided Operation Life with the funds needed to sustain it in its service to the community (Bracey 2001:140).

Employment Discrimination (ca. 1966–ca. 1979)

In addition to the debate over welfare rights, economic discrimination remained a serious issue for African Americans throughout Nevada during this period (Figure 39). The state had an equal rights commission starting in the early 1960s that theoretically had the power to oversee issues such as fair hiring practices. But in practice, the Commission and the state did little to actively enforce equality or hold biased employers accountable (Chute 2014:156).

As a result of ongoing inaction, and supported by the passage of the federal and state civil rights acts in 1964 and 1965, respectively, the NAACP took direct action.

> The NAACP filed a complaint in November 1967 with the National Labor Relations Board for the local culinary and teamsters unions as well as eighteen Las Vegas hotels. The unions were charged with failing to promote black workers to non-menial jobs, while the hotels were charged with unfair labor practices. The NAACP charges also came as a response to continued reports that black employees were being paid less, were not receiving compensation for overtime, and were not receiving adequate training. (Chute 2014:156–157)

African Americans were hired much less frequently than their white counterparts for better paying jobs (such as dealers in casinos), with little progress occurring since the early 1960s in securing a higher proportion of those jobs. Filing the lawsuit allowed the NAACP to bypass the often onerous negotiations with casinos and other businesses that had previously characterized civil rights efforts (Moehring 2004:288).

Figure 39. Film negatives showing Human Relation Commission (1964) and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People committee members (1965). Clinton Wright Negatives Collection 0379. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

In response to the lawsuit, casinos pledged to increase the hiring of African Americans and to implement "a wide range of remedial measures such as diversity training for white managers, targeted job recruitment in west Las Vegas, and a $75,000 grant to the Clark County NAACP" (Moehring 2004:288–289). Despite the promises, they failed to follow through. As a result, the U.S. Department of Justice intervened in 1971. During negotiations, the managers of casinos demanded exceptions to integration for dealer positions as well as to a mandate to hire other minority groups. In response, the Justice Department filed a complaint regarding civil rights violations in casinos, hotels, and unions. In order to remediate the issue, and to avoid the negative publicity that went with it, the casinos, hotels, and unions agreed to a consent decree (Chute 2014:157; Moehring 2004:289).[16]

Consent Decree (1971–ca. 1979)

The consent decree with Nevada's casinos, hotels, and unions was filed in U.S. District Court in June 1971. It named 19 defendants. The decree noted, "In general, while African-American workers achieved widespread employment in the casino work force . . . they suffered from intra-firm discrimination" and 90 percent of African American workers were limited to the "lowest-paying, less desirable duties and occupations" (Moehring 2004:291). This, it alleged, was the result of the following three factors:

1. The use of personal networks in hiring for positions, which de facto excluded many African Americans from consideration

2. The use of race rather than objective qualifications in job placement

3. Lack of equal training or opportunities for professional advancement and promotion (Moehring 2004:291–292).

To remedy these systemic issues, the decree demanded an end to hiring based on personal networks, the establishment of personnel offices to handle hiring, and that job openings be advertised in ways that made it likely for African Americans to hear of them. Open supervisory positions would be advertised in areas employees were likely to see them and would no longer be advertised through word-of-mouth. The Decree also demanded the creation of training programs for African American hires and the creation of a quota system of job placement. It also required the defendants to submit quarterly reports on the racial composition for all jobs and information on African American applicants (Moehring 2004:292). Monitoring continued without issue for 2 years by the Justice Department before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) took over in 1974.

Based on its investigation when it began monitoring, the EEOC felt that the defendants were not complying. The commission discovered that casinos would only temporarily hire African Americans to meet quotas, after which they were quickly fired; that no progress had occurred in promoting African Americans to managerial positions; and that personnel offices conducted little of the actual hiring. The EEOC attempted to gather more information, but the casinos filed for a protective order against providing that information. Considerable legal wrangling occurred between the EEOC and the casinos; in 1975, the casinos emerged the victors and the EEOC could not compel them to answer questions. As a result, the EEOC could address individual complaints but could not conduct widescale compliance monitoring. Over the following years the casinos slowly met their quotas and were released from the decree (Moehring 2004:293–295). However, a subsequent investigation undertaken by the Minorities Research and Development Corporation in 1984 revealed that widespread discrimination remained rampant, ranging from the previously alleged temporary hiring to meet quotas as well as the disproportionate employment of African Americans in menial or low-paying positions (Moehring 2004:296).

[16] A consent decree is an agreement resolving a dispute that does not require an admission of guilt or liability on either party's part. Consent decrees save time and money that would otherwise be spent on lawsuits.

4.3.4.3.4 Politics (ca. 1966–1979)

In prior decades, African Americans had frequently been excluded from politics and the legal profession in Nevada. This was in part due to patterns of racism but also because of the proportionately small size of the African American population in the state as well as patterns of racism. "Blacks found it extremely difficult to gain elective office because of the relatively small black population in Nevada prior to 1960. Blacks were outside the state's inner circle of political power for the first half of the twentieth century. According to Professor Elmer R. Rusco, private discrimination, to a degree, also thwarted black Nevadans' political empowerment" (Bracey 1999:140). But as a result of demographic shifts during and after World War II, African Americans in the state (particularly in southern Nevada) made up an increasing percentage of the population and could assert an increasing political influence (Figure 40).

As a result of this rising level of political heft, starting in the late 1950s, African Americans in Nevada began to pursue political office. The first was Dr. Charles West, who in 1959 ran for Las Vegas city commissioner. He garnered a substantial number of votes from both the African American community and the general public but lost the run-off election (Bracey 1999:143). In 1966, Woodrow Wilson, another southern Nevada resident, ran for the state legislature and won. "Wilson waged a brilliant political campaign, with the help of important, reform-minded white supporters and benefactors, overcoming daunting odds" (Bracey 1999:143). He was the first African American to hold such a post in Nevada history.

Figure 40. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People voter registration in Las Vegas, 1971. Clinton Wright Negatives Collection 0379. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

In 1971, the Nevada Legislature was redistricted based on population, which gave an increased level of power to population centers, particularly in the southern part of the state. The redistricting also helped to

create minority-majority districts, which further assisted African Americans in gaining political representation by not diluting their votes (Bracey 1999:143). In 1973, Joseph M. Neal, Jr. was elected as a senator to the Nevada Legislature and served 27 years in that role. That same year, Rev. Marion D. Bennett, Sr. was elected to the Assembly and would serve there 10 years (Ragan 2013). By 1979, African Americans held 5 percent of the state's legislative seats (Bracey 1999:145). The 1970s also saw increasing numbers of African Americans in the legal profession. In 1969, Earle W. White, Jr. opened a private legal practice in Nevada, making him the first known African American lawyer in private practice in the state (Anderson 2012:13). David Dean, the first African American lawyer in Reno, began his career in 1974 (Miller 2012:34).

4.3.4.4 NORTHWEST NEVADA (1946–1979)

In the northwest region of Nevada, African Americans undertook a range of civil rights advocacy work from 1946 to 1979.

4.3.4.4.1 Reno

Throughout much of the Activism and Advocacy Era, Reno remained deeply segregated. The 1954 *Ebony* article "Negroes Can't Win In Las Vegas" also extended its critique to include Reno: "Reno, Nevada's second major gambling center, is the only other town in the state with a critical Jim Crow policy like that of Las Vegas" (Goodrich 1954:47). During the 1950s, African Americans in Reno could only patronize one casino, the New China Club, although other smaller clubs offered gambling as well (Miller 2009:2). Until the 1960s, many restaurants banned African Americans (Miller 2009:3). As with Las Vegas, African American entertainers experienced discrimination when performing, ranging from being denied access to casinos to being forced to use separate doors from whites to access buildings (Miller 2009:23). Interestingly, casino workers from the 1950s and 1960s recalled that segregation was not a written rule but instead functioned as an unwritten standard with which businesses almost universally complied (Miller 2009:24).

During the 1950s, low-income housing became an issue in Reno. Population growth had resulted in high rental costs; lower cost units frequently lacked basic amenities such as running water and toilets. African Americans, who were often forced to accept low-paying jobs and to live in de jure or de facto segregated areas, were disproportionately at a disadvantage when finding affordable housing. The frustration felt by the community about lack of affordable housing options is perhaps best summed up by a question and answer pamphlet published by the Reno Housing Authority (RHA) that included common misconceptions about low-income housing and the RHA's responses. At one point in the pamphlet, the author rhetorically states, "Better housing can be and is being furnished for less money by private enterprise." The author then answers, "WHERE AND FOR HOW MUCH??????" [caps and question marks in original] (RHA n.d. [ca. 1958]). By the time of the publication of *A Report of the Nevada Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights* in the early 1960s, no adequate answer had been provided.

The report provided a bleak picture of the physical environment in Reno. Patterns of urban renewal, which disproportionately affected minority communities throughout the United States, had similarly affected African American communities in the city.

> Many Negroes live in the worst kind of housing. Many have been replaced by urban renewal without any adequate planning as to their re-habitation in adequate homes. . . . Adequate rentals for Negroes are non-existent. Negro servicemen coming to Stead Air Force Base eight miles from Reno cannot find adequate housing. No trailer park in Washoe County will take Negroes. (Nevada Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights [NAC] 1962:8)

Housing for African Americans in Reno was substandard—when it was even available. As the report concluded succinctly, "The picture is bleak. The picture is tragic" (NAC 1962:8). Access to affordable housing would remain an issue for many African Americans in Reno.

Neighborhoods

African Americans living in Reno faced challenges in finding a place to live beyond the issues of substandard housing. Restrictive covenants prohibited African Americans and other people of color from buying property in many areas of the city. As a result, the most densely populated area where African Americans lived was in the northeastern part of Reno, generally on the outskirts of town and in areas near the railroad (Miller 2009:49; Woodard 1991:20). This area included land between Lake and Sutro Streets (to the east and west, respectively) and East 4th Street and East 11th Street (to the south and north, respectively) (personal communication, Alicia Barber, historian, April 2020). In this neighborhood, residents (particularly those newly arrived) lived with relatives or in boardinghouses until they could purchase homes (Miller 2009:50). Northeast Reno included numerous boardinghouses catering to out-of-state visitors seeking divorces. African American divorcees were not allowed to stay in the white areas of the city, so these boardinghouses provided an important refuge for visitors (*Ebony* 1950:18). In 1950, 130 African Americans owned homes in Reno (*Ebony* 1950:20). As of 1981, the majority of Black homeowners lived on Montello Street (on either side of Oddie Boulevard) and Sutro, Helena, 9th, and 10th Streets (*Reno Evening Gazette* 1981).

But while northeast Reno had the reputation as a "Black" neighborhood, this was not entirely accurate for two reasons. For one, the neighborhood was actually quite racially diverse. As a 1981 article in the *Reno Evening Gazette* emphatically reported, "Northeast Reno is *not* an all-black community. Northeast Reno is not even a predominantly black community. And Northeast Reno certainly is not a ghetto" *(Reno Evening Gazette* 1981; italics in original). Although it did represent the area in which most Black homeowners lived, the neighborhood included residents from a wide range of races and ethnicities: "Interspersed throughout are whites, senior citizens, Hispanics, American Indians and any number of the new Reno immigrants—Vietnamese, Cambodian, Indonesian, Pakistani and so on" (*Reno Evening Gazette* 1981).

The second reason was that African Americans in Reno were not historically limited to living exclusively in northeast Reno. While restrictive covenants limited the ability of Blacks in Reno to purchase property elsewhere, the covenants did not preclude them from doing so. As an article published in *Ebony* in 1950 notes, "Negroes live all over Reno and can shop in any store, including fancy fashion shops which carry latest New York and Hollywood exclusives, but find it rough when they want to dine out. Only the Club Harlem, Woolworth's and a small Chinese restaurant will serve negroes" (*Ebony* 1950:18). During the 1960s and 1970s, many African Americans lived throughout Reno and Washoe County (Mathews 1969:122–123; *Reno Evening Gazette* 1981).

African American residents of northeast Reno also faced the construction of interstates through low-income, minority neighborhoods during this period, such as when Interstate 80 was built through the city beginning in 1958 (Nevada Historical Markers 2020). As a 1962 *Reno Evening Gazette* article reported, Black residents of northeast Reno pushed back against the plans:

> A verbal exchange over the Reno Urban Renewal project filled the second half of the afternoon open meeting. Rev. C. A. Crosby outlined the problem of Negroes displaced by the project. He said they had been forced to sell their land at prices far less than what it would cost today, that they had not been helped to find new housing, and that many had been forced into sub-standard housing. Rev. Mr. Mathews said it pointed up the problem of segregated housing. 'When something like urban renewal happens, it is the problem of where the Negroes are going to live

> temporarily,' he said. The committee has heard complaints on law enforcement and administration in its morning session. (*Reno Evening Gazette* 1962)

Despite the pushback by African American residents, urban renewal and the construction of Interstate 80 (completed in 1974) did occur. The construction resulted in the demolition of residences north of East 4th Street from Wells Avenue to the east during the 1960s, and the freeway eventually divided in two the northeast neighborhood where many African Americans lived (Belaustegui 2017:111).

Clubs, Casinos, and Other Entertainment Venues

Just as African Americans faced barriers accessing entertainment venues in Las Vegas during the Activism and Advocacy Era, those in Reno faced similar difficulties. In response to the segregation of venues, during the Post–World War II Period, several clubs opened up in Reno—particularly in the Lake Street and Commercial Row area—that catered to people of color, including both Black and Asian clientele. These venues included the Peavine Club (1945−1946); the Harlem Club (1946−1968), which was later sold and renamed the Soul Club (1968−1977); and the New China Club (1952–1971) (Kling 2000).

The clubs served as important recreation spots for African American residents in Reno and for Black entertainers visiting the city: "The Harlem Club was one of the few integrated clubs in Reno at that time. After their regular shows were over, many African American entertainers came to the Harlem [Club] for unscheduled jam sessions. It was common for Pearl Bailey . . . Louis Armstrong, Sammy Davis Jr., and B.B. King to play at the Harlem [Club] until dawn" (Kling 2000:4). Despite their distinguished visitors, the clubs were located in an economically depressed area. "The Harlem Club, which was located in what was known at that time as the skid row of Reno, was a rough place, and there were frequent fights and disturbances" to the extent that it was placed off-limits in 1956 for almost a whole year for personnel at Stead Air Force Base (Kling 2000:61). William Bailey, an active civil rights advocate, was a part owner of many of these clubs, including the Peavine Club and the Harlem Club (Kling 2000:4).

4.3.4.4.2 Black Springs

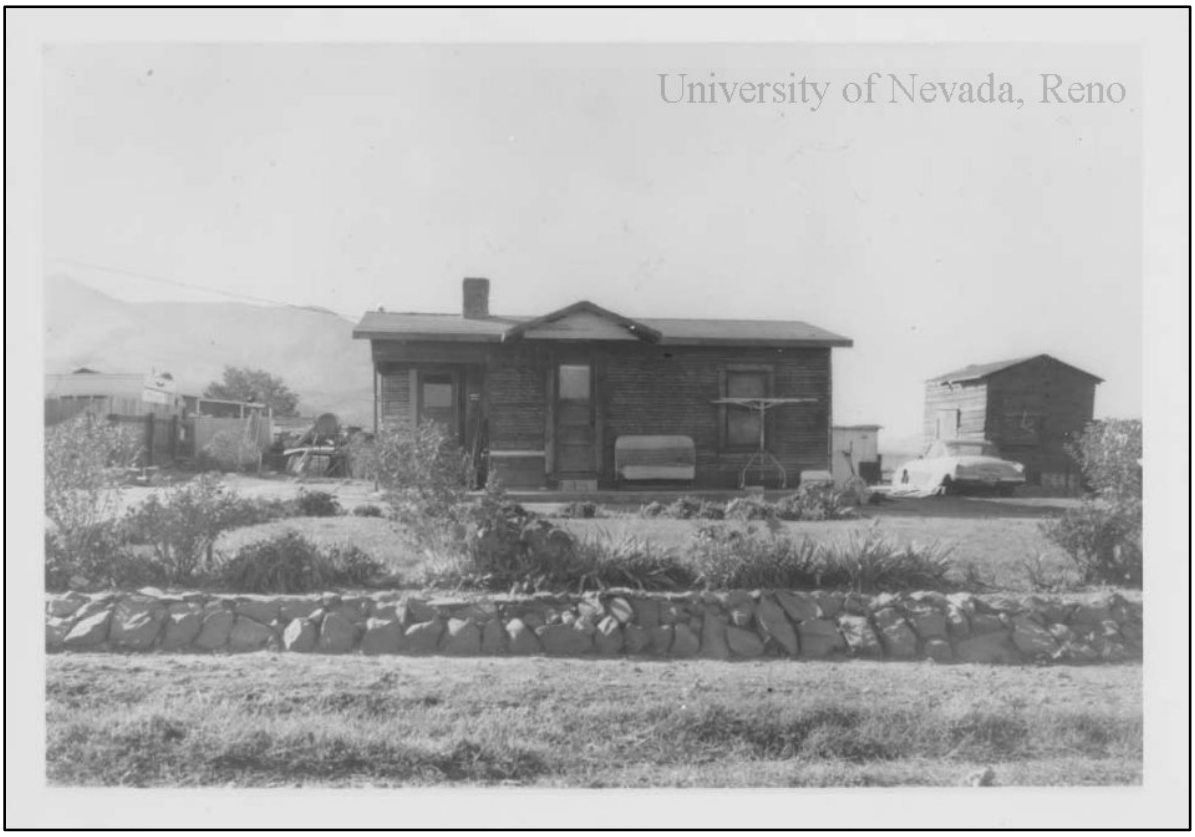

Figure 41. Residence in Black Springs, 1965. Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

As a part of Reno's population boom, neighborhoods and communities grew during the Post–World War II Period. Black Springs, approximately 6 miles north of metropolitan Reno, was established unofficially as one of the city's African American neighborhoods.[17] Evidence suggests that African Americans first began to settle there during the early twentieth century (Harmon 2001:278). But traditional neighborhood platting and development of Black Springs did not begin until 1950 (Figure 41) (Hinman 2010:8). The area's developer, John E. Sweatt, purchased farmland to sell to Black residents in an unincorporated community, as Reno had many neighborhood covenants, codes, and restrictions excluding the sale of property to racial minorities—specifically, African Americans (Hinman 2010:8). A remote and underdeveloped community, Black Springs was sparsely populated and originally predominately inhabited by African Americans, although low-income residents of other racial and ethnic groups also lived there in later years. Many homes were moved to Black Springs from other locations (Miller 2009:52–53). The community had no traditional municipal services, lacking developed roads, water, and gas utilities (Cross 1967:1, 10; Hinman 2010:8; Our Story, Inc. 2020). But it had a volunteer fire department and several churches in its early years, and in the 1970s and 1980s, a community center and children's playground were installed (Miller 2009:53; Our Story, Inc. 2020). As a family-oriented community dominated by single-family residences, Black Springs was a place where African American residents working in the Reno area could legally live and raise their families as well as enter into various religious fellowships (Figure 42). Many prominent figures in the Nevada and national fight for civil rights lived in Black Springs, including Helen Westbrook, Willie J. Wynn, and Barbet Bufkin, Sr.

[17] The name "Black Springs" derives from the black mineral deposits at a natural spring nearby; the area was known as such before the establishment of an African American neighborhood (Miller 2009:52).

Figure 42. Meeting at Mt. Hope Baptist church, Black Springs, 10 October 1965. Eddie Scott, Rev. Eddie Hill, John E. Sweatt, James W. Hulse; Sheriff Allen at front left. Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

4.3.4.4.3 Carson City

African Americans, particularly members of the NAACP, frequently staged picket lines and protests at the state capitol in Carson City during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Advocates such as Charles Kellar, Eddie Scott, Dr. James McMillan, William Bailey, and Dr. Charles West also frequently lobbied legislators at the Nevada Assembly and in the governor's office (White 2010b).

4.3.4.4.4 Sparks

In Sparks, like other areas in northwest Nevada, African American residents also faced segregation, formal and informal, that influenced where they lived for much of the Activism and Advocacy Era. In Sparks, it was common for African Americans to live near the Southern Pacific Railroad on Pacific Avenue, with which many were employed (Miller 2009:51).

One such resident was Bertha Woodard, who described moving to Reno-Sparks in 1949. She and her husband moved to the area from California and were surprised by the difficulty they faced in obtaining housing; Woodard noted that the Reno area was a "desolate place" (Woodard 1991:4). They initially lived in what she describes as a dirty rundown shack in Reno; it had electricity and other amenities, but many similar houses in the area at the time did not even have indoor plumbing (Woodard 1991:5). The couple did not like being forced to rent a house in order to live in Reno and considered purchasing a house in Black Springs but felt the conditions were too poor (Woodard 1991:5). Instead, they purchased a house in

Sparks. As Woodard recalls, the white real estate agent tried to influence them to live in specific areas of Sparks because of their race (Woodard 1991:8). Restrictive covenants, which were commonly used to prevent African Americans, Asians, and Native Americans from buying property in specific areas, also limited their ability to purchase a home in parts of Sparks. Ultimately, they purchased a house in a Black neighborhood on Pacific Avenue, near the railroad tracks and south of modern Interstate 80 (Woodard 1991:18). The Woodards moved into a white neighborhood in 1968; and while some tension surrounded their move, they successfully exercised their right to live in the area (Woodard 1991:16).

4.3.4.4.5 Mineral County

Since World War II, a significant number of African Americans lived in Mineral County; between 1941 and the 1960s, 80 percent of that population resided in the town of Babbitt. As noted in Section 4.3.3.2.1, most moved to the area to work at HNAD during World War II; significant numbers of African American veterans also worked at HNAD after World War II (Figure 43) (Reader 2007:2). Most worked in the communities around HNAD; despite work slowdowns after World War II and the Korean War, the African American population of Hawthorne and Babbitt continued to grow faster than the general population during the late 1940s and early 1950s (Reader 2007:40). In 1946, Hawthorne's residents voted to incorporate the town, and it remained an incorporated city until 1956, when residents voted to "disincorporate" it; as Reader observes, this had the effect of limiting the political clout of African Americans, who primarily lived in Babbitt (Reader 2007:41).

Figure 43. Photograph of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People meeting in Hawthorne. Rev. Donald Clark, Bob Davis, Leo Jones, Charles Kellar, George McNeal, Eddie Scott, Rev. Prentiss Walker, Joe Williams and Ulysses Woodard, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People members, at the El Capitan in Hawthorne, Nevada, 1962. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Reno-Sparks Branch, UNRS-P1988-31, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

Babbitt

Historic records do not indicate any civil rights–related protests occurring in Babbitt during the Post–World War II Period (Reader 2007:42). But in 1955, ongoing grievances motivated African Americans in Babbitt to form a branch of the NAACP. As Reader notes, no specific incident spurred African Americans to form the branch; they were motivated by a preponderance of injustices and inequalities on the local level and the influence of the national civil rights movement (Reader 2007:43–46).

Civil rights organizing in Hawthorne and Babbitt differed significantly from organizing in other areas of the state and nation in several ways. First, churches were not a primary point of organizing in Hawthorne/Babbitt (Reader 2007:4). Second, African American civil rights activists in Hawthorne/Babbitt were generally middle-aged and generally had high school educations, as opposed to many civil rights activists in the American South who were young and college educated. And third, many organizers were women who served in leadership roles and chaired committees (Reader 2007:3–4).

In 1956, the NAACP branch targeted the housing segregation that had been common in Babbitt since World War II (Reader 2007:48). Despite an initially belligerent reaction from military officials, the NAACP prevailed, and HNAD staff were ordered to desegregate the housing complex in 1957 (Reader 2007:50–54). Recreation halls, the barber shop, the bowling alley, the lunch counter, and the clothing shop in Babbitt all followed suit and desegregated by 1959 (Reader 2007:55). Despite this, later studies show that de facto segregation characterized the community during the 1960s and 1970s (Reader 2007:56).

Black workers at HNAD also faced discrimination in employment. Local 1630 of the American Federation of Government Employees was integrated but failed to address complaints lodged by Black members. Additionally, a disproportionately small number of African Americans held supervisory positions. But due to NAACP work from the 1950s through the 1970s, numbers of African Americans in supervisory positions increased and integrated teams became common (Reader 2007:54–56). But by the 1970s, the end of the Vietnam War and the transfer of HNAD from Navy to Army control forced civilian workers to relocate to Hawthorne; by the mid-1970s, Babbitt no longer existed (Reader 2007:57).

Hawthorne

Historic accounts suggest that during and after World War II, race relations in Hawthorne were far more congenial than in much of the nation. Hawthorne never had segregated housing, and even during the 1940s, Black residents could access many of the same public accommodations as whites. But white apathy in regard to racial equality also enabled racist policies, such as those advocated by Hawthorne's wealthiest businessman, Lindsay Smith. Smith maintained a policy that he would destroy the business of anyone accepting Black customers. Because he controlled the local bank, the El Capitan Club casino, and the transportation of goods into town, the threat was serious, and it influenced many local business owners. When asked by the Nevada Equal Rights Commission, most business owners testified that if not for Smith's ban, they would not exclude African Americans (Reader 2007:58–60).

By the late 1950s, the Mineral County NAACP was actively challenging this pattern of discrimination through measures such as picketing; sit-ins; and appealing to government authorities at the local, state, and federal level (Reader 2007:66). Despite the early failure of governmental authorities to address the issue (even when jurisdictionally possible), the NAACP persisted. It secured a meeting with Mineral County commissioners and business owners in 1960 to discuss the discrimination, but business owners ultimately refused to integrate their businesses on the basis that it would lose them money, and the county commissioners declined to pressure them to change their policies (Reader 2007:68–69). The Mineral County NAACP began to publicize the issue with news outlets and state agencies and continued to hold nonviolent protests (Reader 2007:79, 81). Organization members and supporters also picketed at the state

capitol (Reader 2007:112). The issue would not be resolved until the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 (Reader 2007:113). The Mineral County NAACP continued its work until the 1970s, and by 1976, the branch was dissolved (Reader 2007:117–118).

4.3.4.5 NORTHEAST NEVADA (1946–1979)

Little information exists regarding African American history or civil rights activism in northeast Nevada from 1946 to 1979. No secondary resources consulted as part of this project discuss the topic. This is likely due to a combination of the small African American population in this region (particularly when compared with the northwest and southern regions of Nevada) and the prominence of civil rights activism in those other areas during this period. But census data does provide some basic information about the lives of African Americans in the northeast region during this period.

The 1950 census presents information about the populations of specific municipalities in northeast Nevada with more than 1,000 residents (Table 20).[18] All such cities and towns had an African American population in 1950, but in many cases, these populations were very small in size (such as in Carlin, Ely, and McGill, which each had less than 10 African American residents). In 1950, African Americans made up 2.7 percent of the population of Nevada. The percentage of African Americans compared to the general population in these northeast Nevada cities was below the state average (although Elko came close, with 2.2 percent). But 17 of the 18 counties in Nevada in 1950 had an African American population that composed less than 2 percent of the general population. As a result, African American population numbers for northeast Nevada's cities in 1950 reflect statewide trends at the time.

Table 20. African American Populations of Urban Places with More Than 1,000 Residents, 1950

Municipality	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Elko	116	5,393	2.2
Ely	5	3,558	0.1
Winnemucca	40	2,847	1.4
Carlin	3	1,203	0.2
Lovelock	11	1,604	0.6
McGill	8	2,297	0.3
Ruth	21	1,244	1.7

Source: Bureau of the Census 1952:30, 32

The 1960 census provides more detailed information about the African American population throughout northeast Nevada (Table 21). The majority lived in Township 5 of Elko County (which presumably included Elko).[19] The other significant African American population in the northeast lived in Union Township in Humboldt County (which presumably included Winnemucca); the third-largest population group lived in Ely. But generally, African Americans living in northeast Nevada frequently composed only a small proportion of the communities in which they lived and were heavily isolated geographically.

[18] The 1950 census includes population statistics for minor civil divisions (census tracts) but does not including information about race based on those census tracts.

[19] No census tract maps were located for the 1960 census in Nevada and the township boundaries are not defined in census information for Elko County.

Table 21. African American Population by Minor Civil Division in Northeast Nevada, 1960

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Elko			
Township 5	118	8,159	1.44
Township 6	3	2,084	0.14
Total	121	12,011	1.01
Eureka			
Beowawe township	1	85	1.18
Palisade township	2	186	1.08
Total	3	767	0.39
Humboldt			
Union township	82	3,984	2.06
Total	82	5,708	1.44
Lander			
Argenta township	1	1,177	0.08
Total	1	1,566	0.06
Pershing			
Humboldt township	1	497	0.20
Lake township	11	2,702	0.41
Total	12	3,199	0.38
White Pine			
Township 1: Ely	21	9,013	0.21
Total	21	9,808	0.21
Total for Region	**240**	**33,059**	**0.73**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1961:32

Note: Only census precincts listing African American residents are included in this table; those without were omitted.

The 1970 census closely mirrors the patterns present in 1960 (Table 22). As in the previous census, the majority of African Americans in the northeast region lived in Elko, Winnemucca, or Ely, although the 1970 census also indicates a small African American population in Carlin. This population may have been present there in 1960 but not visible due to differences in census tracts. The remainder of the African American population in northeast Nevada was, as in 1960, often small in number and spread throughout the region.

Table 22. African American Population by Minor Civil Division in Northeast Nevada, 1970

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Elko			
Carlin township	11	1,356	0.81
Elko township	86	8,931	0.96
Wells township	3	2,196	0.14
Total	100	17,269	0.58
Eureka			
Total	0	1,198	0.00

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Humboldt			
Union township	62	4,794	1.29
Total	62	6,375	0.97
Lander			
Argenta township	1	2,252	0.04
Total	1	4,076	0.02
Pershing			
Lake township	4	2,670	0.15
Total	4	3,408	0.12
White Pine			
Ely township	10	9,686	0.10
Total	10	10,150	0.10
Total for Region	**177**	**42,476**	**0.42**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1973:50

Note: Only census precincts listing African American residents are included in this table; those without were omitted.

The same patterns present in 1960 and 1970 are largely present in 1980 (Table 23). Elko, Winnemucca, and Ely remained the areas with the largest African America populations, although the number of African Americans in both Elko Township and Union Township dropped between 1970 to 1980, while the African American population of Ely grew slightly. African Americans made up a small proportion of the population of the rest of the region, and numbers of African Americans in given census tracts are uniformly small (less than 10).

Table 23. African American Population by Minor Civil Division in Northeast Nevada, 1980

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Elko			
Carlin township	5	1,280	0.39
Elko township	73	11,398	0.64
Mountain City township	2	1,216	0.16
Tecoma township	1	231	0.43
Total	81	17,269	0.47
Eureka			
Total	0	777	0.00
Humboldt			
McDermitt township	1	1,159	0.08
Paradise Valley township	1	286	0.35
Union township	34	7,209	0.47
Total	36	9,434	0.38

County and Minor Civil Division	African American Population	Total Population	Percent African American Population
Lander			
Argenta township	4	3,640	0.11
Total	4	4,076	0.10
Pershing			
Lake township	3	3,408	0.09
Total	3	3,408	0.09
White Pine			
Ely township	12	7,599	0.16
Total	12	8,167	0.15
Total for Region	**136**	**43,131**	**0.32**

Source: Bureau of the Census 1981a:58

Note: Only census precincts listing African American residents are included in this table; those without were omitted.

4.3.4.6 SOUTHERN NEVADA (1946–1979)

As the area with the largest African American population from 1950 to 1980, southern Nevada often took a lead role in activism and advocacy at the statewide level. But this era is also characterized by historic events and patterns specific to the region. These include the development of the casino and gambling industry, including the state's first integrated casino; civil rights activism; and the growth of the Historic Westside.

4.3.4.6.1 Casinos

After World War II, casino development boomed in Las Vegas, particularly on the newly established Strip. During the 1940s and 1950s, 19 major casinos were constructed in the city (White 1997:31). The casinos were universally segregated. This proved a problem both for African American residents of Las Vegas, who wanted equal access to the casinos they frequently worked at as well as for Black entertainers who performed in them.

By the late 1940s, African American entertainers were often not welcome to stay at the hotels where they performed, and if they did, they were required to use rooms separate from white guests (Geran 2006:106). But with the proliferation of large casinos, the demand for African American performers increased in Las Vegas (Geran 2006:108). Many stayed in the Historic Westside when not performing, mixing with residents and visiting local venues.[20]

> Entertainers who performed on the Strip did not just rent rooms on the Westside. They shared their talents with black audiences at the Town Tavern, the Cotton Club, and other clubs on Jackson Street in impromptu jazz sessions. . . . Gambling was not one of the reasons that African Americans came to Las Vegas. (White 1997:25)

In response to African Americans' growing demands for equal access during the early 1950s, in 1954, the city approved a new, integrated hotel-casino to be built in the Historic Westside. Despite the objections of some nearby white residents, the Moulin Rouge opened in 1955 as the first integrated hotel-casino in Las Vegas (Figure 44) (Moehring and Green 2005:165–167; White 1997:46).

[20] Entertainment venues in the Historic Westside were frequently owned by African Americans, but white and Asian owners also operated businesses there.

As Claytee White points out, the Moulin Rouge was not just a casino:

> [It was a] symbol of the best that the city had to offer. It was a movement, a synergism, a symbolic watershed that introduced a new group of people into the struggle for social, economic, and political equality. The middle class expanded forming a network of people who began to develop more political finesse by establishing a newspaper and a Voter's League. This new casino meant that the sizable number of African American entertainers would no longer have to stay in private homes on the Westside. (White 1997:46)

The Moulin Rouge quickly rose in popularity, due in part to its catering to Black entertainers such as Sammy Davis, Jr., Pearl Bailey, and Louis Armstrong; it even attracted some white tourists (Green 2009; Moehring and Green 2005:165–167). During its period of operation, many African American performers would go there after their shifts in segregated casinos and perform for an integrated audience (Figure 45) (Green 2009).

Figure 44. Moulin Rouge Hotel and Casino, 1955. Don T. Walker Collection 0280 0020. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 45. Cancan dancers in the Moulin Rouge opening show, May 24, 1955. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

Despite its initial success, the Moulin Rouge ran into financial difficulties after its white owners mismanaged money; its heyday lasted less than 6 months, and it remained open for less than a year in total (Moehring and Green 2005:167). It closed in November 1955 due to unpaid liens—what its owners characterized as mismanagement and lack of funds. There is considerable speculation in the historic record regarding whether other reasons led to its closure (Geran 2006:124; White 1997:66). Various historic accounts, including oral histories, point to its success as one cause:

> [T]he blacks in Las Vegas knew there was a long list of interested buyers who desperately wanted to purchase the hotel [the Moulin Rouge]. Some say the doors closed because of skimming or that it was planned to fail by rival hotel owners, but Aunt Mac [an oral history interviewee] said they were both lies. The truth, she said, was the Moulin Rouge was too competitive for the segregated Strip and downtown hotels and they really did not anticipate it being so successful in such a short time. (Geran 2006:124)

Claytee White also notes, "Many interviewees believe that the casinos on the Strip forced its closure because they lost valuable clientele to the Rouge" (White 1997:66).

Despite its closure, the Moulin Rouge in many ways acted as a catalyst for change in Las Vegas. It proved that not only was there a demand for integrated casinos, they could be immensely popular. It also foreshadowed the establishment of several new clubs on or near Jackson Street in the Historic Westside during the late 1950s, including the El Rio, Louisiana Club, New Town Tavern, and Key Club (Figure 46) (Geran 2006:111, 114).

Figure 46. Photograph of "Wash," James O'Neal, "Jeno," and Robert "Moon" Mullins at a gaming table in El Rio Club. Lloyd Gill Collection 79-136. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

4.3.4.6.2 Historic Westside

Through a series of official and unofficial means during the 1930s, the Historic Westside became the designated neighborhood for people of color in Las Vegas. Although legal segregation ended in the 1960s, the Historic Westside remained the de facto residential area for much of Las Vegas's African American population throughout the period.

Due to the combination of rapid population growth during World War II, the failure of city officials to provide adequate infrastructure, and the systematic denial of loans to African American residents during the Advocacy and Activism Era, the Historic Westside remained overcrowded and underdeveloped (Figure 47). As an article by James Goodrich in *Ebony* in 1954 pointed out,

> Negroes of Las Vegas have more to worry about than the gamblers. Housing is their most immediate problem. They presently live "across the tracks" in a segregated, unkempt area covering about 10-square blocks on the city's west flank. Called Westside, the area is separated from white communities by a yard of railroad tracks and a pedestrian-auto underpass which negroes jokingly refer to as the "Iron Curtain." It has few lights, is poorly paved. Most of the houses on the Westside—at least 70 per cent—are sub-standard, one-and-two room shacks without toilets or running water or both. Often as many as five persons, adults and children, dwell in one of the rooms. Rent ranges from $10 to $17.50 a week. Public housing is the answer to the Negro's toughest problem in Vegas but there is little being done in this respect for him by his city fathers. (Goodrich 1954:52)

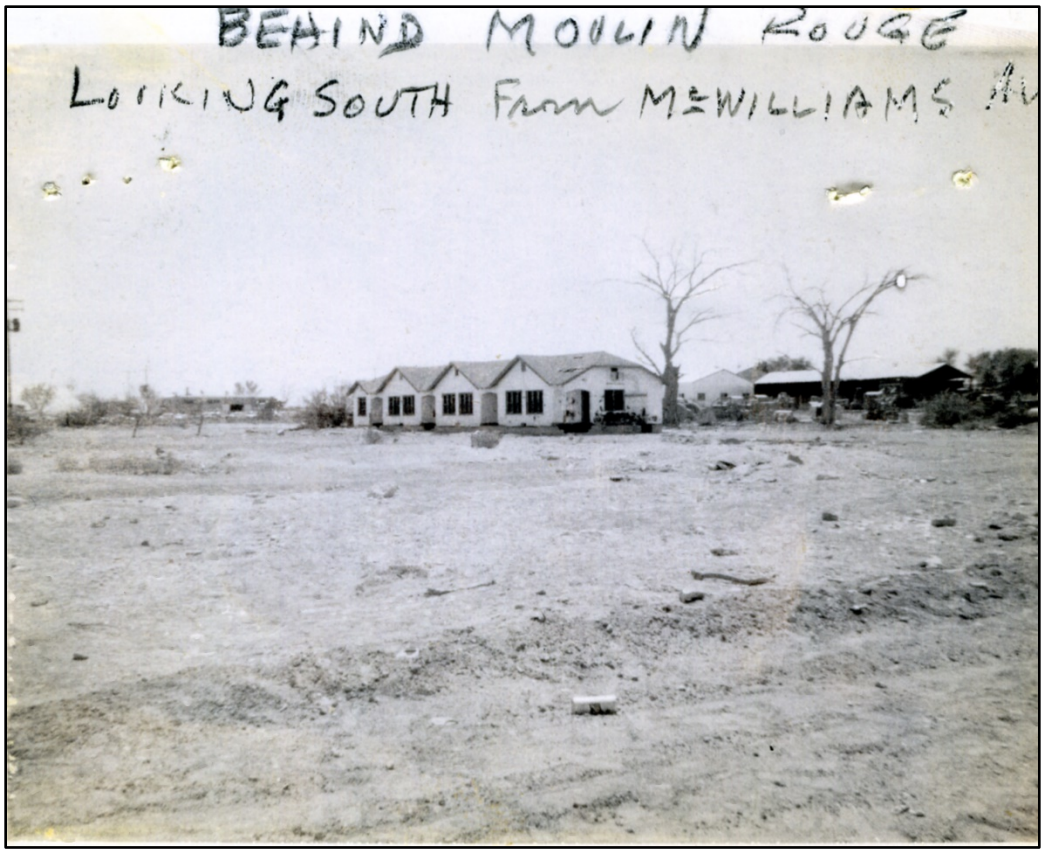

Figure 47. Housing in the Historic Westside behind the Moulin Rouge, ca. 1955. Milton Norman Collection 0259 0042. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Streets were unpaved and lacked gutters (Moehring and Green 2005:122). No fire station existed until 1951 (Moehring and Green 2005:163). In at least one case, the city's administration used the low property values—which of course resulted from the lack of infrastructure development—as justification for not creating the infrastructure that would have led to improvement, trapping Historic Westside residents in a vicious cycle (Moehring and Green 2005:122). And not only did residents not have access to adequate housing, African American visitors to Las Vegas also faced a lack of lodgings. Goodrich notes that "Negro tourists would have to rough it in Las Vegas. There is no motel for them that measures up to A.A.A. (American Automobile Association) standards and no decent hotel" (Goodrich 1954:49).

Development did occur between 1946 and 1979 (Figure 48). In 1949, a new subdivision designed by African American architect Paul Revere Williams was built in the Historic Westside; it was initially known as "Westside Park" but was later renamed "Berkley Square" after nationally prominent African American civil rights attorney Thomas L. Berkley (McKee 2012:17). But development was frequently a mixed blessing. In the late 1950s, the city condemned large parcels as part of its slum clearance program; these would eventually be cleared and replaced with new housing, but the number of units was insufficient to meet the neighborhood's growing needs (Forletta 2012:81–2). The city also recommended that Interstate 15 be routed through the neighborhood (Chute 2014:164; McKee 2012:18).

But segregation and urban renewal did not prevent residents of the Historic Westside from starting their own businesses, churches, and nightclubs. As White describes it, despite the lack of infrastructure, "the Westside was the community that blacks preferred. It was a complete, self-contained neighborhood with black-owned businesses, a variety of churches, nightclubs, and casinos" (White 1997:24–25). The

eventual integration of Las Vegas during the 1970s did not bring uniform improvement. Because the population now had access to businesses outside the Historic Westside, many businesses there lost customers and residents continued to be disproportionately impoverished (McKee 2012:19).

Figure 48. Aerial view of the Westside taken for purposes of urban renewal, April 11, 1963. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

4.4 Conclusion

African American history in Nevada begins during the nineteenth century with early exploration and settlement that reflected broader Euro-American efforts in the area. The first permanent African American residents of Nevada came to the region as part of mining rushes and generally lived in Euro-American settlements associated with mineral extraction. These early African Americans in Nevada made up a small percentage of the overall population but still managed to successfully advocate for the repeal of many racist laws, helped in part by the social and political conditions resulting from Reconstruction after the Civil War. But with the end of Reconstruction the state's political and social climate grew increasingly hostile, and African American residents faced a resurgence of discrimination by whites.

The early twentieth century continued the social trend toward racial antagonism. Although African Americans made up only a fraction of a percent of the state's population throughout much of the first half

of the twentieth century, they still suffered from ever-rising levels of racism. During the 1920s, the KKK established groups in many cities and towns throughout the state. In the 1930s, segregation was increasingly rigidly enforced in places like Las Vegas, and white company officials and agency leaders actively discriminated against Blacks in federal recovery programs like the CCC and the BOR. Within this frequently hostile environment, African Americans advocated for equality through measures such as political lobbying.

World War II brought a massive increase in the state's African American population as a result of in-migration to take advantage of war-related manufacturing work and positions at military facilities. Corresponding with the increasing size, and demographic power, of the state's African American population, Black activists engaged in some of the first large-scale acts of civil disobedience and protest against the racial discrimination that was still common.

These patterns of resistance solidified further after the war. African Americans in Nevada began to organize on a larger scale, including forming three branches of the NAACP in the state. Their acts of advocacy and civil disobedience also became increasingly visible. Those same acts had the potential for large-scale disruption of industries like tourism and gambling, and as a result, Black activists could exert an unprecedented level of influence on state and local politics. Through their advocacy during this period, African Americans secured access to casinos in Las Vegas and Reno, the passage of a state civil rights act, promises of equal employment, and even welfare rights.

It is important to bear in mind that while this context presents the history of civil rights in Nevada through 1979, that history is still being written—both literally and figuratively. As of 2019, African Americans make up approximately 9.37 percent of Nevada's population. African Americans had the lowest average household income of any race in Nevada at just $56,381 per year, compared with an overall average of $79,867. The median household income of African Americans was also the lowest of any race in the state, at $42,264 per year (Healthy Southern Nevada 2020). While conditions have unquestionably improved from when Jim Crow was the law of the land, true equality has not yet been achieved. Inequality is not just economic. Patterns of discrimination are entrenched in the United States and overtly and subtly affect the lives of African Americans.

Similarly, the history of civil rights in Nevada is still being written in a literal sense. Although scholarly efforts to record African American history in Nevada began in the 1970s, no comprehensive source exists for the entire state or its African American history. The context presented here draws from a wide range of historic sources, but efforts to conduct oral histories and write the history of African Americans in Nevada are ongoing. Future work should seek to draw additional information from primary sources, such as archival collections and oral histories, of which there are many. As a result, this history is necessarily incomplete. It is intended not as a comprehensive or definitive history of the African American civil rights movement in Nevada but as a framework that will facilitate future historical investigations, historic preservation, and the nomination of properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

5 AFRICAN AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS PROPERTY TYPES IN NEVADA (CA. 1900–1979) AND EVALUATION METHODS

5.1 Introduction

The Secretary of the Interior recognizes five historic resource types that may be listed in the NRHP: buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts. All properties can be classified as one or more of these resource types. Based on the findings of the context, properties are also classified by property type.

Property types differ from resource source types in that "property type" refers to how a property is used (such as a residence or business), whereas "resource type" refers to what general type of resource the property is (such as a building or an archaeological site). For example, a property's property type might be "church" but its resource type would be "building." The identification of property types associated with African American civil rights in Nevada is a work in progress. No comprehensive architectural surveys relating to this theme have been conducted for the state as a whole or for any of its major cities, although multiple properties have been individually nominated to the SRHP and/or NRHP for their significance in African American history; these resources comprise 10 properties significant for their connection to African American history that had been previously nominated to the SRHP and/or the NRHP (Table 24). Five of those properties have been nominated to the NRHP, three have been only been nominated to the SRHP, and two properties have been nominated to both the SRHP and NRHP. These 10 properties consist of one historic district, one railroad underpass, two churches, two schools, two houses, and two lodgings.

Because no formal surveys for properties significant for their relation to African American civil rights history have been conducted, this initial list of property types is somewhat conjectural. The list was developed by first combining the recorded properties relating to African American history identified from a SHPO database search with property types that potentially related to African American civil rights, based on the events and patterns of history outlined in the overview (Section 4). We then considered the property types identified in other contexts and MPDFs for additional property types to add to our own list. Using this information as a foundation, we consulted with the Advisory Committee regarding possible property types. As part of its role, the Advisory Committee then surveyed contacts within Nevada's African American population to further expand the list. This allowed us to refine the list and develop a better, albeit still incomplete, understanding of property types.

This approach allowed us to predict the types of resources that make up the historic built environment relating to African American civil rights in Nevada, but without more in-depth study, we had little information on the ways in which those resources had since been preserved and modified through continued use, abandoned due to obsolescence, or adaptively reused to suit changing needs within the study period for this context. The degree to which changing patterns of city planning and growth have affected identified property types also bears further investigation. In summary, future surveys are imperative for refining this list of property types and will help to increase our understanding of African American history and improve the recognition and preservation of significant property types.

Table 24. Nevada Properties Relating to African American History That Have Been Nominated to the State Register of Historic Places and/or National Register of Historic Places

Name	National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)/State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) Number	Location (City, County)
Berkley Square Historic District	09000846*	Las Vegas, Clark County
Bethel AME Church	1000587*	Reno, Washoe County
Clark Avenue Railroad Underpass	03001509*	Las Vegas, Clark County
First Church of Christ, Scientist	99000939* 820076†	Reno, Washoe County
Garvey, Luella, House	03001510* 030125†	Reno, Washoe County
Harrison House	140152†	Las Vegas, Clark County
La Concha Motel Lobby	150154†	Las Vegas, Clark County

Name	National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)/State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) Number	Location (City, County)
Las Vegas Grammar School	79001460*	Las Vegas, Clark County
Moulin Rouge Hotel	92001701*	Las Vegas, Clark County
Westside School	810059†	Las Vegas, Clark County

Source: NVSHPO (2019)

* NRHP listed

† SRHP listed

5.2 Methods

Methodologies for NRHP eligibility evaluations and registration requirements are well defined by the Secretary of the Interior. Methodologies are defined in *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (NRHP 2002). The information in that bulletin is summarized in this chapter and is followed by a discussion of the ways in which those methodologies may apply specifically to architectural and archaeological property types significant for their relation to African American civil rights.

This historic context contains all the information necessary to create a MPDF for evaluating and listing African American civil rights resources in the NRHP. An MPDF is a cover document that can be used to facilitate the individual nomination of groups of related significant properties, either at once or as properties continue to be encountered and determined eligible in the future. An MPDF typically contains a statement of one or more associated historic contexts and a description of associated property types, which includes a discussion of property type significance and registration requirements. Nomination forms can be attached to the MPDF as individual properties are nominated to the NRHP. Guidelines for preparing an MPDF are provided by Lee and McClelland (1999).

5.2.1 *Terms Common to Historic Properties Relating to African American Civil Rights*

This section provides explanations for common terms used in the evaluation of historic cultural resources and determining their eligibility for listing in the NRHP.

Identification means the process of gathering information about historic properties. The term comes from the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines* for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (NPS 1983). This is the first step in a standard process laid out by the Secretary of the Interior.

Evaluation means the process of determining if properties identified during the *identification* step meet the NRHP criteria of significance. The term comes from the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines* for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (NPS 1983). This is the second step in a standard process laid out by the Secretary of the Interior.

Registration means historical designation through listing in the NRHP. The term comes from the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines* for Archaeology and Historic Preservation (NPS 1983). Registration occurs after a property is identified, evaluated, and found to meet the NRHP criteria (Section 5.2.2). The central NRHP document for nominating properties to be listed (i.e., designated or registered) is the National Register Registration Form.

Architectural in this historic context is a broad term for intact buildings, structures, objects, districts, and landscapes, as distinguished from archaeological resources, which are typically classified as sites, districts, or landscapes.

Archaeological in this historic context is a broad term for the material remains of buildings, structures, and objects, plus features, artifacts, landscapes, and materials that are associated with archaeological studies. Archaeological studies are the studies of past lifeways through material remains. Archaeological sites are the places where the remnants of past culture survive in a physical context that allows study of these remains. Although this definition could also include architectural resources, intact buildings, structures, and objects are generally distinguished from archaeological sites.

Resource types are the five historic property classifications established by the NRHP: districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects. When an historic-age resource is evaluated for historic significance and considered for NRHP eligibility, it must first be classified as one of these five basic property types.

Associated property types are additional categories that relate to a specific historic context, such as the African American experience in twentieth-century Nevada. Section 5.4 describes, for example, residences, churches and businesses associated with this context as buildings, monuments or murals relating to civil rights as objects, and neighborhoods with historically large African American populations as potential districts.

Significance is the quality of a historic property that assigns importance to its contributions in local, state, and national history. The bulletin on completing the National Register Registration Form defines a property's significance variously as its association with "patterns of history that extend beyond the doorstep or immediate neighborhood" and "character and associations [that] are unique, representative, or pivotal in illustrating the history of a community, State, or the nation" (NPS 1997). For example, a church that was frequently used by NAACP for meetings or organizing protests would be significant for its connection with the history of the African American civil rights movement.

NRHP criteria form the foundation of NRHP eligibility and, ultimately, NRHP registration. Criterion A measures a property's significance through its association with important events. Criterion B associates a property with significant individuals. Criterion C gathers the characteristics that distinguish a property's significance through design, materials, and workmanship. Criterion D acknowledges significance through information that a property might yield, such as an archaeological site. A historic property needs only to meet one criterion to be NRHP eligible, but often a property is eligible under more than one—and sometimes all four—criteria. For example, the home of an important civil rights leader where they did much of their work organizing or advocating might be eligible under Criterion A for its connection with the civil rights movement and under Criterion B for its connection with an important historic figure.

Areas of significance further define the roles that a historic property played in history. The bulletin on completing the National Register Registration Form lists specific areas to apply in registration evaluation (NPS 1997). For the African American experience in Nevada, those areas most likely to apply are as follows: Art, Commerce, Community Planning and Development, Education, Entertainment/Recreation, Ethnic Heritage, Law, Literature, Military, Performing Arts, Politics/Government, Religion, and Social History. See targeted definitions of these areas in Section 5.3.1.

Integrity of a property with significance is established through seven aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Each aspect has a specific definition and application (see Section 5.3.4 and NRHP 2002). Historic integrity and these NRHP aspects are not to be confused or interchanged with structural integrity, which is the momentary physical condition of a building, structure, or object.

Period of significance establishes the time range—written as years—during which a property attained its significance. These periods can be defined by a single year, such as 1900, or multiple years expressed as a date range, such as 1941–1945.

Criteria considerations are possible exceptions to the usual evaluation sequence beginning with a property's age (is it 50 years old or older?), significance (does it meet Criterion A, B, C, or D?), and integrity (does it appear as it did 50 years ago or during an earlier period of significance?). The criteria considerations acknowledge that certain properties, though they might pass this initial evaluation test, require additional considerations to establish NRHP eligibility (see Section 5.3.3 and NRHP 2002). Criteria considerations must be applied to religious properties; moved properties; birthplaces, graves, and cemeteries; reconstructed or commemorative properties; and properties less than 50 years old.

5.2.2 Essential National Register of Historic Places Eligibility Steps

The recognition and valorization of historic African American civil rights-related properties in Nevada is a process that moves from identification through and beyond the establishment of significance to, ultimately, registration for the NRHP. Registration is the intended path for nominating properties for official listing in the NRHP. However—and critically—the same registration path is routinely navigated to establish the NRHP eligibility of properties, even if that exercise is for purposes of compliance with federal regulations and stops short of nomination. In summary, NRHP eligibility should be based, in most cases, on the test that if the property were formally nominated, it would likely be listed in the NRHP (that is, registered).

Following the identification of potential historic resources through research and survey, their evaluation for significance and then integrity is based on the four NRHP criteria. The intended steps in this process begin with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation Planning, which are the basis for this historic context document and its broad components of Theme (African American civil rights), Place (Nevada), and Time (1900–1979). Thus, identification, evaluation, and registration are conducted by following the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines* for Archaeology and Historic Preservation, in sequence (NPS 1983).

5.2.2.1 IDENTIFICATION

The three standards for identification of properties potentially eligible for the NRHP are as follows:

- Identification of historic properties is undertaken to the degree required to make decisions. For surviving properties representing African American civil rights, this means always observing the resources with an understanding of this historic context and deciding soon after first observation if the resources might be historically significant.
    - Example: A city wants to build a new road using federal funding. They undertake a survey to identify historic properties, including those significant for their relationship to African American civil rights.
- Results of identification activities are integrated into the preservation planning process. For African American civil rights-related resources, this means the coordination of initial and subsequent decisions with the NVSHPO.
    - Example: The city incorporates the results of the survey into planning decisions about road location and construction.
- Identification activities include explicit procedures for recordkeeping and information distribution. This means utilization of NVSHPO survey methodology and forms, and ensuring

that information on the forms is compatible with restricted and/or public databases maintained by the SHPO.

- Example: All survey for historic properties conforms with NVSHPO survey methodology.

5.2.2.2 EVALUATION

The process of evaluation is the heart of determining 1) significance through the NRHP criteria and 2) integrity of historic-age (50+ year-old) properties. The four standards for evaluation are as follows:

- Evaluation of the significance of historic properties uses established criteria. As noted above and below, historic significance is defined and guided by the four NRHP criteria.
  - Example: Significance of historic properties is based on NRHP standards.
- Evaluation of significance applies the criteria within historic contexts. For African American civil rights properties, this historic context provides that framework.
  - Example: A church historically used by African American civil rights activists is identified and evaluated for significance using this context.
- Evaluation results in a list or inventory of significant properties that is consulted in assigning registration and treatment priorities. The NVSHPO's survey and inventory databases are used for many purposes, but the paramount value of maintaining the state's inventory of evaluated historic properties is for the assignment of limited resources to the preservation of irreplaceable historic resources throughout the state and in its communities.
  - Example: Data from the survey is entered into NVSHPO cultural resource databases.
- Evaluation results are made available to the public. Evaluation forms for districts, buildings, structures, and objects become public documents upon formal evaluation and before NRHP listing. However, eligibility recommendations and determinations might not be released to the public under certain circumstances, and the proprietary information for most archaeological sites is never released to the public.
  - Example: The survey report and associated documents are made available for the public by the NVSHPO, as appropriate.

5.2.2.3 REGISTRATION

The three standards for registration in the NRHP are as follows:

- Registration is conducted according to stated procedures. Those procedures are presented on the National Register Registration Form and instructions are provided in *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* (Bulletin 16A) (NPS 1997).
  - Example: A local neighborhood group decides to nominate the church (which is significant for its relation to African American civil rights) to the NRHP; they use the standard forms and procedures to do so.
- Registration information locates, describes, and justifies the significance and physical integrity of a historic property. The National Register Registration Form provides ample organization and a repository for this most basic approach to registration requirements for this document's associated property types.
  - Example: The neighborhood group completed the National Register Registration Form and incorporates information from this context in order to justify why it is eligible for the NRHP.
- Registration information is accessible to the public. Registration forms for districts, buildings, structures, and objects become public documents upon formal NRHP listing. However, eligibility

recommendations and determinations might not be released to the public under certain circumstances, and the proprietary information for most archaeological sites is never released to the public.

- Example: the NRHP nomination is approved by the NPS and is made available to the public through their database.

5.3 Assessing Eligibility

5.3.1 *Areas of Significance*

5.3.1.1 STATEWIDE THEMES

As suggested by the title, the general theme for this historic context is the African American experience in Nevada in the twentieth century, with an emphasis on the civil rights movement. Although very broad, this theme is intertwined with a number of other historic themes and subthemes derived from the *Nevada Comprehensive Preservation Plan* (White et al. 1991), which are as follows:

- Theme: Land Usage
  - Subthemes: Townsite development and city planning
- Theme: Commerce and Industry
  - Subthemes: Recreation; others
- Theme: Government and Politics
  - Subtheme: Federal government; state and local government
- Theme: The People
  - Subthemes: Blacks; Catholics; Protestants
- Theme: Social Organizations and Movements
  - Subthemes: Fraternal movements, organizations and societies; women's movements, organizations and societies; labor unions
- Theme: Literature, Arts and Journalism
  - Subthemes: Literatures; visual arts; performing arts

An examination of Nevada's history quickly reveals why African American civil rights is a significant theme. Although Nevada's African American population was small for much of its history, African Americans have made up a portion of the population since non-Native American explorers first entered the region. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the state's African American residents asserted their rights to equality and pushed back against racism. During World War II, Nevada's African American population made wartime industry possible and helped to staff military bases. After World War II, African Americans formed the core of the service industry supporting the state's growing tourism, all while being denied equal access to public accommodations and services. In response, African Americans in Nevada successfully lobbied for equality during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s; thereby gaining equal access to the casinos and hotels in which so many worked, equality under the law, and the right to public services and utilities. The advocacy and activism of African Americans in Nevada shaped the development of the state in ways that remain visible and important today.

5.3.1.2 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE

As noted above, several NRHP areas of significance are applicable to African American civil rights history in Nevada. As with the NRHP criteria, a historic property need only be associated with one area to reflect significance under a criterion. But often a property is significant under more than one area of significance and under one or more criteria. The definitions of the areas of significance, as provided in the NRHP bulletin (NPS 1997), are as follows.

Architecture is "the practical art of designing and constructing buildings and structures to serve human needs." Architecture may relate to property types designed or built by well-known African American architects, vernacular buildings that represent a specific type, period, or method of construction as well as property types with high artistic values.

Art is "the creation of painting, printmaking, photography, sculpture, and decorative arts." Property types in which African American artists did their work, such as studios, or property types significant in the display or marketing of that artwork may relate to this area of significance. Works of art designed by or commemorating African Americans or their heritage, such as sculptures or other objects, may also relate to this area of significance.

Commerce is "the business of trading goods, services, and commodities." African American business owners conducted commerce in the operation of their businesses. Associated property types might include retail stores, restaurants, bars, casinos, beauty salons, or other businesses owned and/or operated by African Americans.

Community Planning and Development is "the design or development of the physical structure of communities." This area may relate to town founding and development, as well as the growth of ethnic or cultural enclaves within specific cities, particularly as a result of policies of segregation.

Education is "the process of conveying or acquiring knowledge or skills through systematic instruction, training, or study." This area may relate to academic institutions or specific parts of a given academic institution, such as property types used as a meeting area for a BSU or cultural organization.

Entertainment/Recreation is "the development and practice of leisure activities for refreshment, diversion, amusement, or sport." This area may relate to both public and private spaces used by African Americans for recreation or entertainment as well as areas where their presence was historically policed or excluded outright, including parks, movie theaters, and casinos.

Ethnic Heritage is "the history of persons having a common ethnic or racial identity." Property types relating specifically to African American history and ethnic heritage may fall under this area.

Law is "the interpretation and enforcement of society's legal code." This area may apply to law offices of prominent African American attorneys or members of the legal profession, as well as public property where law was practiced, such as courthouses.

Literature is "the creation of prose and poetry." This area may relate to property types where African American authors wrote well-known or significant works of literature.

Military is "the system of defending the territory and sovereignty of a people." This area may apply to military installations, as well as infrastructure associated with those installations (e.g., housing for military families or civilian workers and entertainment or commercial venues that served personnel associated with military installations).

Performing Arts is "the creation of drama, dance, and music." This area may apply to property types in which African American entertainers and performing artists performed, practiced, composed, or otherwise developed their art, including theaters and casinos.

Politics/Government is "the enactment and administration of laws by which a nation, State, or other political jurisdiction is governed; activities related to political process." This area relates to property types in which the functions of politics and government occurred as well as those relating to the history of government policy or assistance. Examples of property types include state or local government buildings, buildings housing the offices of government officials, and public areas associated with significant political lobbying or protest events.

Religion is "the organized system of beliefs, practices, and traditions regarding mankind's relationship to perceived supernatural forces." This area relates to places of worship important to African Americans in Nevada; property types may include formal houses of worship as well as informal religious gathering places.

Social History is "the history of efforts to promote the welfare of society; the history of society and the lifeways of its social groups." This broad area can draw together such diverse property types as headquarters of social or fraternal organizations, civil rights groups, schools, or public or private meeting places.

These areas of significance are not the only categories that will supplement appropriate criteria; others may be applicable depending on specific properties. See NPS (1997) for further definitions.

5.3.2 *Significance Criteria*

5.3.2.1 CRITERION A

Properties significant under Criterion A are "associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history" (NRHP 2002:2). African American civil rights–related resources may qualify for local, regional, state, or national significance under Criterion A for contributing to the broad patterns of history. Since the earliest periods of African American settlement in Nevada, advocacy for racial equality has been an important pattern of history in the state. Civil rights–related properties may be eligible under Criterion A through their association either with specific events or, more commonly, with trends or patterns in civil rights history at the local, state, or national level.

5.3.2.2 CRITERION B

Properties significant under Criterion B are "associated with the lives of persons significant in our past" (NRHP 2002:2). Eligibility of agricultural resources under Criterion B is likely to be associated with key civil rights leaders or advocates who were important in shaping and conducting civil rights initiatives. Some property types that might be eligible at the local level under Criterion B include homes or businesses associated with persons important in organizing or leading branches of the NAACP or similar organizations, union organizing, or conducting lobbying efforts with the local or state government. An example might be the home of James McMillan or business of Dr. Charles West.

5.3.2.3 CRITERION C

Properties significant under Criterion C are those that "embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction" (NRHP 2002:2). A building or district that retains a high proportion of original features might

be significant under Criterion C because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a particular type or period of construction or is a significant and distinguishable entity whose components cumulatively relate to a specific historic period in the history of African American civil rights. A house or apartment building that represents the work of a master, such as Paul Revere Williams, may also be significant under Criterion C.

5.3.2.4 CRITERION D

Properties significant under Criterion D "have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history" (NRHP 2002:2). Criterion D can apply to architectural properties, but it is most commonly applied to archaeological sites. The Historic Westside is one example of a property that may be significant under Criterion D. Any project involving ground disturbance in that area has the potential to offer information relating to the material culture and lives of past residents there. The Boston Saloon in Virginia City, for which an archaeological investigation was conducted, is another example of a property that might be significant under Criterion D in relation to African American history.

5.3.3 *Criteria Considerations*

The NPS, in the early 1980s, after its first 15 years of scrutinizing nominations and registering properties nationwide, responded to questions and criticisms about the eligibility of certain properties by issuing the criteria considerations. The following quotes and approaches for applying the criteria considerations to properties associated with Nevada's African American history are taken from National Register Bulletin 15 (NRHP 2002).

5.3.3.1 CRITERIA CONSIDERATION A: RELIGIOUS PROPERTIES

Ordinarily, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes are not considered eligible for the NRHP. "A religious property's significance under [NRHP] Criterion A, B, C, or D must be judged in purely secular terms" (NRHP 2002). Typically, a house of worship might be eligible under Criterion C for its significant architectural merits. If the building is potentially eligible under Criterion A for events or Criterion B for persons, those associations typically cannot be religious in nature unless an extensive case is made for significance that transcends the regular religious associations with the building and its congregation. In the case of Nevada's African American history, houses of religious worship were frequently also used by communities as places to organize civil rights efforts or for community-building beyond religious worship. These uses may enable a religious property to be nominated under Criteria Consideration A.

5.3.3.2 CRITERIA CONSIDERATION B: MOVED PROPERTIES

Ordinarily, properties moved from their original locations and contexts are not considered eligible for the NRHP. Regarding moved properties, the NRHP states, "significance is embodied in locations and settings as well as in the properties themselves. Moving a property destroys the relationships between the property and its surroundings and destroys associations with historic events and persons" (NRHP 2002). Criteria Consideration B states that for buildings and structures with exceptional significance through their design, materials, and workmanship, a case for sustained eligibility might be made for the property after its move if its new setting and orientation are similar to its original location or if it is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event. In the case of Nevada's African American history, if a house built by Paul Revere Williams (which may be exceptionally significant for its design, materials, and workmanship) was moved from its original location to a new setting similar to its original location, it would still be eligible for listing in the NRHP. Additionally, for historically African American neighborhoods eligible as districts, a small percentage of buildings moved within or out of the district would not disqualify it, especially if those resources were less significant to the function of the district as

a whole (such as storage sheds or other minor outbuildings). Likewise, buildings moved into the district during its period of significance—for example, relocated from nearby neighborhoods or military installations—would be contributing to the district.

5.3.3.3 CRITERIA CONSIDERATION C: BIRTHPLACES AND GRAVES

Ordinarily, birthplaces and graves are not considered eligible for the NRHP. "Birthplaces and graves, as properties that represent the beginning and the end of the life of distinguished individuals, may be temporally and geographically far removed from the person's significant activities, and therefore are not considered eligible" (NRHP 2002). However, under Criteria Consideration C a grave or cemetery in a historic district can contribute to that district if it is not the main resource or focal point of the district. A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance can also be eligible if there is no more representative site or building directly associated with his or her productive life. An example of a birthplace or grave relating to African American civil rights that might be eligible for listing in the NRHP is that of an important figure in the history of Nevada's civil rights movement for which a more representative site or building directly associated with their productive life does not exist.

5.3.3.4 CRITERIA CONSIDERATION D: CEMETERIES

Ordinarily, cemeteries are not considered eligible for the NRHP. The NRHP criteria "allow for listing of cemeteries under certain conditions" (NRHP 2002). Cemeteries can be NRHP-listed without applying Criteria Consideration D, if they are associated with a more dominant resource such as a church (but see Criteria Consideration A); eligible under Criterion D for their potential to yield significant information and answer research questions; or eligible as contributing properties in a district where the cemetery is not the "focal point of the district." Otherwise, if the cemetery itself is considered eligible under Criterion A, B, or C, an extensive case—Consideration—must be made for the cemetery's exceptional significance. Consideration includes cemeteries as districts that are eligible as rural or designed landscapes. Cemeteries may also be eligible under Criteria Consideration D, if they include the graves of "persons of transcendent importance," are the earliest cemetery in a region, have distinctive design values (such as those related to aesthetic principals of landscaping), are associated with important historic events (such as those associated with the settlement of an area by a specific ethnic group), or have the potential to yield important information (NPS 1997). For example, the first cemetery established by an African American community in an early Nevada mining town might be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria Consideration D.

5.3.3.5 CRITERIA CONSIDERATION E: RECONSTRUCTED PROPERTIES

Ordinarily, reconstructed properties are not considered eligible for the NRHP. Reconstructed properties "fall into two categories: buildings wholly constructed of new materials and buildings reassembled from some historic and some new materials. Both categories present problems in meeting the integrity requirements of the NRHP criteria," particularly materials, workmanship, and feeling (NRHP 2002). However, when accurately executed in a suitable manner and presented as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived, a reconstructed property may be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria Consideration E. The reconstruction of a previously demolished building, such as if the Moulin Rouge were reconstructed, is an example of a property that might be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria Consideration E.

5.3.3.6 CRITERIA CONSIDERATION F: COMMEMORATIVE PROPERTIES

Ordinarily, commemorative properties are not considered eligible for the NRHP. Properties—typically objects such as monuments and sculptures, "designed and constructed after the occurrence of an important historic event or after the life of an important person," are significant because of "their value as

cultural expressions at the date of their creation. . . . A commemorative property generally must be over fifty years old and must possess significance based on its own value, not on the event or person being memorialized. . . . A commemorative property may, however, acquire significance after the time of its creation through age, tradition, or symbolic value." (NRHP 2002). Under Criteria Consideration F an object, such as historic marker, erected more than fifty years ago to commemorate a significant event in the history of the African American civil rights movement such as a protest or march might be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria Consideration F.

5.3.3.7 CRITERIA CONSIDERATION G: PROPERTIES THAT HAVE ACHIEVED SIGNIFICANCE WITHIN THE PAST 50 YEARS

Ordinarily, properties constructed within the last 50 years are not considered eligible for the NRHP. The general standard for a property to be considered of historic age is for it to be 50 years of age or older. However, properties of "exceptional importance" may still be considered significant even if they are less than 50 years old. "The phrase 'exceptional importance' may be applied to the extraordinary importance of an event or to an entire category of resources so fragile that survivors of any age are unusual" (NRHP 2002). A property can qualify as exceptionally important at the local, state, or national level; it is not necessary for a property to be significant at the national level in order to qualify as exceptionally important. An example of a property that might be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criteria Consideration G is the tunnel through the F Street wall in Las Vegas, which was built in 2009 as a result of protests by the Historic Westside community.

5.3.4 *Aspects of Integrity*

As defined in National Register Bulletin 15, "Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance" (NRHP 2002:44). The integrity of a property is defined by the seven aspects of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. To convey its significance under one or more NRHP criteria, a property must retain integrity in several, or (more usually) most, of these aspects. Most important are those aspects that are vital to the significance of the property and which help to create its historic identity. Overall, a property either retains integrity (its historic identity) or it does not; integrity is binary, rather than on a scale.

5.3.4.1 LOCATION

Location "is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred" (NRHP 2002:44). Put simply, this means that a property's features should not have been moved to or from their locations during or after their periods of significance. For a civil rights–related building, structure, or object to be significant under NRHP criteria and retain integrity of location, the resource must remain in the same location that it occupied during the period of significance (construction or the event of association). All moved properties should be evaluated under Criteria Consideration B, which further defines properties that must comply or are exempt. Properties that were moved before their period of significance do not need to meet this standard.

5.3.4.2 DESIGN

Design "is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property" (NRHP 2002:44). The design of a property is a result of all the decisions that go into its creation, including how buildings and structures were built and the overall layout of a given property or landscape. In the case of a residence or business, this may include the physical layout of the property as well as the form and plan of buildings. For archaeological sites or public spaces, it may relate more to the ways in which the site was used. It is important to note, however, that design also encompasses historic systems and technologies as well as physical layouts. As National Register Bulletin 15 states, design

"includes such considerations as [a building's] structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; textures and colors of surface materials; type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing; and arrangement and type of plantings in a designed landscape" (NRHP 2002:44).

5.3.4.3 SETTING

Setting "is the physical environment of a historic property" (NRHP 2002:45) and means that the area around a property should remain similar to what it was during the property's period of significance. For a civil rights–related property or district to be significant under NRHP criteria and retain integrity of setting, it must exhibit its "relationships between . . . buildings and other features [and] open space." Setting is retained within the property's boundary, and also "between the property and its surroundings," even when surrounding features are outside the NRHP boundary. Setting refers to the character of the place in which the property played its historic role. Setting often reflects the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and functioned during its period of significance. It can also reflect the builder's or designer's concepts of nature and aesthetic preferences, particularly when the property is set within a cultural landscape. The physical characteristics of setting can be natural or human-made, including surrounding development, open spaces, and nearby streets, and (in the case of historic districts) the relationships between buildings and structures within the property boundary. Setting frequently includes historically significant views.

5.3.4.4 MATERIALS

Materials "are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property" (NRHP 2002:45). Properties that reflect this aspect should retain the original materials that defined them. For a civil rights–related property to be significant under NRHP criteria and retain integrity of materials, it must "retain the key exterior materials dating from the period of . . . historic significance" and "reveal the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies." Vernacular buildings are often built using local or easily obtained materials, and these help define the building's relationship to its geographic area and provide a sense of time and place. Comparing a property's material integrity to similar resources is often helpful when determining whether a property retains sufficient integrity of materials.

5.3.4.5 WORKMANSHIP

Workmanship "is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory" (NRHP 2002:45). For a civil rights–related property to be significant under NRHP criteria and retain integrity of workmanship, it must preserve the exterior construction materials present during the period of significance, retain "evidence of the crafts," and illustrate "the aesthetic principles of a historic period." In addition, workmanship reveals "individual, local, [and] regional . . . applications of both technological practices and aesthetic principles." Workmanship can be expressed in vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes or highly sophisticated configurations. Examples of workmanship can include tooling, carving, painting, graining, turning, and joinery.

5.3.4.6 FEELING

Feeling "is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time," which results from the presence of physical features that combine to convey a property's historic character (NRHP 2002:45). Extensive modification to properties and/or their surroundings is likely to have a detrimental effect on their integrity of feeling. The retention of the original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will strongly convey the feeling of a property's relationship with civil rights history.

5.3.4.7 ASSOCIATION

Association "is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property" (NRHP 2002:45). For a property to be significant under NRHP criteria and retain integrity of association, its physical setting must be "sufficiently intact to convey" its period of significance to an observer, particularly anyone familiar with the property during its identified period. Integrity of association draws strength from other exhibited aspects of integrity, particularly design, materials, workmanship, and setting.

5.3.5 *Linking Significance Criteria and Integrity*

5.3.5.1 INTEGRITY AND CRITERIA A AND B

A property that is significant under Criterion A and/or B is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that characterized its appearance during the period of its association with the important event, historic pattern, or person(s). For example, the residence of an important figure in the African American civil rights movement, which is where they did the majority of their organizing work and which retains its essential physical features from that period of association, will be eligible under Criterion A and/or B. Another example of such a property would be the law office of an African American lawyer who used their legal expertise to support civil rights efforts. If it retains its essential physical features from the period during which that lawyer worked there, that property will also be eligible under Criterion A and/or B.

Archaeological sites eligible under Criteria A and/or B must have limited disturbance with excellent preservation of features, artifacts, and spatial relationships to the extent that they remain able to convey important associations with events, historic patterns, or persons. For example, the remains of a historic residence or business as a site where the buildings are no longer standing, but where foundations and/or cultural artifacts remain intact and in a condition able to express their relationship to each other and to significant people or activities that took place there, may retain integrity of location, association, and setting. It will, therefore, be eligible under Criterion A or B.

5.3.5.2 INTEGRITY AND CRITERION C

A property (including a district) significant for illustrating a particular architectural style, type, or construction technique must retain the majority[21] of the external physical features that characterize the style, type, or technique. Some historic material loss is acceptable depending on the style or architectural type, but a property is not eligible under Criterion C if it only retains some basic massing and has lost the majority of physical features (or buildings in the case of a district) that once characterized it.

5.3.5.3 INTEGRITY UNDER CRITERION D

Archaeological sites do not exist in the present as they did when they were formed. Cultural and natural processes always alter deposited materials and their spatial relationships. Therefore, integrity under Criterion D is based upon the property's ability to yield information and answer research questions. For example, the archaeological remnants of a historic saloon owned by an African American in an early mining community would retain integrity under Criterion D, if subsurface materials had experienced little disturbance. However, if subsurface materials had been disturbed through extensive looting or major ground disturbing activities (such as construction projects) integrity might no longer remain. A property,

[21] The NPS offers a rare definition of *majority* in this application as 75 percent, for its Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program addressing buildings that have lost some external walls and some internal structure: http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm.

such as a building or structure, that can offer important information answering historic research questions through its physical material or design may also be eligible under Criterion D. For example, a cabin occupied by an African American cowboy or prospector that retains its original design, materials, and workmanship may offer otherwise unavailable information about the lifestyle, daily activities, and even building construction methods used by similar individuals throughout the state; it might therefore be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion D.

5.3.5.4 INTEGRITY AND DISTRICTS

The majority of individual components that comprise a district must retain their individual integrity. "For a district to retain integrity as a whole, the majority of the components that make up the district's historic character must possess integrity even if they are individually undistinguished. In addition, the relationships among the district's components must be substantially unchanged since the period of significance" (NRHP 2002:46). A district's historic character is the result not just of buildings and structures but also the relationship between properties, which is defined by design components such as building setbacks and height, vacant lots, sidewalks, patterns of infill, and streetscapes. When studying the impact of noncontributing intrusions in a district, the evaluation should take into consideration their number, size, scale, design, and location. A component of a district cannot be contributing if it was built after the period of significance, has been substantially altered outside the period of significance or, based on this historic context document, does not share historic associations with contributing resources in the district.

5.3.6 *Period of Significance*

Determining the period of significance for a historic property or district often depends on the criterion under which it is deemed significant. For properties associated under Criterion A with historic events or trends, the date range of that event or trend is typically that property's period of significance. For properties associated with significant persons under Criterion B, the dates of that person's encounter with the resource are paramount; some people may be famous for activities in other places at other times, but only their association with the evaluated historic property is considered for significance—and thus NRHP registration—under Criterion B. For an architectural property under Criterion C, the construction year is most often the beginning of its period of significance, and the end is usually the point when construction ended (for some properties, the period of significance is a single year). For properties associated under Criterion D with the potential to yield information related to history, the period of significance is defined by research questions that the resource can address in relation to the integrity of the resource. Materials must be related to significant research questions and retain a level of integrity that allows a discrete assessment of temporal data to be made.

For a district, the date of construction of its earliest resource, or the earliest associated event reflected in surviving properties in the district, is the beginning date. The end date for the period of significance of a district often, though not always, runs to 50 years prior to evaluation (for example: 1970 for evaluation in 2020). The end date for a district's period of significance can also be a specific date, such as when the initial period of construction of a neighborhood ended or when it ceased to be associated with a certain event or group of people.

5.4 Summary of Potential African American Civil Rights Property Types and Evaluation Methods

The following section presents a summary of property types identified to potentially be associated with African American civil rights in Nevada. These property types were drawn from a variety of sources, including historic accounts from Nevada, secondary sources, and existing NRHP nominations. Additional

property types were also drawn from contexts and MPDFs from other states; while some of those property types may not have been identified in Nevada during research, they are still included here as property types commonly associated with African American history and community in other regions that may be present but previously unidentified in Nevada. A list of examples of these property types that were identified during research, including location information and a brief description of current condition, is provided in Appendix A.

Because this context did not include a statewide survey of properties associated with African American civil rights, the descriptions for many of these property types are limited in detail. It is likely that styles, types, and methods of construction for these property types vary widely throughout the state, and will reflect local taste, economic means, property availability or lack thereof, or the period in which they were constructed. Those seeking to evaluate or nominate properties using this context are, therefore, urged to carefully consider those factors when assessing properties.

5.4.1 *Businesses and Commercial Enterprises*

5.4.1.1 DESCRIPTION

Businesses and commercial enterprises vary widely in appearance, based on their period of construction, the nature of the business (such as restaurants vs. office buildings), and the availability of building materials and the architects or craftspeople to build them. Because of the economic discrimination that African American business owners frequently faced when owning or renting property, businesses may historically have been housed in reused or adapted buildings rather than newly built ones. Common examples of business types that may be significant for their relationship with African American heritage include restaurants, markets or retail businesses, clothing shops, barber or beauty shops, bars, or laundries.

Geographically, businesses associated with African American history and the civil rights movement are likely to be in areas that historically had or continue to have a significant African American population, such as the Historic Westside of Las Vegas, Reno, Black Springs, Virginia City, or Hawthorne/Babbitt. These areas were frequently the parts of the state with a sufficiently large African American populations to support Black-owned or -operated businesses during historic periods when white clientele would not patronize them.

5.4.1.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Businesses and commercial buildings associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. Businesses are significant in the areas of Commerce and Ethnic Heritage. If part of larger patterns of the establishment of commercial districts in a community, they may also be significant in the area of Community Planning and Development. Specific professional practices, such as those of lawyers or writers, may also be significant in the areas of Law and Literature, respectively. Owning or operating a business frequently represented an opportunity for economic subsistence or prosperity for African Americans when otherwise excluded from employment as a result of racial discrimination. Businesses also supplied segregated African American communities with necessary commodities and services when residents of those communities were prevented from accessing white-owned businesses due to their race. Successful business owners may also have been leaders in their communities, or leant support to civil rights efforts by providing physical space for meetings or offering material and financial support.

5.4.1.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Businesses will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and Ethnic Heritage for their association with historic patterns of trade and commerce by African Americans in Nevada. If part of larger patterns of the establishment of commercial districts in a community, they may also be eligible in the area of Community Planning and Development. Because these properties are by nature commercial and because ownership or operation by African Americans is a key component of their historic significance, they should be evaluated and/or nominated under both areas of significance. The density of businesses historically owned and/or operated by African Americans varies widely throughout the state. In areas where a large number of these resources may exist, such as Reno or Las Vegas, stricter standards may apply in terms of significance, while examples of this property type in more remote areas or with a smaller historic African American population may inherently be more significant as a result of their uniqueness.

In cases where local business-owners or entrepreneurs played significant leadership roles in the African American community, businesses may possess significance under Criterion B as well.

If a business retains integrity and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or if it contributes to a historic district, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Businesses are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation specific information significant to the history of commerce or ethnic history.

To retain integrity, Businesses should possess key features relating to their use in conducting trade or commerce during their period of significance, which will be manifested in the aspects of location, design, setting, feeling, and association. In particular, they should retain their layout as it existed during the period of significance, particularly in terms of how the space was used (such as customer service areas vs. storage areas).

5.4.2 *Churches or Houses of Worship*

5.4.2.1 DESCRIPTION

Churches and meeting houses vary widely in appearance based on their period of construction, congregation size, and religious affiliation (Figures 49–55).

One common church type observed during research was the gable-front church building, which commonly dates to ca. 1950 to 1980. Churches of this type generally have rectangular building plans, with entrances on the gable end; they are one story and have a roof with a low pitch and overhanging eaves. They frequently include a large central worship area for the congregation with a raised stage at one end. The interiors may also include smaller rooms that serve for offices, storage, or other functions. An example of this type of church building is Faith Deliverance Church (now demolished) in Reno. Based on observation, this church type is frequently associated with Protestant denominations.

In terms of geography, churches or meeting houses associated with African American history and the civil rights movement are likely to be located in areas that historically had or continue to have a significant African American population, such as the Historic Westside, Reno, Black Springs, Virginia City, or Hawthorne/Babbitt. Buildings or spaces in buildings not specifically built as churches but where people gathered for worship (such as the upstairs or common rooms of business or fraternal organizations, or even private residences) should also be considered in relation to this property type.

5.4.2.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Churches and houses of worship associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. Churches are significant in the areas of Religion, Ethnic Heritage, and Social History. It is important to note that as per Criteria Consideration A, a house of worship must be judged secularly; it generally must be significant for factors other than its religious associations. In the case of churches or houses of worship in this context, those secular associations would generally be their relationship with the history of the civil rights movement. Churches in Nevada were frequently used by African Americans both as places to organize civil rights efforts or build community outside of religious worship and may meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration A.

5.4.2.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Churches or houses of worship will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Religion, Ethnic Heritage, or Social History for their association with community building and the civil rights movement. Because Criteria Consideration A precludes most houses of worship from being considered significant for their religious history alone, they should be evaluated under the area of Religion in association with Ethnic Heritage and/or Social History.

In some cases, where church leaders played significant leadership roles in the civil rights movement, churches or houses of worship may possess significance under Criterion B.

If a church retains integrity and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or if it contributes to a historic district, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Note that the vernacular types, styles, or methods of construction that may characterize many of these buildings are equally as important as more high-style examples.

Churches or meeting houses are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation specific information significant to social or ethnic history.

As per Criteria Consideration A, churches or houses of worship must be assessed in secular terms; they are generally not eligible based on religious associations.

To retain integrity, churches or houses of worship should possess key features relating to their use in conducting religious services and civil rights organizing or as points of social intercourse during their period of significance. They should retain integrity in the aspects of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. In particular, they should retain their layout as it existed during the period of significance, particularly in terms of how the space was used (such as worship services vs. offices or meeting rooms); if being nominated under Criterion C they should retain historically significant building features.

Figure 49. Zion Methodist Church, no date (ca. 1950). Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

Figure 50. Interior of Zion Methodist Church, 1966. Clinton Wright Negatives Collection 0379. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

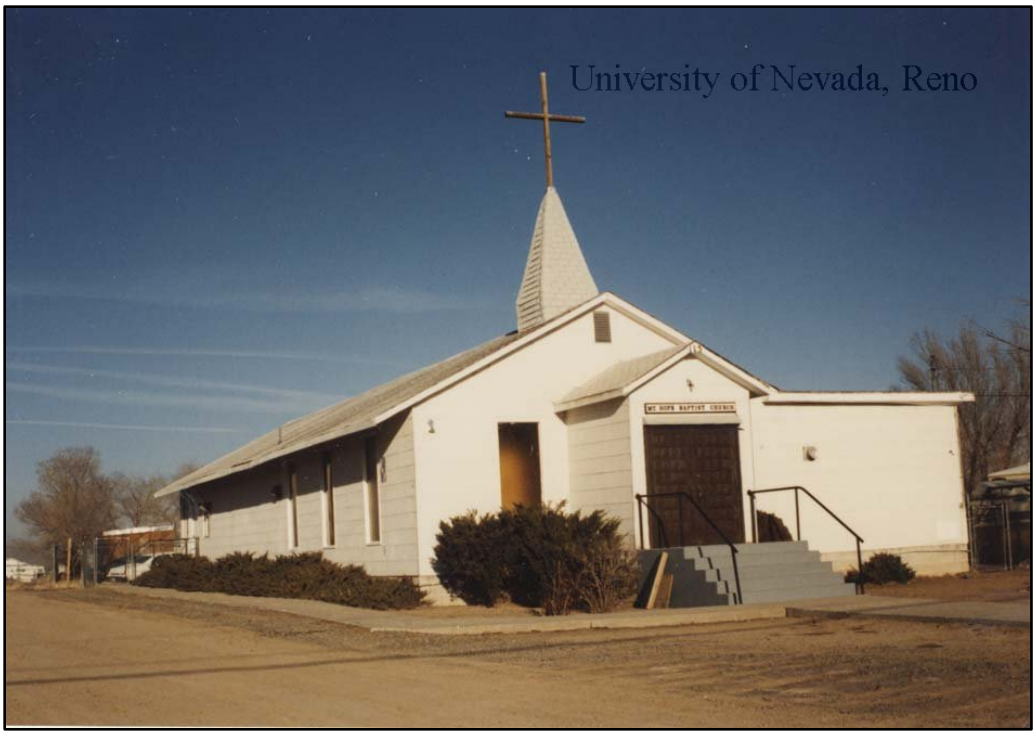

Figure 51. Mt. Hope Baptist Church, Black Springs, 1991. Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

Figure 52. First Baptist Church, Black Springs, 1991. Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

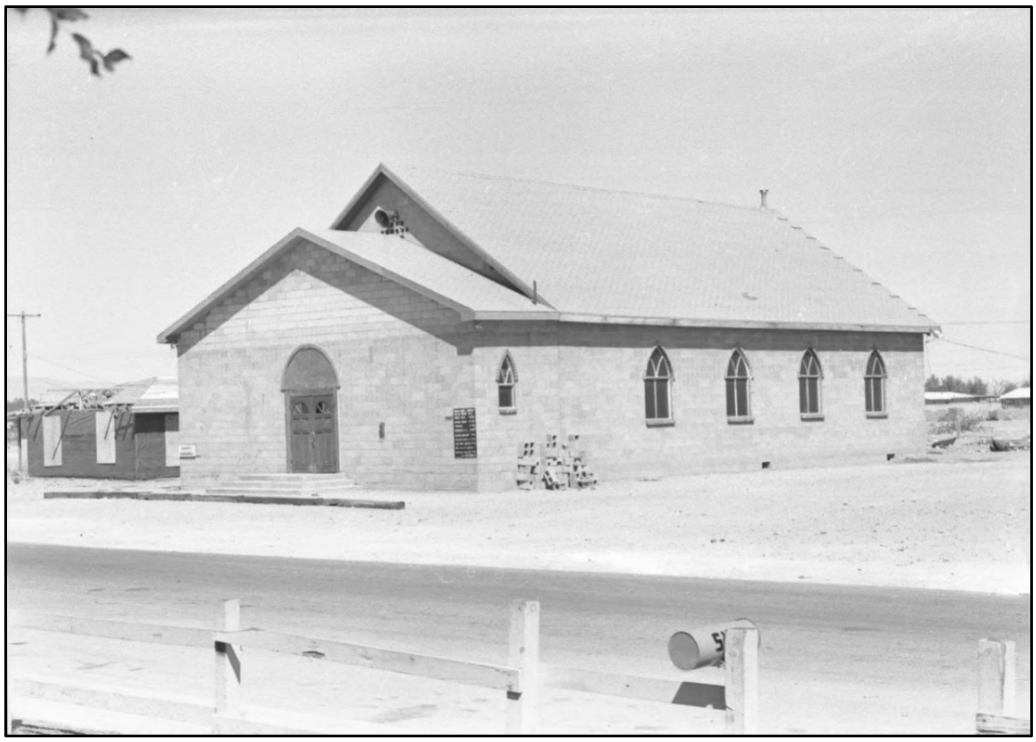

Figure 53. Elder Logan's Church, Las Vegas, 1964. Clinton Wright Negatives Collection 0379. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 54. Interior of Victory Baptist Church, 1969. Clinton Wright Negatives Collection 0379. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

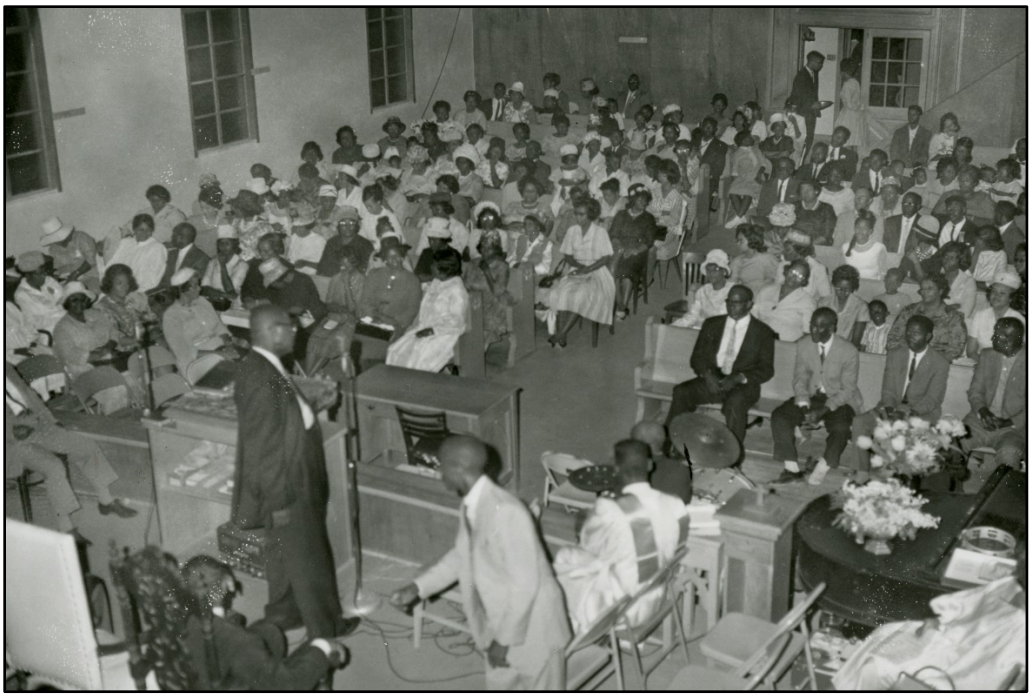

Figure 55. Interior of Second Baptist Church during a civil rights rally, Las Vegas, date unknown (ca. 1960). Donald M. Clark Photo Collection 0087 0055. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

5.4.3 *Headquarters of Political Groups*

5.4.3.1 DESCRIPTION

Only one example of a historic property owned or used as the headquarters of a political group was identified during research, the property from which Operation Life was based during the 1970s (Figure 56). Other unidentified examples of this property type may exist in Nevada. Properties not specifically dedicated to meeting spaces but where significant organizing activities for political groups may also represent examples of this property type, such as businesses or private residences.

5.4.3.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Headquarters of political groups associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. Headquarters are significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Social History. Political groups such as the NAACP and SURE formed the backbone of the civil rights movement in Nevada. Headquarters of those groups would have provided a physical meeting location for members and for organizing efforts.

5.4.3.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Headquarters of political groups will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Social History; they should be evaluated and/or nominated under both areas of significance.

In some cases, where leaders or other important figures associated with the political group played leadership roles in the African American community, they may possess significance under Criterion B.

If the headquarters of a political group retains integrity and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or if it contributes to a historic district, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Headquarters of political groups are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation specific information significant to the history of commerce or ethnic history.

To retain integrity, Headquarters should possess key features relating to their use in organizing or conducting political advocacy during their period of significance. They should retain integrity in the aspects of location, design, setting, feeling, and association. In particular, they should retain their layout as it existed during the period of significance; if being nominated under Criterion C, they should retain historically significant building features and retain integrity in the aspects of materials and workmanship as well.

Figure 56. Human Relation Commission meeting, location unknown, 1964. Clinton Wright Negatives Collection 0379. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

5.4.4 *Hotels, Casinos, or Other Entertainment-Related Properties*

5.4.4.1 DESCRIPTION

Casinos and other entertainment-related properties open to African Americans were historically smaller in size than their segregated counterparts and did not generally include hotels or other lodging-related amenities (Figures 57–67). Although there are examples of entertainment venues open to, or operated by, African Americans from early in the twentieth century, the majority of the integrated casinos documented in the historic record date to the 1940s and 1950s. The only example of an integrated casino larger in size

and incorporating a hotel component was built in Nevada prior to the desegregation of the casinos—the Moulin Rouge. Public entertainment venues, such as segregated swimming pools, recreation centers, or movie theaters may also represent examples of this property type.

Geographically, hotels, casinos, and other entertainment-related properties that were historically integrated are likely to be in areas that historically had or continue to have a significant African American population, such as the Historic Westside or Reno. These areas were frequently the parts of the state with a sufficiently large African American populations to support integrated establishments during historic periods when white clientele would not patronize them.

5.4.4.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Hotels, casinos, and other entertainment venues associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. These resources may be significant in the areas of Entertainment/Recreation, Commerce, Ethnic Heritage, and/or Performing Arts. If part of larger patterns of the establishment of commercial districts in a community, they may also be significant in the area of Community Planning and Development. Prior to the second half of the twentieth century hotels, casinos, and other entertainment venues were frequently segregated in Nevada. Integrated establishments allowed African American patrons to enjoy the entertainment and recreation opportunities otherwise denied to them; the integration of segregated hotels and casinos was an important cause for civil rights activists in the state.

5.4.4.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Hotels, casinos, and other entertainment venues will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Entertainment/Recreation, Commerce, Ethnic Heritage, and/or Performing Arts for their association with civil rights activism by African Americans in Nevada. If part of larger patterns of the establishment of commercial districts in a community. they may also be eligible in the area of Community Planning and Development. Because these properties varied widely in terms of their histories and the recreation activities they offered, not all areas of significance will apply. For example, a venue well known for live music should be considered under the area of Performing Arts in addition to Entertainment/Recreation; another venue might have operated as the only bar for African Americans in a given municipality and, therefore, should also be considered under the area of Commerce. The density of hotels, casinos, and other entertainment venues historically owned and/or operated by African Americans varies widely throughout the state. In areas where a large number of these resources may exist, such as Reno or Las Vegas, stricter standards may apply in terms of significance, while examples of this property type in more remote areas or with a smaller historic African American population may inherently be more significant as a result of their uniqueness.

In some cases, where owners or operators played significant leadership roles in the African American community, they may possess significance under Criterion B as well.

If a hotel, casino, or other entertainment venue retains integrity and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or if it contributes to a historic district, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Hotels, casinos, or other entertainment venues are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation specific information significant to the history of Commerce or Ethnic Heritage through physical investigation.

To retain integrity, hotels, casinos, and other entertainment venues should possess key features relating to their use for entertainment and recreation during their period of significance. They should retain integrity

of location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association. They should retain their layout as it existed during the period of significance, particularly in terms of how the space was used (such as different recreation activities in given areas or the retention of stages and performance halls); if being nominated under Criterion C, they should retain historically significant building features.

Figure 57. Photograph of Carver House Hotel and Casino (later known as the Cove Hotel), ca. 1961. Lloyd Gill Collection 0083 0008. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 58. Carver House Hotel and Casino, ca. 1961. Lloyd Gill Collection 79-136. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 59. Unidentified woman on the diving board at Carver House Hotel and Casino, no date (ca. 1960). Lloyd Gill Collection 79-136. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 60. Swimming pool at Carver House Hotel and Casino, no date (ca. 1960). Lloyd Gill Collection 79-136. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 61. El Rio Club front desk, no date (ca. 1960). Lloyd Gill Collection 79-136. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

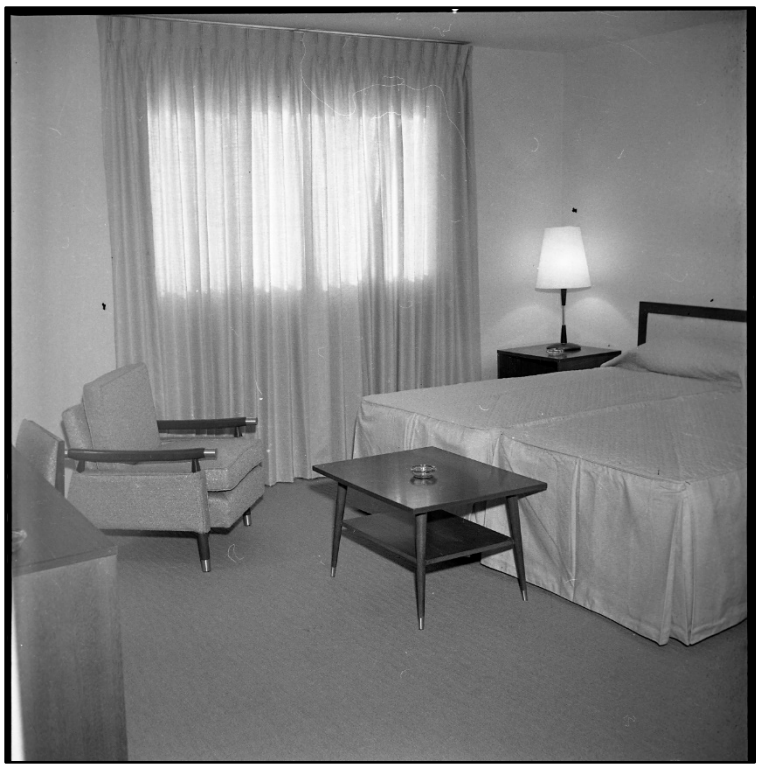

Figure 62. Guest room at Moulin Rouge, 1955. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

Figure 63. Moulin Rouge bar, 1955. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

Figure 64. New Town Tavern, 1960. Lloyd Gill Collection 0083 0022. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 65. Ike Rome, Gloria Rome, and Florence Elmore at New Town Tavern, no date (ca. 1960). Lloyd Gill Collection 79-136. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 66. Cotton Bowl Bowling Alley, 1962. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

Figure 67. Cotton Bowl Bowling Alley, 1962. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

5.4.5 *Military Facilities*

5.4.5.1 DESCRIPTION

Military facilities associated with African American history and the civil rights movement may include a wide range of subtypes (Figures 68 and 69). These might consist of materiel storage facilities, command offices, airplane hangars, parade grounds, manufacturing facilities, and housing or other amenities for staff or workers and their families. In some cases, such as when large sections of a specific town may have housed workers for a military facility, multiple associated properties may be best considered as a historic district rather than on an individual basis.

5.4.5.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Military facilities associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. Military facilities are significant in the areas of Military and Ethnic Heritage. Military facilities provided employment for many African Americans in Nevada. But they also often instituted discriminatory policies in hiring, promoting, and even in assigning housing for workers.

5.4.5.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Military facilities will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Military and Ethnic Heritage for their association with African American civil rights in Nevada. Because these properties are, by nature, based around military history, and because their relationship with African Americans is a key

component of their historic significance, they should be evaluated and/or nominated under both areas of significance.

In some cases, where employees of the facilities played significant leadership roles in the African American community, they may possess significance under Criterion B as well.

If a military facility retains integrity and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or if it contributes to a historic district, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Military facilities are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation specific information significant in the areas of Military and Ethnic History.

To retain integrity, military facilities should possess key features relating to their military uses during the period of significance associated with the reason for their historic significance (such as their use by African American troops). They should retain integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association.

Figure 68. Buildings at Camp Williston, ca. 1940. United States Park Service Collection 0189 0024. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Figure 69. Library at Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, HABS, HABS NV-23-H.

5.4.6 *Monuments or Murals*

5.4.6.1 DESCRIPTION

No examples of historic monuments or murals relating to African American civil rights were identified during research, but unidentified examples of this property type may exist in Nevada.

5.4.6.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Monuments or murals associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. Monuments and murals are significant in the areas of Art and Ethnic Heritage. Monuments or murals may commemorate important events in a community's history or may represent artistic achievements by African Americans.

5.4.6.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Monuments and murals will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Art and Ethnic Heritage for their association with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada. Because the associations with a specific racial group are an important part of their importance in the broader historical narrative, the creation or commissioning of monuments or murals by members of the African American community is an important aspect of their history. Commemorative monuments with important aesthetic qualities, that are associated with an ethnic group's historic identity, that symbolize the value placed on historic figures, or markers established early in a community's history may be eligible under Criteria Consideration F.

In rare cases where the creator is a significant artist or played significant leadership roles in the African American community, a monument or mural may possess significance under Criterion B as well, if no property with a stronger association to the productive life of the artist or creator remains.

Monuments and murals are unlikely to be significant under Criterion C unless they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or if they contribute to a historic district.

Monuments and murals are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation specific information significant to the history of Art or Ethnic Heritage.

To retain integrity, monuments and murals should possess key features relating to the period of significance associated with their basis in historic events. In particular, they should retain integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

5.4.7 *Neighborhoods and Business Districts*

5.4.7.1 DESCRIPTION

Historically, cities in Nevada with larger African American populations frequently forced those African Americans to live in formally or informally designated neighborhoods; these neighborhoods often developed a mix of owned or rented single- or multiple-family residences, African American–owned and/or African American–operated businesses, religious and social institutions, and recreation/entertainment options (Figures 70–77). Prior to integration, these neighborhoods were frequently mostly self-sufficient, since Black clientele were often prohibited from patronizing white establishments. Historically, they also frequently possessed under-developed infrastructure, such as unpaved roads, lack of streetlights, or even basic water and sewer systems; in the case of neighborhoods such as the Historic Westside in Las Vegas, historic accounts also note that the buildings were frequently substandard. While many of the neighborhood infrastructure deficiencies were later remedied through action by their inhabitants, these neighborhoods may still reflect earlier patterns of community growth and planning. Segregated sections of cemeteries may also fall within this property type. Large properties with multiple historic components, such as ranches, are frequently evaluated as districts; ranches owned by African Americans (such as that owned by Ben Palmer along the Carson River or those owned by John Howell in southern Nevada) were rare and may be difficult to distinguish (Bertolini 2017:55). But because of their uniqueness and value in telling an often neglected aspect of this history, particular care should be given to their identification and registration when located.

Geographically, neighborhoods and business districts associated with African American history are likely to be in areas that historically had or continue to have a significant African American population, such as the Historic Westside, Reno, Black Springs, and Hawthorne/Babbitt. These areas were frequently the parts of the state with a sufficiently large African American populations to encourage white officials to pass discriminatory zoning laws or restrictive covenants. Communities formed through *de facto* segregation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, such as B Street in Virginia City, may also represent potential historic districts.

5.4.7.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Neighborhoods and business districts associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. Neighborhoods and business districts are significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Community Planning and Development, particularly when historically related to patterns of residential or commercial segregation. African Americans in Nevada frequently experienced discrimination and segregation in terms of where they were allowed to live and own businesses. These patterns were frequently enforced by restrictive covenants, zoning laws, and business licensing practices. These segregated neighborhoods were frequently underdeveloped due to the indifference of city officials and the denial by banks of loans for residents.

5.4.7.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Neighborhoods and business districts will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Community Planning and Development for their association with African American history in Nevada; business districts may also be eligible in the area of Commerce.

Neighborhoods and business districts are unlikely to be eligible under Criterion B. If a neighborhood or business district retains integrity and represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Because of the frequent destruction of historically African American communities as a result of urban renewal, even demolished neighborhoods and business districts have the potential to yield specific information significant to history through their study as archaeological districts and sites and therefore to be significant under Criterion D. Sources of information that would make a neighborhood or district eligible under Criterion D might include building foundations, travel routes, and/or other structures reflecting travel routes and the spatial layout of neighborhoods, and cultural artifacts showing patterns of procurement and use.

To retain integrity, neighborhoods and business districts should possess key features relating to their history. The component resources should generally retain integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship; the neighborhoods and business districts, as a whole, should retain integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association.

Figure 70. Aerial view of Moulin Rouge Hotel and Casino and Montmartre Motel, Las Vegas, 1965. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

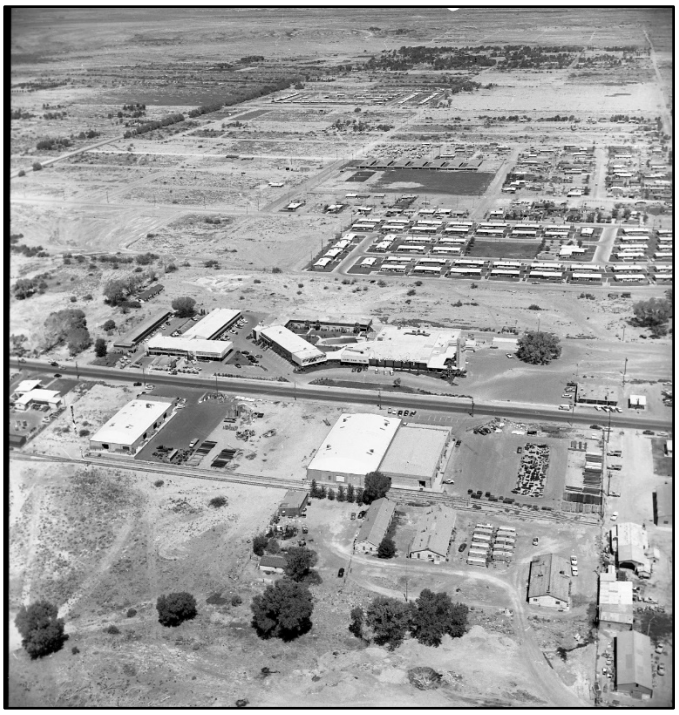

Figure 71. Aerial view of Moulin Rouge Hotel and Casino and Montmartre Motel, Las Vegas, 1965. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

Figure 72. Aerial view of Fremont Street, Las Vegas, 1956. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

Figure 73. Aerial view of Historic Westside prior to urban renewal project, Las Vegas, 1963. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

Figure 74. Historic Westside property, Las Vegas, 1962. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

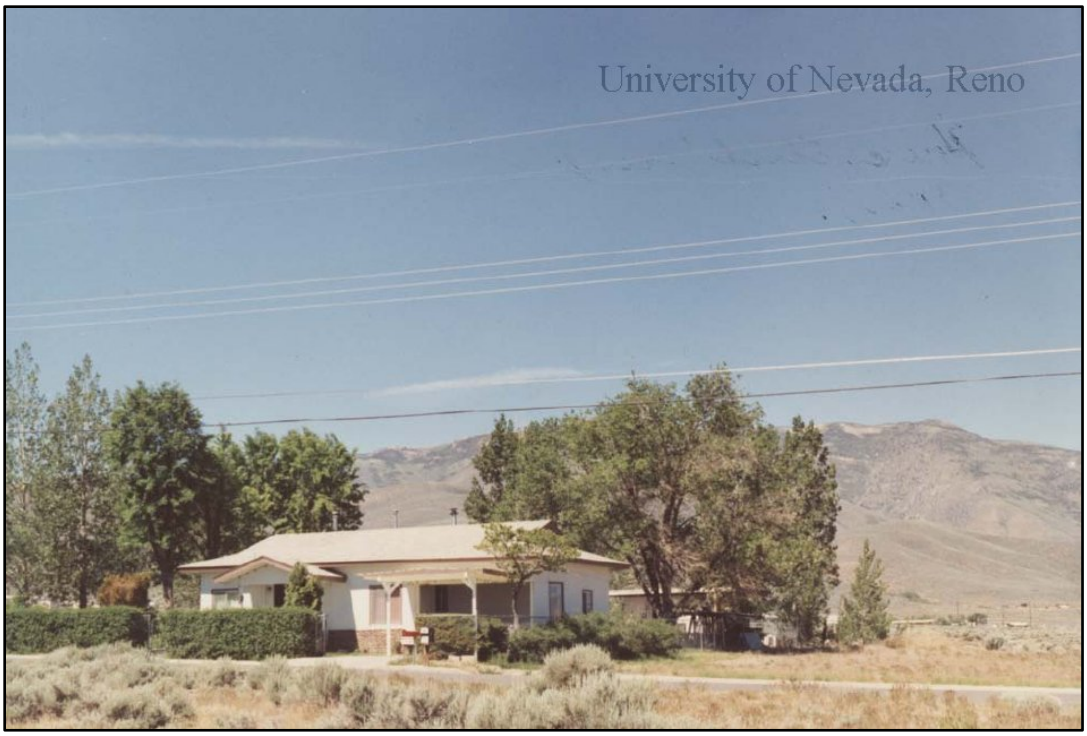

Figure 75. House belonging to Westbrook family, Black Springs, 1991. Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

Figure 76. Homes in Black Springs, ca. 1964–1965. Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

Figure 77. Homes in Black Springs, 1965. Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

5.4.8 *Performing Arts Spaces*

5.4.8.1 DESCRIPTION

No examples of dedicated performing arts spaces relating to African American history or the civil rights movement were identified during research, but unidentified examples of this property type may exist in Nevada. During and after World War II performance spaces utilized by Black entertainers, such as theaters or other venues, were frequently associated with other property types, such as hotels and casinos (Figures 78 and 79).

5.4.8.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Performing arts spaces associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. Performing arts spaces are significant in the areas of Performing Arts and Ethnic Heritage. Performing arts spaces offered venues for African American entertainers to rehearse and perform; in many cases African Americans performing for white audiences in segregated venues experienced racism while doing so, while all-Black or integrated venues (such as the Moulin Rouge) offered a relief from those experiences and perhaps a fuller expression of African American culture.

5.4.8.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Performing arts spaces will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Performing Arts and Ethnic Heritage for their association with the history of performing arts for African Americans in Nevada. Because these properties are significant for the intersection of performance and ethnic heritage they represent, they should be evaluated and/or nominated under both areas of significance.

In rare cases, where long-term performers were well-known or played significant leadership roles in the African American community, they may possess significance under Criterion B as well.

If a performing arts space retains integrity and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or if it contributes to a historic district, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Performing arts spaces are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation information significant to the history of Performing Arts or Ethnic Heritage.

To retain integrity, performing arts spaces should possess key features relating to their use in the performing arts during the period of significance during which their association with African American history was established. In particular, they should retain integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association. They should retain their layout as it existed during the period of significance, particularly in terms of how the space was used (such as backstage areas vs. stages and auditoriums or other public areas).

Figure 78. Dancer and musicians performing at Carver House, Las Vegas, 1962. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

Figure 79. Dancers performing at the Moulin Rouge, Las Vegas, 1955. Nevada State Museum, Las Vegas.

5.4.9 *Residences of Key Historic Civil Rights Figures*

5.4.9.1 DESCRIPTION

Residences can vary widely in appearance based on their period of construction, the socio-economic status of their owners, and the availability of building materials and the architects or craftspeople to build them (Figures 80 and 81).

Geographically, residences of individuals significant for their roles in African American history and the civil rights movement are likely to be in areas where advocacy was occurring. In the second half of the twentieth century, the three branches of the NAACP (the most important advocacy organization) in Nevada were in Reno, Las Vegas, and Mineral County. Residences of key civil rights leaders are, therefore, most likely to be in those places. Residences of African Americans significant for their roles as community members or leaders but not as civil rights leaders can be found throughout the state, potentially even in remote locations. Examples of this latter category might include business leaders or professionals who were the first African Americans to practice their careers in the state (such as the first lawyer or doctor).

5.4.9.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Residences associated with key historic civil rights figures in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. These residences are significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage; the exact nature of the civil rights advocacy work of the significant individual will determine additional areas of significance. These areas might include Law, Social History, Politics/Government, or Commerce. The civil rights movement was led by a wide range of individuals from diverse backgrounds. These individuals acted as representatives of organizations, legal advocates and lobbyists, and organizers.

5.4.9.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Residences will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage for their association with African American civil rights in Nevada; additional areas of significance may also apply depending on the individual.

Because of the importance of the individuals with which these residences were associated, they will always be significant under Criterion B unless the residence is not associated with that individual's productive period (such as their civil rights or professional work) or there is a property that better represents their work.

If a residence retains integrity and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or if it contributes to a historic district, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Residences are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation specific information significant to one of the areas of significance.

To retain integrity, residences should possess key features relating to their use during the productive lives of the significant individuals who lived in them. In particular, they should retain integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and setting from the period of significance when the significant person lived there.

Figure 80. House belonging to Jean Bufkin, Black Springs, 1991. Nevada Black History Project, UNRS-P1997-56, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

Figure 81. Interior view of Lubertha Johnson's home (Lubertha Johnson in chair), Las Vegas, 1978. Elizabeth Nelson Patrick Collection. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

5.4.10 *Sites, Buildings, or Public Spaces in Which Civil Rights–Related Activities Occurred*

5.4.10.1 DESCRIPTION

Sites, buildings, or public spaces (sites) in which civil rights–related activities occurred include a wide variety of possible properties (Figure 82). Examples are public spaces around the state capitol or on the Las Vegas Strip where protests or marches occurred, or lunch counters where sit-ins took place. In terms of geography, these sites are most likely to exist in areas in which significant civil rights organizing and advocacy occurred, such as Las Vegas, Carson City, or Reno.

5.4.10.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Sites associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. These sites are significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Politics/Government or Social History. Public demonstrations to combat discriminatory laws or social conditions were an important tool in the civil rights movement; the venues where these demonstrations occurred were often carefully chosen by protestors to garner public notice or to draw attention to specific individuals or businesses.

5.4.10.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Sites will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Politics/Government or Social History for their association with the civil rights movement in Nevada, often for specific events rather than general patterns.

Sites are unlikely to be eligible under Criterion B.

Sites are unlikely to be eligible under Criterion C.

Sites are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have the potential to yield specific information significant to the areas of Ethnic Heritage, Politics/Government, and/or Social History through further physical investigation.

To retain integrity, sites should possess key features relating to the period of significance associated with key historic events. They should retain integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association.

Figure 82. Civil rights protesters at Nevada State Capitol, Carson City, 1961. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Reno-Sparks Branch, UNRS-P1988-31, Special Collections and University Archives Department, University of Nevada, Reno.

5.4.11 *Schools*

5.4.11.1 DESCRIPTION

Schools can vary widely in appearance, based on their period of construction, size, availability of materials, and the local governmental, social, or economic circumstances prevailing at their time of construction (Figure 83).

In terms of geography, schools associated with African American history and the civil rights movement are likely to be located in areas that historically had or continue to have a significant African American population, such as the Historic Westside, Reno, Virginia City, or Hawthorne/Babbitt. These areas were frequently the parts of the state with sufficiently large African American populations to encourage discriminatory white officials to take measures to segregate school populations.

Figure 83. Lubertha Johnson and Senator Howard Walter Cannon at library, Las Vegas, 1966. Clinton Wright Negatives Collection 0379. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

5.4.11.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Schools associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. Schools are significant in the areas of Education and Ethnic Heritage. If part of larger patterns of the establishment of communities, they may also be significant in the area of Community Planning and Development. Access to an equal education was a key aspect of the national civil rights movement, as exemplified in *Brown I* and *II*. Equal access to education was also an issue in Nevada specifically, starting in the 1870s when African Americans challenged a law to segregate schools.

5.4.11.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Schools will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Education and Ethnic Heritage for their association with the African American civil rights movement in Nevada. If part of larger patterns of the establishment of communities, they may also be eligible in the area of Community Planning and Development.

In some cases, where teachers or students played significant leadership roles in the African American community, they may possess significance under Criterion B as well, unless the school is not associated

with that individual's productive period (such as their civil rights or professional work) or there is a property that better represents their work.

If a school retains integrity and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or if it contributes to a historic district, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Schools are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation specific information significant to the areas of Education or Ethnic Heritage.

To retain integrity, schools should possess key features relating to their use in education during their period of significance. They should retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

5.4.12 *Sororities or Fraternal Organizations*

5.4.12.1 DESCRIPTION

No examples of historic properties owned or used by sororities or fraternal organizations relating to African American history during the twentieth century were identified during research, but unidentified examples of this property type may exist in Nevada (Figure 84).

5.4.12.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Sororities or fraternal organizations associated with African American history and the civil rights movement in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. Sororities and fraternal organizations played an important role in African American society by providing fellowship, mutual assistance, and a starting point for political organizing.

5.4.12.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Sororities and fraternal organizations will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage for their association with social patterns in African American communities in Nevada; if associated with academic institutions such as universities, they will also be eligible under Criterion A in the area of Education.

Sororities or fraternal organizations are unlikely to be eligible under Criterion B.

If a building associated with a sorority or fraternal organization retains integrity and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or if it contributes to a historic district, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Sororities or fraternal organizations are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation specific information significant to the areas of Social History or Ethnic Heritage.

To retain integrity, resources associated with sororities or fraternal organizations should possess key features relating to their use as places of community building and social welfare during their period of significance. They should retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Figure 84. Example of an African American sorority. Delta Sigma Theta Sepia Fashion Show, Las Vegas, ca. 1972. Roosevelt and Gertrude Toston Collection. Special Collections & Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

5.4.13 *Union Halls or Other Union-Related Facilities*

5.4.13.1 DESCRIPTION

No confirmed examples of union halls or other union-related facilities relating to African American civil rights history were identified during research, although Local 226 of the Culinary Workers Union in Las Vegas may be of historic age. Other unidentified examples of this property type may exist in Nevada.

5.4.13.2 SIGNIFICANCE

Halls or other facilities associated with African American participation in unions in Nevada may qualify for listing in the SRHP and/or NRHP at the local or state level. Union facilities are significant in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage. During much of the nineteenth and twentieth century, African Americans were frequently prevented from participating in trade and labor unions in Nevada due to racial discrimination. Participation in unionizing gave Black workers increased job security and the power to combat unsatisfactory working conditions and pay as well as on-the-job discrimination.

5.4.13.3 REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Union facilities will generally be eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Social History and Ethnic Heritage for their association with African American civil rights in Nevada.

In some cases, where labor organizers played significant leadership roles in the African American community, they may possess significance under Criterion B as well, unless the union facility is not associated with that individual's productive period (such as their civil rights or professional work) or there is a property that better represents their work.

If a union facility retains integrity and embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or if it contributes to a historic district, it may be eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture.

Union facilities are unlikely to be significant under Criterion D unless they have yielded or have the potential to yield through further physical investigation information significant to the areas of Social History or Ethnic Heritage.

To retain integrity, union facilities should possess key features relating to their use in union activities and labor organizing during their period of significance. They should retain integrity of location, design, workmanship, materials, setting, feeling, and association.

5.5 Summary

When identifying, evaluating, and nominating properties to the NRHP that are significant for their relationship to the history of the African American civil rights movement, it is important to follow the process established by the NPS. The African American civil rights-related properties presented in this document do not represent a comprehensive list. While every effort was made to identify potential property types related to African American history in Nevada from 1900 to 1979, in the future, additional NRHP-eligible properties may be identified that relate to that history that fall outside of the types listed here. In addition to providing a guide for the nomination of properties to the NRHP, this list is also intended to provide guidance to cultural resource managers conducting surveys and evaluating properties for NRHP eligibility.

6 REFERENCES CITED

Ancestry
2002 1930 United States Federal Census. Available at: https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/6224/. Accessed April 28, 2020.

2010 1880 United States Federal Census. Available at: https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/6742/. Accessed April 28, 2020.

Anderson, Rachel J.
2012 African-American Legal History in Nevada (1861-2011). *Nevada Lawyer* 20(2):8–18.

Armour, Mark
2007 Baseball Integration, 1947-1986. Society for American Baseball Research. Available at: https://sabr.org/bioproj/topic/integration-1947-1986. Accessed January 24, 2020.

Atomic Heritage Foundation
2020 Nevada Test Site. Available at: https://www.atomicheritage.org/location/nevada-test-site. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Baker, William D.
1991 *Minority Settlement in the Mississippi River Counties of the Arkansas Delta, 1870-1930: A Historic Context.* Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, Little Rock.

Barber, Alicia
2018 1971: When Racial Tension at UNR Boiled Over. Available at: https://www.kunr.org/post/1971-when-racial-tension-unr-boiled-over#stream/0. Accessed January 31, 2020.

2019a The Architect Behind Reno's Lear Theater. Available at: https://www.kunr.org/post/architect-behind-renos-lear-theater#stream/0. Accessed January 28, 2020.

2019b Reno's Red Light District: The Colorful History of Brothels in Washoe County. Available at: https://www.kunr.org/post/reno-s-red-light-district-colorful-history-brothels-washoe-county#stream/0. Accessed April 25, 2020.

2020 Johnson-Jeffries Fight (site). Available at: http://renohistorical.org/items/show/82. Accessed April 12, 2020.

Belaustegui, Dick
2017 *An Oral History of Fourth Street and Prater Way through Reno and Sparks, Nevada*, Alicia Barber, ed. Available at: https://archive.org/details/FourthPrater/page/n521/mode/2up. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Bertolini, Jim
2017 Agriculture on the Carson River in Nevada's Douglas and Ormsby Counties. Nevada State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

Berwanger, Eugene H.
2001 Reconstruction on the Frontier: the Equal Rights Struggle in Colorado, 1865-1867. In *African Americans on the Western Frontier*, edited by Monroe Lee Billington and Roger D. Hardaway, pp. 37–53. University Press of Colorado, Niwot.

Billington, Monroe Lee
2001 Buffalo Soldiers in the American West, 1865-1900. In *African Americans on the Western Frontier*, edited by Monroe Lee Billington and Roger D. Hardaway, pp. 54–72. University Press of Colorado, Niwot.

Billington, Monroe Lee, and Roger D. Hardaway
1998 *African Americans on the Western Frontier*. University Press of Colorado, Boulder.

Bracey, Earnest Norton
1999 The Political Participation of Blacks in an Open Society: The Changing Political Climate in Nevada. *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 42(3):140–159.

2001 Ruby Duncan, Operation Life, and Welfare Rights in Nevada. *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 44(2):133–146.

Burbank, Jeff
2008 McWilliams Townsite. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/mcwilliams-townsite. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)
1950 *Boulder Canyon Project Final Reports*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Washington, D.C.

Bureau of the Census
1904 *Bulletin 8: Negroes in the United States*. Bureau of the Census, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

1913 *Thirteenth Census of the United States, Volume 1: Population, 1910.* Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

1922 Bulletin: Population: Nevada. *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920.* Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

1932 *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930* Population, Volume III, Part 2. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

1943 *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940*. Population, Volume II: Characteristics of the Population. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

1952 *A Report of the Seventeenth Decennial Census of the United States: Census of Population: 1950*. Volume ii: Characteristics of the Population. Part 28: Nevada. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

1961 *The Eighteenth Decennial Census of the United States: Census of Population: 1960*. Volume I: Characteristics of the Population. Part 30: Nevada. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

1970 *1970 Census of Population: Advance Report*. Nevada: General Population Characteristics. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

1973 *1970 Census of Population*. Volume I: Characteristics of the Population. Part 30 Nevada. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

1981a *1980 Census of Population*. Volume 1: Characteristics of the Population. Part 30: Nevada. Chapter A: Number of Inhabitants. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

1981b *1980 Census of Population*. Volume 1: Characteristics of the Population. Part 30: Nevada. Chapter C: General Social and Economic Characteristics. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

Capps, Kriston, and Kate Rabinowitz
2018 How the Fair Housing Act Failed Black Homeowners. Available at: https://www.citylab.com/equity/2018/04/how-the-fair-housing-act-failed-black-homeowners/557576/. Accessed January 31, 2020.

Carson City Daily Appeal
1917 The Negro Soldiers. 3 October. Carson City, Nevada.

Charles, Henrietta
1981 Black Church Facing Demands for Change. *Reno Evening Gazette* 3 July:3. Reno, Nevada.

Christie, Matt
2018 On This Day: Joe Gans Defeats Battling Nelson via 42nd Round Disqualification. Available at: https://www.boxingnewsonline.net/on-this-day-joe-gans-defeats-battling-nelson-via-42nd-round-disqualification-in-goldfield/. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Chute, Mahlon W. L.
2014 "Don't Fence Me In": Architecture, Tourism, and Segregation in Las Vegas. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara.

Coray, Michael
1992 African-Americans in Nevada. *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 33(4):239–257.

Cotton, George
1971 Interview conducted by Lenore M. Kosso. On file, University of Nevada, Reno Oral History, 1970–1971. UNOHP Catalog #048., pp. 25–32.

Cross, Cheri
1967 Challenge Faced at Black Springs. *Nevada State Journal* 26 March:1, 10. Reno, Nevada.

Cyriaque, Jeanne, Keith Hebert, and Steven Moffson
2009 *Rosenwald Schools in Georgia*. Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta.

Davis, Emerson S.
1972 Interview conducted by Ruth G. Hilts. On file, University of Nevada, Reno Oral History, 1971–1972. UNOHP Catalog #055, pp. 81–91.

Durham, Philip, and Everett L. Jones
1983 *The Negro Cowboys*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln.

Earl, Phillip I.
1994 Nevada's Miscegenation Laws and the Marriage of Mr. And Mrs. Harry Bridges. *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 37(1):1–17.

Ebony
1950 Reno Divorcee. *Ebony* (August). Johnson Publishing Company, Chicago.

Edwards, Jerome
2011 Comstock Lode. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/comstock-lode. Accessed January 27, 2020.

Emerson, John Herbert
2012 Methodism in Nevada Part II. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/methodism-nevada-part-ii. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Foger, Oscar
2005 Interview with Oscar Foger. Interviewed by Suzanne Becker. Nevada Test Site Oral History Project, Las Vegas. Available at: http://d.library.unlv.edu/digital/collection/nts/id/1325. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Forbes, Jack D.
1966 *Afro-Americans in the Far West*. Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, Berkeley, California.

Forletta, Felicia
2012 A Historical Case Study of School Desegregation and Resegregation in Las Vegas, Nevada, 1968-2008. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Gates, Jr., Henry Louis
2013 What Was Black America's Double War. Available at: https://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/history/what-was-black-americas-double-war/. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Geran, Trish
2006 *Beyond the Glimmering Lights: The Pride and Perseverance of African Americans in Las Vegas.* Stephens Press, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Goodrich, James
1954 Negroes Can't Win in Las Vegas. *Ebony* 9(5):44–53.

Goodwin, Joanne L.
2012 Nevada Civil Rights Act of 1965. *Nevada Lawyer* 20(2):8–18.

Goodwin, Joanne, and Claytee White
2011 Sarann Knight Preddy, Entrepreneur. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/sarann-knight-preddy-entrepreneur. Accessed January 31, 2020.

Green, Michael
2009 Moulin Rouge. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/moulin-rouge. Accessed January 31, 2020.

2015 Nevada's Role in Civil Rights Act, Part II. Available at: https://knpr.org/knpr/2015-07/nevadas-role-civil-rights-act-part-ii. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Grimes, Teresa
2008 Historic Resources Associated with African Americans in Los Angeles. Christopher A. Joseph and Associates, Los Angeles, California.

Hall, Shawn
2020 Tonopah's History. Available at: http://www.tonopahnevada.com/history/. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Hardaway, Roger D.
1997 African American Women on the Western Frontier. *Negro History Bulletin* 60(1):8–13.

Harmon, Mella
2001 Bethel AME: The Oldest Surviving African-American Church in Nevada. *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 44(3):270–284.

2009 Reno: Twentieth-Century Divorce Capital. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/reno-twentieth-century-divorce-capital. Accessed January 28, 2020.

2011 Reno and the African American Divorce Trade: Two Case Studies. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/reno-and-african-american-divorce-trade-two-case-studies. Accessed January 28, 2020.

2020 El Reno Apartments (Original Site). Available at: http://renohistorical.org/items/show/8?tour=10&index=27. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Hashaw, Tim
2007 The First Black Americans. Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20110202205901/https://www.usnews.com/usnews/news/articles/070121/29african.htm. Accessed January 24, 2020.

Healthy Southern Nevada
2020 2019 Demographics. Available at: http://www.healthysouthernnevada.org/demographic data?id=1800&sectionId=940. Accessed January 31, 2020.

Hinman, Debbie
2010 Black Springs: A Colorful History. *Historic Reno Preservation Society, Footprints* 13(1):7–9.

History
2009 The Compromise of 1850. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/abolitionist-movement/compromise-of-1850. Accessed January 24, 2020.

2018a Bleeding Kansas. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/19th-century/bleeding-kansas. Accessed January 24, 2020.

2018b Fair Housing Act. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/fair-housing-act. Accessed January 24, 2020.

2018c Nevada. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/us-states/nevada. Accessed January 27, 2020.

2019a Kansas-Nebraska Act. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/19th-century/kansas-nebraska-act. Accessed January 24, 2020.

2019b Dred Scott Decision. Available at: https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/dred-scott-decision. Accessed January 24, 2020.

2019c John Brown's Raid on Harpers Ferry. Available at: https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/john-browns-raid-on-harpers-ferry. Accessed January 24, 2020.

2019d Ku Klux Klan. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/reconstruction/ku-klux-klan. Accessed January 24, 2020.

2020 Great Migration. Available at: https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/great-migration. Accessed January 24, 2020.

Hulse, James W.
1991 *The Silver State: Nevada's Heritage Reinterpreted.* University of Nevada Press, Reno.

James, Ronald, and Julie Rose
2009 Storey County Courthouse. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/storey-county-courthouse. Accessed July 19, 2020.

Kling, Dwayne
2000 *The Rise of the Biggest Little City: An Encyclopedic History of Reno Gaming, 1931-1981.* University of Nevada Press, Reno.

Kling, Rose, Wilma Evans, Sally Price, and Meri Price
2005 *A Family Affair: Harolds Club and the Smiths Remembered*. Interviewed by R. T. King. Nevada Oral History Program, Reno.

Kolvet, Renee Corona, and Victoria Ford
2006 *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Nevada: From Boys to Men.* University of Nevada Press, Reno.

Larsen, Julia
2009 Ben Palmer (c. 1817-1908). Available at: https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/palmer-ben-c-1817-1908/. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Lee, Antoinette J., and Linda F. McClelland
1999 *National Register Bulletin—How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form*. Originally published 1991, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Available at: https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16b/. Accessed October 23, 2017.

Library of Congress
2008 World War I and Post War Society. Available at: https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaohtml/exhibit/aopart7.html. Accessed January 28, 2020.

2020 Race Relations in the 1930s and 1940s. Available at: http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/depwwii/race/. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Loewen, James W.
2005 *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism.* New Press, New York.

Marschall, John
2010 Islam in Nevada. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/islam-nevada. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Mathews, Jr., H. Clyde
1969 *Oral Autobiography of a Modern-Day Baptist Minister: Life in California, Missionary to the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Office of Economic Opportunity, Nevada Politics and Civic Affairs.* Interviewed by Mary Ellen Glass. University of Nevada Oral History Program. Available at: https://archive.org/details/MathewsClyde/page/n137/mode/2up. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Mathis, Tya R.
2019 The Story of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority in Las Vegas. Available at: https://digital.library.unlv.edu/aae/story-delta-sigma-sorority-las-vegas. Accessed June 26, 2019.

McBride, Terri, and Michael "Bert" Bedeau
2008 *School Buildings in Nevada*. Nevada State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

McKee, Robert Joseph
2012 Community Resources and Black Social Action: F Street, A Case Study. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Miller, Geralda D.
2009 The Biggest Little Struggle: Black Activism in Reno, 1954 to 1965. M.A. thesis, University of Nevada, Reno.

2012 Bar None: Pioneer African-American lawyers in Northern Nevada. *Nevada Lawyer* 20(2):32–34.

Mingus, Richard W.
1995 Breakdown in the Broker State: The CIO in Southern Nevada During World War II. M.A. thesis, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Moehring, Eugene
2004 Civil Rights and Employment Equity in Las Vegas Casinos: The Failed Enforcement of the Casino Consent Decree, 1971-1986. *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 47(4):283–303.

Moehring, Eugene P., and Michael S. Green
2005 *Las Vegas: A Centennial History*. University of Nevada Press, Las Vegas.

Moore, Alan
2010 Nevada Test Site Overview. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/nevada-test-site-overview. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Myers, Dennis
2018 The Secret History of Reno. Available at: https://www.newsreview.com/reno/secret-history-of-reno/content?oid=26171115. Accessed April 19, 2020.

National Archives
1941 Executive Order 8802. June 25, 1941. General Records of the United States Government. Record Group 11. Available at: https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=72. Accessed February 13, 2020.

1948 Executive Order 9981. July 26. General Records of the United States Government, Record Group 11. Available at: https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=84. Accessed January 24, 2020.

National Park Service (NPS)
1983 *Archaeology and Historic Preservation: Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines* [As Amended and Annotated]. Available at: https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_0.htm. Accessed October 23, 2017.

1997 *National Register Bulletin—How to Complete the National Register Registration Form.* U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Available at: https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/. Accessed October 23, 2017.

2008 *Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites*. Rev. ed. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Historic Landmarks Program, Washington, D.C.

2016 Civil Rights Act of 1964. Available at: https://www.nps.gov/articles/civil-rights-act.htm. Accessed January 28, 2020.

2020a African American Civil Rights Grants. Available at: https://www.nps.gov/preservation-grants/civil-rights/. Accessed January 31, 2020.

2020b *African American History Timeline: 1619-2008*. Available at: https://www.nps.gov/saga/learn/education/upload/African%20American%20History%20Timeline.pdf. Accessed January 24, 2020.

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)
2002 *National Register Bulletin—How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. First published 1990. Available at: https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/. Accessed April 12, 2016.

Nevada Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights (NAC)
1962 The Report of the Nevada Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. NC18, University of Nevada, Reno Special Collections.

Nevada Historical Markers
2020 Markers Found along I-80. Available at: http://nevadahistoricalmarkers.com/tag/i-80/. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau
2016 *Policy and Program Report: Labor and Employment*. Available at: leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Publications/PandPReport/02-LE.pdf. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (NVSHPO)
2018 Solicitation – FY2018 African American Civil Rights Grant (NPS). Nevada State Historic Preservation Office, Carson City.

Nevada State Journal
1942 No Negro Troops at Lemmon Valley. 9 October. *Nevada State Journal*, Reno.

Nevada Women's History Project
2020 Alice Lucretia Smith. Available at: https://www.nevadawomen.org/research-center/biographies-alphabetical/alice-lucretia-smith/. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Oliver, Mamie O.
2006 Idaho Ebony: The African-American presence in Idaho State History. *The Journal of African-American History* 91(1):41–54.

Online Nevada Encyclopedia
2020 Civil Rights in Nevada. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/civil-rights-nevada. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Our Story, Inc.
2020 Black Springs, Nevada—A Study In Perseverance. Available at: https://ourstoryinc.com/did-you-know-2/oral-history/black-springs-a-study-in-perseverance/. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Oyez
2020a Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1). Available at: https://www.oyez.org/cases/1940-1955/347us483. Accessed January 28, 2020.

2020b Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (2). Available at: https://www.oyez.org/cases/1940-1955/349us294. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Porter, Jess
2019 African Americans in the CCC. Available at: https://ualrexhibits.org/ccc/african-americans-in-the-ccc/. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Porter, Kenneth W.
2001 Black Cowboys in the American West, 1866-1900. In *African Americans on the Western Frontier*, edited by Monroe Lee Billington and Roger D. Hardaway, pp. 110–127. University Press of Colorado, Niwot.

President's Committee on Civil Rights
1946 To Secure These Rights: The Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights. Available at: https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/to-secure-these-rights#VII. Accessed January 28, 2020.

PRW Project
2020 La Concha Motel, The Neon Museum, Las Vegas, NV. Available at: https://www.paulrwilliamsproject.org/gallery/la-concha-motel-the-neon-museum-las-vegas-nv/. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)
2007 War Production. Available at: https://www.pbs.org/thewar/at_home_war_production.htm. Accessed January 28, 2020.

2020 Virginia's Slave Codes. Available at: https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1p268.html. Accessed January 24, 2020.

Rafferty, Kevin
2008 Roman Catholicism in Nevada. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/roman-catholicism-nevada. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Ragan, Tom
2013 Las Vegas Pastor, Civil Rights Defender Marion Bennett Dies at 80. Available at: https://www.reviewjournal.com/local/local-las-vegas/las-vegas-pastor-civil-rights-defender-marion-bennett-dies-at-80/. Accessed January 31, 2020.

Rayle, Greta J., and Helana Ruter
2015 *World War II Era Residential Housing In Las Vegas, Clark County, Nevada (1940-1945)*. Prepared for City of Las Vegas Development Services Center and Historic Preservation Commission. Logan Simpson, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Reader, Robert J.
2007 A Tale of Two Cities: The African American Struggle for Civil Rights in Babbitt and Hawthorne, Nevada. M.A. thesis, University of Nevada, Reno.

Reno Evening Gazette
1958 NAACP Seeks Civil Rights Law in Nevada. *Reno Evening Gazette* 10 September:6. Reno, Nevada.

1962 Jobs Barred to Negroes. *Reno Evening Gazette* 8 October. Reno, Nevada.

1966 200 to Attend Church Session. *Reno Evening Gazette* 11 August:45. Reno, Nevada.

1967 Special Week in the Outdoors for Nevada Youngsters. *Reno Evening Gazette* 30 May:10. Reno, Nevada.

1971 NAACP branch plans meeting at church. *Reno Evening Gazette* 27 May:3. Reno, Nevada.

1981 Northeast Reno: The Myth Persists. *Reno Evening Gazette* 1 July:3. Reno, Nevada.

Reno Housing Authority (RHA)
n.d. [ca. 1958] The Opposition to Public Housing in Reno Has Presented the Following Questions and Statements. NC18, University of Nevada, Reno Special Collections.

Robinson, Hannah, and Melise Leech.
2019 Guide to the Basic Magnesium, Inc. (BMI) Records and Photographs. Available at: https://www.library.unlv.edu/speccol/finding-aids/MS-00126.pdf. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Rozen-Wheeler, Adam
2017 The Boston Saloon (1864-1875). Available at: https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/boston-saloon-1864-1875/. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Rusco, Elmer R.
1975 *"Good Time Coming?": Black Nevadans in the Nineteenth Century.* Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut.

2019 Civil Rights Movement in Nevada. In Black Americans and the Civil Rights Movement in the West, edited by Bruce A. Glasrud and Cary D. Wintz, pp. 71–87. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Schwartz, David
2014 My Nevada 5: The Days that Changed the Gaming World. Available at: https://www.unlv.edu/news/article/my-nevada-5-days-changed-gaming-world. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Smithsonian Institution
2020 Buffalo Soldiers. National Museum of African American History and Culture. Available at: https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/manylenses/buffalosoldiers. Accessed February 7, 2020.

Southern Poverty Law Center
2020 Nation of Islam. Available at: https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/nation-islam. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Spring Mountain Ranch State Park
2017 Black History Month: John Howell the First Black Land Owner in Nevada. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/notes/spring-mountain-ranch-state-park/black-history-month-john-howell-the-first-black-land-owner-in-nevada/1758038254222114. Accessed July 19, 2020.

Steward, Stanley
2012 Pentecostalism in Nevada. Available at: http://onlinenevada.org/articles/pentecostalism-nevada. Accessed January 28, 2020.

Swallow, Craig F.
1981 The Ku Klux Klan in Nevada During the 1920s. *Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 24(3):203–220.

Taylor, Quintard
1998 *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528-1990.* W. W. Norton, New York, New York.

Tonopah Daily Bonanza
1917 Give 'Em What They Want. 27 August. Tonopah, Nevada.

Toy, Steve
1971 First Black Principal for Washoe Schools. 28 April. *Reno Evening Gazette*. Reno, Nevada.

Traverse, Hannah
2017 Moving Forward Initiative: the African American Experience in the Civilian Conservation Corps. Available at: https://corpsnetwork.org/blogs/moving-forward-initiative-the-african-american-experience-in-the-civilian-conservation-corps/. Accessed January 28, 2020.

United States Census Bureau
1870 Nativity and Nationality: A Compendium of the Ninth Census. Available at: https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1870/compendium/1870e-18.pdf?#. Accessed April 25, 2020.

University of Richmond Digital Scholarship Lab
2020 Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America. Available at: https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=5/40.33/-124.774. Accessed April 25, 2020.

Van West, Carroll
2013 *The Civil Rights Movement in Selma, Alabama, 1865-1972*. MTSU Center of Historic Preservation, Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Visit Carson Valley
2020 Ben Palmer: Meeting the American Dream in Carson Valley. Available at: https://visitcarsonvalley.org/ben-palmer-meeting-american-dream-carson-valley/. Accessed April 25, 2020.

White, Claytee
1997 The Roles of African American Women in the Las Vegas Gaming Industry, 1940-1980. M.A. thesis, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

2004 The March That Never Happened: Desegregating the Las Vegas Strip. *Nevada Law Journal* 5(1):71–83.

2010a Mabel Hoggard. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/mabel-hoggard. Accessed January 31, 2020.

2010b Bob Bailey. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/bob-bailey. Accessed January 31, 2020.

2011a Charles I. West. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/charles-i-west. Accessed January 31, 2020.

2011b J. David Hoggard, Sr. Available at: http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/j-david-hoggard-sr. Accessed January 31, 202.

2013 Using Oral History to Record the Story of the Las Vegas African American Community. In *Oral History, Community, and Work in the American West*, edited by Jessie L. Embry, pp.150–174. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

White, William G., Ronald M. James, and Richard Bernstein (editors)
1991 *Nevada Comprehensive Preservation Plan*. Originally published 1989. Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology (Department of Conservation and Natural Resources) and Nevada Historical Society (Department of Museums and History), Reno.

Wilson, Woodrow
1989 Interview conducted by Jamie Coughtry. Woodrow Wilson: Race, Community and Politics in Las Vegas, 1940s-1980s. Available at University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Wolfenbarger, Deon
2010 *African American Resources in Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas.* Three Gables Preservation, Nederland, Colorado.

2011 *African American Resources in Manhattan, Kansas.* Three Gables Preservation, Nederland, Colorado.

Woodard, Bertha
1991 *Oral History with Bertha Woodard*. Interviewed by Gwen Clancy. University of Nevada, Reno Libraries, Reno.

Wyatt, Barbara
2009 *The Components of a Historic Context: A National Register White Paper*. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.

This page intentionally left blank.

APPENDIX A

Identified Properties Potentially Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places

Table A-1. National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) Listed Resources and Potentially NRHP-Eligible Resources

Resource Name	City	County	NVCRIS #	Condition	Property Type
221 Lake Street	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Military
520 Spokane Street	Reno	Washoe	–	Demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
875 E Second Street	Reno	Washoe	–	Demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
AME Church (F Street)	Virginia City	Storey	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Church/House of Worship
AME Zion Church	Carson City	Carson City	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Church/House of Worship
Annie's Kitchen (1212 D Street)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Good	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Ashlar Lodge No. 9	Virginia City	Storey	–	Unknown	Sorority/Fraternal Organization
Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge	Amargosa Valley	Nye	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Babbitt	Babbitt	Mineral	–	Poor; military housing removed	Neighborhood/Business District
B and C Streets	Virginia City	Storey	–	Fair	Neighborhood/Business District
Bailey's Room and Board (corner of Toana Street and 7th Street)	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Residence
Beckwourth Pass/Beckwourth Trail	Reno (vicinity)	Washoe	–	Fair	Other
Ben Palmer Ranch	Genoa (vicinity)	Douglas	–	Fair; portions of ranch demolished	Residence
Berkley Square Historic District	Las Vegas	Clark	09000846*	Good	Neighborhood/Business District
Bethel AME Church	Reno	Washoe	1000587*	Good	Church/House of Worship
Bethel Baptist Church	Hawthorne	Mineral	–	Good	Church/House of Worship
Binion House	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Good	Residence
Black Springs Historic District	Reno Vicinity	Washoe	–	Fair	Neighborhood/Business District
Black Springs Fire Station	Reno Vicinity	Washoe	–	Good	Other
Boston Saloon	Virginia City	Storey	–	Demolished	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Brown Derby (Jackson Street vicinity)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Butterfly's Junk Removal	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Cadillac Arms Historic District (bounded by D Street, Interstate 15, Fredrick Avenue, and Owens Avenue)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Good	Neighborhood/Business District
Carver House	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Residence
Carver Park	Henderson	Clark	–	Unknown	Neighborhood/Business District

Resource Name	City	County	NVCRIS #	Condition	Property Type
Cass Eppenger's Wood Service	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Church of God in Christ (Corner of F Street and Madison Street)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Good	Church/House of Worship
Clark Avenue Railroad Underpass	Las Vegas	Clark	03001509*	Good	Site/Building/Public Space Related to Civil Rights Activities
Club Alabama (Fremont Street vicinity)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Colored Independent Political Club	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown	Headquarters of Political Group
Cotton Club (Jackson Street vicinity)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Cove Hotel	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Culinary Workers Union, Local 226	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Good	Union-Related Facility
Dairy Queen (00 block of Bonanza Road)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Do Drop In	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Elko Republican Club	Elko	Elko	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Headquarters of Political Group
Elks Club (Jackson Street vicinity)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Sorority/Fraternal Organization
Elks Lodge Building	Henderson	Clark	–	Good	Sorority/Fraternal Organization
El Dorado Canyon Mining District	Nelson	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly partially demolished	Business/Commercial Enterprise
El Morocco Club (Jackson Street vicinity)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
El Reno Apartments	Reno	Washoe	–	Fair to Good	Residence
El Rio (Jackson Street vicinity)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Emma's Salon	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
EnSoul Salon	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
F Street	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Poor to Good	Neighborhood/Business District
F Street Mural (F Street Underpass)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Good	Monument/Mural
First Baptist Church (B Street)	Virginia City	Storey	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Church/House of Worship
First Baptist Church of Black Springs (100 Coretta Way)	Reno	Washoe	–	Good	Church/House of Worship
First Church of Christ, Scientist (Lear Theater)	Reno	Washoe	99000939* 820076†	Good	Church/House of Worship
Four Mile	Las Vegas Vicinity	Clark	–	Unknown	Neighborhood/Business District

Resource Name	City	County	NVCRIS #	Condition	Property Type
Frank Levy's Economy Oil and Ice Store	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Fremont Street	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Fair	Neighborhood/Business District
Garvey, Luella, House	Reno	Washoe	03001510* 030125†	Good	Residence
Harlem Club (221 East Douglas Alley)	Reno	Washoe	–	Demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Harrison House	Las Vegas	Clark	140152†	Good	Residence
Hawthorne Guest House (542 Valley Road)	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Hawthorne Naval Ammunition Depot	Hawthorne	Mineral	–	Fair	Military Facility
Historic Westside	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Fair	Neighborhood/Business District
Holiness Church of God in Christ (First Baptist Church)	Black Springs	Washoe	–	Unknown	Church/House of Worship
Hotel Louie	Elko	Elko	–	Likely demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Huntridge Theater	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Good	Performing Arts Spaces
Jackson Street Commercial District	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Poor to Good	Neighborhood/Business District
Jean's Barber Shop	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Jefferson's Mortuary (705 West Van Buren)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Key Club (Jackson Street vicinity)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Kiah's Squeeze In	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
King's Lounge	Reno	Washoe	–	Fair	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
La Concha Motel Lobby	Las Vegas	Clark	150154†	Good	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Lake-Evans District	Reno	Washoe	–	Fair	Neighborhood/Business District
Las Vegas Grammar School	Las Vegas	Clark	79001460*	Good	School
Lincoln Union Club	Virginia City	Storey	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Headquarters of Political Group
Loomis Manor (1045 Riverside Drive)	Reno	Washoe	–	Good	Residence
Louis Motel	Elko	Elko	–	Unknown	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Louisiana Club (Jackson Street vicinity)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
McWilliams Townsite/Historic Westside	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Poor	Neighborhood/Business District
Mizpah Lodge #206 (Prince Hall Masons)	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Sorority/Fraternal Organization

Resource Name	City	County	NVCRIS #	Condition	Property Type
Moulin Rouge Hotel	Las Vegas	Clark	92001701*	Demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Mt. Hope Baptist Church	Black Springs	Washoe	–	Good	Church/House of Worship
Mt. Zion Baptist Church	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown	Church/House of Worship
Needham Court Apartments (501 Elko Avenue)	Reno	Washoe	–	Fair	Residence
Negro Masonic Lodge (419 North Virginia Street)	Reno	Washoe	–	Demolished	Sorority/Fraternal Organization
New Bethel Baptist Church (Corner of D Street and Adams Street)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Good	Church/House of Worship
New China Club (260 Lake Street)	Reno	Washoe	–	Demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
New Town Tavern (Jackson Street vicinity)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Nick's Restaurant (First Street and Ogden Avenue)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Likely demolished	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Oasis Valley	Beatty	Nye	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Oklahoma Café	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Operation Life (400 W Jackson Street)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown	Headquarters of Political Group
Our Lady of Perpetual Help	Hawthorne	Mineral	–	Good	Church/House of Worship
Palmer Ranch	Genoa	Douglas	–	Fair	Residence; Business/Commercial Enterprise
Pilgrim Church of Christ Holiness (Corner of D Street and Harrison Street)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Good	Church/House of Worship
Peavine Club (219 Evans Avenue)	Reno	Washoe	–	Demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Ruby Duncan Manor	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Fair	Neighborhood/Business District
Second Baptist Church of Reno	Reno	Washoe	–	Good	Church/House of Worship
Second Baptist Church (500 West Madison Avenue)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Good	Church/House of Worship
Shamrock Hotel (Main Street and Bonanza Road)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Society to Underwrite Racial Equality (207 E Second St)	Reno	Washoe	–	Demolished	Headquarters of Political Group
Springs Preserve	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; likely demolished	Business/Commercial Enterprise

Resource Name	City	County	NVCRIS #	Condition	Property Type
State Historical Marker #220	Reno	Washoe	–	Good (property it commemorates demolished)	Monument/Mural
St. James Catholic Church	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Church/House of Worship
St. John's Lodge No. 13	Carson City	Carson City		Unknown; possibly demolished	Sorority/Fraternal Organization
St. Paul Baptist Church	Hawthorne	Mineral	–	Unknown	Church/House of Worship
Stewart Street Business District (area between Stewart Street and Blocks Sixteen and Seventeen)	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Neighborhood/Business District
Sutro Park	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown	Site/Building/Public Space Related to Civil Rights Activities
Tonga Club	Hawthorne	Mineral	–	Unknown	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Town Tavern	Las Vegas	Clark	–	Unknown; possibly demolished	Hotel/Casino/Entertainment Facility
Washington's Plumbing	Reno	Washoe	–	Unknown	Business/Commercial Enterprise
Westside School	Las Vegas	Clark	810059†	Good	School

Note: NVCRIS = Nevada Cultural Resource Information System

* NRHP listed

† SRHP listed

This page intentionally left blank.