

2008

Environment, labor, and race: an historical geography of St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, 1878-1956

Amy Rhiannon Sumpter

Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, asumpt1@lsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations



Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Sumpter, Amy Rhiannon, "Environment, labor, and race: an historical geography of St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, 1878-1956" (2008). *LSU Doctoral Dissertations*. 3784.

https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations/3784

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized graduate school editor of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.

ENVIRONMENT, LABOR, AND RACE:
AN HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY
OF ST. TAMMANY PARISH, LOUISIANA, 1878-1956

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Geography and Anthropology

by
Amy R. Sumpter
B.A., University of Kansas, 1999
M.A., University of Colorado, 2002
August 2008

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

While the production of a dissertation is an introspective and often solitary effort, it is also collaborative. I wish to thank several persons who contributed significantly to the research and writing of this dissertation. First, I would like to acknowledge the patience, interest, and attentiveness of the staff at Hill Memorial Library at LSU, in particular Judy Bolton, Germain Bienvenu, and Barry Cowen. Thanks also to Robin Perkins, archivist at the St. Tammany Parish Clerk of Court, who helped me comb through a huge amount of material while simultaneously helping hundreds of patrons obtain passports and marriage licenses.

I would also like to acknowledge all the interest and support that my friends and family have shared over the last few years. My parents, Mike and Janet, and my sisters, Megan and Molly, always gave words of encouragement, dismissed my doubts, and provided much needed comic relief. My father instilled in me a love of history and geography for which I am very grateful. My husband Steve encouraged me, provided technical support, and supplied excellent shoulder rubs after I'd read too many reels of microfilm.

Finally, I must give ultimate thanks to the members of my committee for their service: Frederick Weil, Kent Mathewson, Dydia DeLyser, Helen Regis, and my advisor Craig Colten. Through coursework and many hours of conversation, this team of individuals positively shaped or influenced almost every aspect of this project. I will always be indebted to them for their nurturance of a new scholar and their interest in the intersection of my personal and professional development. In particular, I would like to thank Dr. Colten for all his time spent reading (and re-reading) drafts of various chapters, writing recommendation letters, giving excellent and timely feedback, and being a mentor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ii

LIST OF TABLES v

LIST OF FIGURES vii

LIST OF MAPS ix

ABSTRACT x

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER 2: GEOGRAPHY AND RACE—RESEARCH CONTEXT AND
METHODOLOGY 10

INTRODUCTION 10

GEOGRAPHY AND RACE 12

 The Construction of Race: Economy and the State 14

 Race at the Individual Level..... 25

 Whiteness Studies..... 26

 Space, Environment, and Health 28

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY 37

 Research Approach: Critical Social Theory and Grounded Theory 39

 Research Questions and Data Sources..... 43

CHAPTER 3: THE GEOGRAPHY OF RACE IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH 52

INTRODUCTION 52

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. TAMMANY PARISH BEFORE 1878 54

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE, 1880-1960 58

 Racial Composition by Ward..... 58

 Growth of the Towns: Population, Rurality, and Segregation 72

 Migration and Immigration, 1880-1920 82

CONCLUSION 88

CHAPTER 4: LABOR AND RACE: AN ECONOMIC HISTORY OF
ST. TAMMANY PARISH, 1878-1956 91

INTRODUCTION 91

WORKING THE LAND: FARMING IN ST. TAMMANY..... 94

 The Early Period 1880-1920 and Connections with Antebellum Agriculture 94

 Development of Agriculture: Immigrants, Truck Farming, and the Problem of
 Cut-Over Land 105

 Economic Hardship and Rebound in Agriculture after 1930..... 113

A GIFT OF THE PINES: LUMBER AND RAILROADS..... 119

 The Arrival of the Lumber Companies: Importance of an Industry on Race and
 Segregation 120

 Saloons, Strikes, and Violence..... 130

WATER AND CLAY: THE SHIPBUILDING AND BRICKWORKS INDUSTRIES IN
 ST. TAMMANY 140

Shipping and Shipbuilding	141
Brick Manufacturing	145
VAGRANCY, DEBT PEONAGE, AND THE CONVICT LEASE SYSTEM	147
CONCLUSION: SKILLED AND UNSKILLED LABOR BY RACE IN ST. TAMMANY 1880-1920	151
<u>CHAPTER 5: “A NATURAL SUBURB”: HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, AND RACE IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH.....</u>	156
INTRODUCTION	156
HEALTH, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND PERCEPTIONS OF DIFFERENCE.....	157
HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT: PINES, OZONE, AND RACE	159
The Pines and Natural Springs.....	159
Hotels and Hospitals: The Color of Health	172
Employment in Health and Resorts	191
Sanitation: Cleaning Up Perceptions of Health	194
“A NATURAL SUBURB”: GOLF, SUBDIVISIONS, AND THE LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN CAUSEWAY.....	200
CONCLUSION	208
<u>CHAPTER 6: SEGREGATION, DIFFERENTIATION, AND VIOLENCE: THE POLITICAL CULTURE OF RACE.....</u>	211
INTRODUCTION	211
VIOLENCE: MEDIUM OF RACIAL SEGREGATION	213
POLITICS, VOTING, AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM.....	229
SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION.....	244
CONCLUSION: A “LAYERED” SOCIETY	253
<u>CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION</u>	256
<u>WORKS CITED</u>	262
<u>VITA</u>	280

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 3.1. RACIAL COMPOSITION (TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES) BY WARD, 1880..... 59

TABLE 3.2. RACIAL COMPOSITION (TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES) BY WARD, 1900..... 62

TABLE 3.3. RACIAL COMPOSITION (TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES) BY WARD, 1920..... 65

TABLE 3.4. RACIAL COMPOSITION (TOTAL AND PERCENTAGES) BY WARD, 1940..... 67

TABLE 3.5. RACIAL COMPOSITION (TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES) BY WARD, 1960..... 69

TABLE 3.6. TOTAL TOWN POPULATION AND PERCENT GROWTH FROM PREVIOUS PERIOD, 1880-1960 73

TABLE 3.7. PERCENT OF POPULATION LIVING IN RURAL AREAS IN ST. TAMMANY BY RACE, 1880-1940..... 77

TABLE 3.8. PERCENT POPULATION BORN IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY BY WARD, 1880-1960 83

TABLE 4.1. PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE BY WARD 95

TABLE 4.2. TOTAL NUMBER OF FARM LABORERS AND FARMERS BY RACIAL GROUP AND WARD IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH, 1880 100

TABLE 4.3. TOTAL NUMBER OF FARM LABORERS AND FARMERS BY RACIAL GROUP AND WARD IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH, 1900 101

TABLE 4.4. TOTAL NUMBER OF FARM LABORERS AND FARMERS BY RACIAL GROUP AND WARD IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH, 1920 102

TABLE 4.5. PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYED POPULATION WORKING IN LUMBER INDUSTRIES 124

TABLE 4.6. PERCENTAGE OF THE LUMBER EMPLOYEES LISTED AS BLACK OR MULATTO 126

TABLE 4.7. PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYED BLACK AND MULATTO MEN WORKING IN LUMBER INDUSTRY 126

TABLE 4.8. TOTAL NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF WORKERS EMPLOYED IN THE SHIP/SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY BY RACE 1880-1920 143

TABLE 4.9. EMPLOYEES IN THE SHIP/SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL WORKFORCE, BY WARD, 1880-1920..... 144

TABLE 4.10. TOTAL NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF WORKERS EMPLOYED IN BRICK MANUFACTURING BY RACE AND WARD, 1880-1920	146
TABLE 4.11. EMPLOYMENT IN BRICK MANUFACTURING AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL WORKFORCE.....	147
TABLE 4.12. PERCENTAGE OF WORKFORCE CLASSIFIED AS LABORER BY WARD, 1880-1920	152
TABLE 4.13. TOTAL NUMBER OF MEN EMPLOYED AS LABOR, BY PERCENTAGE RACE AND WARD, 1880-1920.....	154
TABLE 6.1. SCHOOL EXPENDITURES AND ATTENDANCE BY RACE, 1909.....	247

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 3.1. RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION BY WARD, 1880 74

FIGURE 3.2. RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION BY WARD, 1900 75

FIGURE 3.3. RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION BY WARD, 1920 76

FIGURE 3.4. PRIMARY COUNTRIES OF BIRTH OF ST. TAMMANY IMMIGRANTS, 1880..... 84

FIGURE 3.5. PRIMARY COUNTRIES OF BIRTH OF ST. TAMMANY IMMIGRANTS, 1900..... 84

FIGURE 3.6. PRIMARY COUNTRIES OF BIRTH OF ST. TAMMANY IMMIGRANTS, 1920..... 85

FIGURE 3.7. PRIMARY COUNTRIES OF BIRTH OF ST. TAMMANY IMMIGRANTS, 1940..... 85

FIGURE 3.8. ST. TAMMANY RESIDENTS BORN OUTSIDE LOUISIANA BY RACE
AND STATE, 1880..... 86

FIGURE 3.9. ST. TAMMANY RESIDENTS BORN OUTSIDE LOUISIANA BY RACE
AND STATE, 1900..... 87

FIGURE 3.10. ST. TAMMANY RESIDENTS BORN OUTSIDE LOUISIANA BY RACE
AND STATE, 1920..... 87

FIGURE 4.1. MR. STRAWBERRY GREETING COUSIN CANTALOUPE 110

FIGURE 4.2. POTTEVANT AND FAVRE LUMBER COMPANY STRAWBERRY PROMOTION..... 112

FIGURE 4.3. R.W. LECHE STOCK FARM 118

FIGURE 4.4. THE WORLD FAMOUS OZONE BELT 121

FIGURE 4.5. THE GREENLAW LUMBER COMPANY, 1905 123

FIGURE 4.6. REFORESTATION BY THE GREAT SOUTHERN LUMBER COMPANY 123

FIGURE 4.7. GATHERING TURPENTINE IN THE PINE FOREST, COVINGTON, LA..... 127

FIGURE 4.8. TURPENTINE CAMPS NEAR MANDEVILLE OWNED BY THE GREAT
SOUTHERN LUMBER COMPANY 128

FIGURE 4.9. THE JAHNCKE SHIPYARDS IN MADISONVILLE, WORLD WAR I..... 142

FIGURE 5.1. MACKIE PINE PRODUCTS COMPANY AD, 1916 162

FIGURE 5.2. MACKIE PINE PRODUCTS AD, 1920..... 163

FIGURE 5.3. A “FIRE-BUG” IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH..... 166

FIGURE 5.4. CAPTION: COVINGTON, LA. THE HEALTHIEST PLACE IN THE WORLD..... 173

FIGURE 5.5. LOUISIANA BOARD OF HEALTH TESTS CHILDREN FOR SYPHILIS..... 190

FIGURE 5.6: SANITARY PRIVY 195

FIGURE 5.7. DETERMINATION TO BUILD THE CAUSEWAY 203

FIGURE 5.8. ENGINEERED ISLANDS AS THE BASE FOR THE CAUSEWAY, 1924..... 205

LIST OF MAPS

MAP 3.1. PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR BY WARD, 1880 61

MAP 3.2. PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR BY WARD, 1900 63

MAP 3.3. PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR BY WARD, 1920 66

MAP 3.4. PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR BY WARD, 1940 68

MAP 3.5. PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR BY WARD, 1960 70

MAP 3.6. DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENTS OF COLOR IN COVINGTON, 1920 79

MAP 3.7. DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENTS OF COLOR IN MANDEVILLE, 1920 81

ABSTRACT

St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, is known as a white suburb of New Orleans. It also has a well-known history as a health resort for wealthy New Orleanians during the summer months, particularly during yellow fever outbreaks in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth centuries. This research investigates the historical geography of this parish in terms of race and attempts to answer the question of how St. Tammany became an attractive place for the development of white subdivisions in the 1950s. I uncover the connections between race, labor, the environment, and political culture of the parish from 1878—the year Reconstruction ended—to 1956, the year of the construction of the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway. Using archival materials, local government documents, and federal census schedules, I show that until the 1940s, St. Tammany Parish had a significant Black population comprising one-third of the total population and concentrated in the southern wards of the parish. After 1878, agriculture became closely tied with a white racial identity within the parish; the lumber, brick manufacturing, and shipbuilding industries became associated with Black racial identities. Perceptions of the environment as healthful and restorative helped establish a health and resort industry on the North Shore, the benefits of which were reserved for whites. These economic and environmental connections to racial identity depended on the legal and political definitions of people of African descent as “Black,” and whites enforced racial divisions with political maneuvers, violence, and access to educational opportunities.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, geography as a discipline has closely examined the issue of race both in the United States and abroad. Much of this work has investigated and excavated “race” as something that society has *created*, for the majority of scientists and scholars no longer view race as a singular biological reality. Geographers and other scholars have produced rigorous studies correlating changes in racial constructions and social identity with changes in economic, environmental, and political conditions (Anderson 1987, Hoelscher 2003, Schein 2006). The vast majority of these studies have focused on urban and suburban places, which have been critical and dynamic spaces of social interaction and identity formation. This urban and suburban focus to some extent has eclipsed the geographic study of race in *rural* places, although there are some notable exceptions (Delaney 1998, Aiken 2001, Hoelscher 2003, Winders 2003, McCarthy and Hague 2004). This study—focusing on St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana—addresses the importance of racial constructions in rural areas, particularly in the U.S. South, and contributes to this emerging and oft-overlooked area of scholarship.

St. Tammany Parish, in southeastern Louisiana, north of Lake Pontchartrain, is often considered a “white” suburb of New Orleans. In some respects this characterization is accurate based on population and proximity to the Crescent City. The parish population today is approximately 90 percent white (U.S. Census Bureau 2000), and after 1956, residents of the parish could easily commute to jobs in New Orleans via the new Lake Pontchartrain Causeway. The parish also has a reputation as a place *for* white people, and the fact that politician and former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke has a permanent residence there strikingly reinforces this image. Walker Percy, in his 1971 work of fiction *Love in the Ruins*, presented a caricature of St. Tammany as a white community of suburban houses and golf

courses surrounded by swampland populated with renegade Black people who inspired fear in the local white community.

The image and reputation of St. Tammany as a white suburb has antecedents in both its history and geography, but the historical geography of this (until recently) rural parish does not consist only of the story of white people. St. Tammany historically had a significant population of African descent, which comprised approximately one-third of the total population until well into the mid-twentieth century. And the parish's white suburban demographic and economic characteristics belie a complicated history of economics and race not many residing in the parish today are aware of.

While there is a dearth of information and scholarship on St. Tammany's past, local historians have produced a handful of scholarly works about the period of French and Spanish colonization, the growth of the parish, and the violent culture of the Florida Parishes, but none has given much attention to the issue of race (Ellis 1981, Hyde 1996). Sam Hyde (1996) ably demonstrates that whites committed organized acts of violence against Black people as a part of a general culture of violence and lawlessness in the Florida Parishes, but he does not consider the issue of race itself as central to these attacks. In other words, historians have yet to scrutinize the concept and construction of race in the context of St. Tammany Parish.

Other research by local authors has focused on the romantic history of the parish as a health resort. During much of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, visitors from New Orleans and more distant places traveled to St. Tammany to vacation in the beautiful scenery and—perhaps more importantly—to recover or protect their health. The expansive pine forests within the parish released a fragrance known as “ozone,” which nineteenth-century medical experts believed killed germs and cured respiratory ailments. Visitors bathed in or drank the water from natural springs and rivers in the area to alleviate

digestive and liver disorders. In the late nineteenth century, visitors stayed several days or weeks in hotels and sanitariums, particularly during yellow fever outbreaks in New Orleans, when many affluent New Orleanians fled to St. Tammany because of its proximity and healthful reputation. This idyllic history overlooks a significant element of the resort industry: whites prevented individuals of African descent from utilizing these resources. The “romantic” days of summer visitors in actuality conceals a story of segregation and exclusion (or access and privilege) based on racial identity.

Beginning in the early 1920s, local political and business leaders in St. Tammany proposed the construction of a bridge linking the parish with the city of New Orleans with the intention of developing the parish as a suburb and vacation spot for white New Orleanians. By the 1940s, subdivisions sprouted in the southern part of the parish, reflecting both an increase in the white population and the commitment to suburban development via the Causeway. This trend, however, marked a significant break from the parish’s economic and cultural past as an isolated, relatively poor area with significant populations of European, Native American, and African ancestry.

This research contributes to the geographic understanding of race in a rural, small-town setting outside of the plantation South; but it also has broader implications for the study of race in the South and in the U.S. as a whole. These implications are found in the ways St. Tammany both followed and diverged from regional and national trends regarding race, civil rights, violence, and the status of those individuals labeled “Black,” “Mulatto,” “colored” or “Negro.” In this dissertation, I focus on western St. Tammany because settlers established towns in this part of the parish much earlier than in east, where towns sprang up along railroads in the 1880s. I position St. Tammany in the context of the broader South, and in doing so, demonstrate how St. Tammany both followed and deviated from the patterns of increasing racial hostility and segregation after the end of Reconstruction. In

1877, voters across the South elected primarily Democratic tickets, ejecting from office those Republican politicians who had pushed for racial equality. Beginning in the year 1878, when the South began its work of re-establishing the racial hierarchy, this research investigates how individuals in St. Tammany approached the concept of racial identity.

Utilizing critical social theory, I explore how the economic, environmental and political/cultural geography of the parish were associated with and fundamentally influenced social outcomes based on racial identity from 1878 to 1956, the year crews completed construction of the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway. According to critical theorists, identity and difference are not staid characteristics based in human biology; they are concepts that fluctuate depending on external social conditions. Identity therefore can shift in both comparative social “value” and representation based on economic, environmental, and political changes. Understanding racial identity as a social construction allows us to interrogate social outcomes as the result of historical processes and individual and collective choices. This theoretical orientation and positioning of St. Tammany Parish, a unique place, within broader research on both the South and constructions of race contributes to both bodies of research.

Scholars have perhaps overlooked the study of racial identity in St. Tammany because it is quite complex—the proverbial “can of worms.” French and Spanish colonial practices in Louisiana encouraged relationships between free individuals of color and Europeans and considered individuals of both European and African ancestries as members of a distinct *race* (Hangar 1997). As the French, Spanish, and Africans settled in southeastern Louisiana in the eighteenth century, they also married and had sexual relationships with Native Americans, producing children of diverse ethnic backgrounds that defied strict racial classification. This fluid racial history that primarily affected the southern part of St. Tammany parish differed significantly with the settlers who moved into the northern part of

the parish in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These later settlers came primarily from elsewhere in the Upland South and had little experience with French or Spanish racial systems. St. Tammany therefore contained a very diverse population with diverse opinions about race and racial identity.

In the context of the collision of these different legacies regarding racial practices in the post-Reconstruction period to the mid-twentieth century, I contend that the economy, environment, and politics shaped constructions of race. Providing the basis for this investigation, I analyze the distribution of racial and ethnic groups in St. Tammany Parish from 1880 to 1960 using U.S. Census data in Chapter 3. This analysis shows that the southern part of the parish had much larger populations of African descent while the northern end of the parish was predominantly white. I show that immigrants in St. Tammany Parish came primarily from France and Germany, two groups which fairly easily (especially when compared to Irish or Italians) adopted white identities. I also provide a snapshot of segregation at the municipal level in 1920 by mapping census data on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. This application demonstrates that the older sections of both Mandeville and Covington had more integrated streets; sections developed in the 1870s and later were almost completely segregated based on race.

In Chapter 4, I address the question, how did the economy and labor shape racial identities? I first discuss the importance of farming in St. Tammany Parish and how these agricultural pursuits differed from other parts of Louisiana. I argue that because St. Tammany never developed large scale plantation agriculture, its population of African descent remained relatively mobile. In other words, St. Tammany did not have strong economic connections to slavery as did other sections of Louisiana and the South, which eliminated one of the most powerful and limiting ties between labor and identity that residents of African descent historically experienced. Farming in St. Tammany Parish

remained largely a small-scale white enterprise, a cultural connection so strong that white farmers fought lumber company control of common grazing lands by burning pine trees and sabotaging government controls in the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century.

Lumber companies in the late 1800s took advantage of the mobile population of African descent, employing a significant percentage of the population classified as “Black” or “Mulatto” within the parish. Even though lumber companies also employed a large number of whites as well, the large number of employees of African descent created an association of this type of labor with Black racial identities. White company owners had a difficult time maintaining racial boundaries in close working conditions, and violence marked areas controlled by lumber companies in the parish. Black employees became an essential part of the economic development of the parish, making the reinforcement of the color line even more difficult.

Shipbuilding and brickworks were two other industries in St. Tammany that had roots in the antebellum economy, but each one of these industries affected race in a different way. Prominent families of mixed European and African ancestry owned shipyards, particularly in Madisonville. Shipyards also employed large numbers of workers of African descent, and ship carpenters earned a reputation for excellence at their craft. Men of all racial groups worked in close proximity in the shipyards, blurring racial lines and reflecting a history of such blurring in some parts of the parish. Families of African descent had also owned brickworks in the parish in the antebellum period, but in the early 1900s, lumber companies helped construct brickworks on an industrial scale that employed hundreds of Black men as laborers and drove small-scale brickworks—owned by both whites and Blacks—out of business. Thus the role of Black (and white) workers in this industry shifted from one of entrepreneurship to one of labor.

In Chapter 5, I address the question, how did issues of health and environment shape racial identities? In this chapter I investigate the connections between health, environment, and white identity. The health resort industry, which included sanitariums, hotels, and natural springs, existed in St. Tammany because of white patronage and for white patronage. Medical practices of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries treated racial groups as biologically different. White residents of St. Tammany Parish thwarted efforts to establish Black treatment hospitals within parish borders, further entrenching the association between St. Tammany's healthful reputation and white racial identity. By the 1940s and 50s, residents of color had access to hospitals and parks but on a completely disparate and segregated basis. Because white New Orleanians and parish residents viewed St. Tammany as a healthful place for whites to vacation, business leaders in the early 1900s began to view the development of St. Tammany as a suburb as the "natural" result of this reputation and an economic endeavor that would benefit both St. Tammany and New Orleans.

In Chapter 6, I explore the cultural, political and legal means for the establishment of racial segregation and inequality. Between 1890 and 1930, Black residents of Louisiana and much of the South struggled against white politicians who fervently stripped them of their political and social rights. The goal of segregation and disenfranchisement was the complete removal of residents of African descent from the political and social lives of white residents. Whites frequently used violence to reinforce color lines and maintain racial hierarchies in the parish, but I argue that many whites did not support these activities. Important evidence demonstrates that white and Black voters continued to elect politicians of color in those parts of the parish with the strongest legacy of racial fluidity decades after Reconstruction. The political culture in St. Tammany was one of "layered" beliefs in which many whites adhered to tenets of white supremacy selectively if at all. By the 1920s and 30s, although almost no Black people voted in the parish, white voters continuously supported racial

“moderates” who did not disrupt the status quo but also did not tolerate racial hatred or animosity.

This research relies extensively on U.S. census data and accounts and information from the *St. Tammany Farmer*, the official register of the St. Tammany Police Jury, the St. Tammany Parish School Board, and the Covington Town Council. Additionally, I utilized Mandeville Town Council minutes, and other primary documents located in the archives of the St. Tammany Clerk of Court and Hill Memorial Library at Louisiana State University. I also conducted interviews with residents of the parish to corroborate newspaper accounts and provide insights official documents and newspapers did not represent.

Throughout this dissertation, I refer to racial categories in multiple ways. While using racial categories such as “Black” and “white” reifies the idea that these categories are actually distinct and normal, it also reflects the overarching racial constructions that literally tore Southern society in half. Terms to describe people of different racial categories—particularly those people of African descent—have changed based on political and social context. In this dissertation, I utilize both the terms “Black” and “people of color” to indicate those people of African descent who, despite their diverse ancestries, for legal and political reasons became lumped into the same racial category. The term “people of color,” while slightly out of favor and vague (typically it includes all those who are “non-white:” Asians, Native Americans, Hispanic, etc.), in the context of this dissertation refers to all people of African descent and reflects the importance of the term “of color” in the context of colonial New Orleans. I capitalize the term “Black,” however, to reflect consideration and political mobilization of people of African descent as an ethnic group, or a group with deep connections in terms of ancestry and experience despite racial classifications (see Collier-Thomas and Turner 1994 for a summary of changing terminology). When attempting to explain events, beliefs, or policy that hinged on the difference between

“whites” and “Blacks,” I often use these terms with the awareness that the term “Black” includes many people with extensive European ancestry in addition to African forebears, including those individuals classified as “Mulatto.” Additionally the term “white” includes multiple ethnic groups who fit problematically into racial schema and many people who had Native American or African ancestry but “passed” as members of that racial group. I have attempted to “re-complicate” these racial constructs by frequently using the term “of African descent” or “people of color” to include individuals who appear in the census as either “Black” or “Mulatto,” but this descriptor is also troublesome because it implies that “white” individuals had no African ancestors at any point in their genealogies. Where the identity of people known in the community as “mixed-race” or “Mulatto” played a noticeably different role in policy, events, or thought than the racial identity of population of African descent as a whole (i.e. those considered “Black”), I have attempted to explicitly distinguish them in the terminology that I use. To put it simply, pinning down an individual’s social identity with only one descriptor is difficult if it is even possible.

CHAPTER 2: GEOGRAPHY AND RACE—RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

Geographers have long been interested in the explanation of human difference, particularly across different regions, landscapes, and spaces. Geography as a discipline has historically dealt with the concept of race in an unproblematic way; that is to say, in the past geographers have looked unquestioningly at the biological and social reality behind racial categories. This in many ways has made geographical scholarship of the past complicit with colonial, imperial, and other continuing oppressive practices toward people of color (Livingstone 1993, Driver 2001). Building upon the work of a small group of anthropologists and other scholars who fought against pervasive “racialized” understandings of social and cultural outcomes in the late nineteenth- and first half of the twentieth century¹ (Baker 1998), recent scholarship in geography and related social science fields has taken the view that racial categories are not biologically valid but are social constructions, often propagated by people or systems in order to privilege one group over another (See for instance Anderson 1987, Jackson 1987, Hale 1998, Delaney 2002, Hoelscher 2003, Kobayashi 2003, McCarthy and Hague 2004). Scholars point out the work of government, capitalism, society, and individuals in maintaining and reinforcing the belief in this racial hierarchy. Additionally, geographers and other scholars now argue that the construction of race has an inherently spatial component (Sibley 1995; Delaney 1998, 2002; Shome 1999). The idea of race has been made to seem natural and valid through the “fixing” of race in very visible spaces.

¹ Anthropologist Franz Boas and sociologist W.E.B. DuBois in the late nineteenth century and anthropologist Ashley Montagu (1942) in the mid-twentieth century were some of the most influential of these revolutionary scholars who argued that race and social difference primarily reflected social and political relationships, not biological reality.

The spatial component of race can take many forms, the most obvious of which is segregation. But these spatial elements supporting “race” are complex and consist of varied processes and institutions that preserve racial distinctions in a number of ways. One such spatial element of the construction of race is the designation or association of certain environments with certain racial groups. For instance, associations of racial groups (such as the Chinese, Sicilians, or African Americans) with unhealthy, dilapidated urban neighborhoods served to reinforce negative stereotypes about these groups. White medical and social theory of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries assumed that a causal relationship existed between the natural “inferiority” of these racialized groups and the disease, crime, or other unhealthy conditions that prevailed in these areas (Anderson 1987, Valencius 1999). But in general, certain spaces and environments have often become socially designated for certain racial groups, and this reinforces the belief in the naturalness of race.

Joining with scholars from other fields such as history, anthropology, and sociology, geographers have begun to investigate not only the construction of racial identities for marginalized groups but the construction of white identities as well. Whiteness studies focus on the construction of whiteness as the societal norm, a standard against which other identities are measured, and the invisibility of this white identity to most white people (Domínguez 1986; Roediger 1991; Frankenberg 1993; Hale 1998; Martin, Krizek, Nakayama, and Bradford 1999; Moon 1999, Shome 1999). Understanding the construction of and adherence to a white identity is crucial in understanding racialized processes, geographies, and outcomes, both historically and contemporarily. Furthermore, applying the concept of whiteness to racialized spaces allows for research on the development of white spaces or environments. This application brings a whole new and important aspect of research on race to the discussion because in the past, work on racialized spaces has been concerned

primarily with “ghettoes” and other non-white areas. Looking at the construction of white spaces and white identities acknowledges that all people and the places they reside are racialized. In other words, all individuals and places are subject to processes, institutions, and systems that have been founded on racist principles or result in racially disparate outcomes.

GEOGRAPHY AND RACE

Geography as a discipline historically has been complicit in activities that have contributed to the oppression and colonization of people of color around the world. The colonial and imperial motivations of Europeans and others have often been predicated on geographical knowledge of foreign lands and foreign people, the construction of maps designating national territory and areas to be conquered, and an explanation of cultural and physiological difference that always showed the colonizing people to be superior to those being colonized (Kobayashi 2003, Driver 2001, Sibley 1995, Godlewska and Smith 1994, Livingstone 1993). Institutional connections between geographers and imperialists (often in the same person) abounded in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in both the U.S. and Britain (Livingstone 1993), and racist science and policies were produced by widely-read geographers (Livingstone 1984).

In most twentieth century geographical research on the topic of race, geographers looked unquestioningly at the concept of race, regardless of their motivations in doing the research. Audrey Kobayashi (2003) outlines different stages of research on race during the latter half of the century, beginning with empirical studies of the 1950s and 60s, the positivist studies of the 60s and 70s, humanist and Marxist research of the 70s and 80s, and post-structuralist and critical research of the 1990s. Geographers did not question the naturalness or biological validity of the category of race, even if they questioned the hierarchy and racism behind it (see Bunge 1971) until this last phase of geographical work. Furthermore,

geographers continued to exclude the voices of women and people of color despite conceptual advances made from post-structuralism and critical theory (Domosh 1991, Slater 1997). In the twenty-first century, geographers have reflexively criticized the discipline for marginalizing work on race and ethnicity and remaining largely a white discipline.

Attempting to remedy the problems within the discipline in the past, they call for further work on race to be more central to the discipline (Pulido 2002) and take an actively anti-racist position in and outside of the academy (Peake and Kobayashi 2002, Kobayashi 2003).

Geographers researching the construction of race have largely adopted critical race theory in their work on race (Schein 2002, 2006). Critical race theory has emerged from critical social theory, which follows the precepts (among others): that all knowledge and thought is constructed in a context of power relations; the distinction between object and subject is fuzzy and made in particular social, economic, and political contexts; language is central to the construction of identities and subjectivities; and oppression has many facets including race and class that must be considered jointly (Outlaw 1990, Kincheloe and McLaren 2000). Following this set of ideas closely, critical race theory holds the assumption that race is a social construction that fluctuates depending on economic, social, and political conditions and varies across and within space. This does not imply that race has no meaning in people's lives, but it asserts that race does not reflect biology as much as socially constructed and maintained hierarchies that favor one social group, in this case whites, over others. In fact, critical race theory begins with the assumption that racism is a fundamental aspect of American society and not the exception to the rule (Ladson-Billings 2000). Furthermore, geographers (as well as some historians and sociologists, see Hale 1998 and Hartigan 1999) contend that space and place are fundamental components in the construction of race.

The Construction of Race: Economy and the State

Particularly in the nineteenth century, the idea predominated that race represented a biological reality. “Science” proved that Caucasians, the white race, had evolved more than other races, hence European superiority in religion, culture, society, and civilization (Baker 1998; Wander, Martin, and Nakayama 1999). The science of Darwin and Lamarck, when adopted by social scientists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, justified the domination of some social groups over others, primarily those identified as white over those identified as non-white (Outlaw 1990, Livingstone 1993). Remnants of nineteenth-century racist science continue to persist into the twenty-first century in thinking about minorities and minority communities. For example, the concept of linear social development and successive improvement through each generation is a leftover from the Darwinistic/Lamarckian belief that certain races were more evolved than others, and is still prevalent today, particularly when the questions arise about solutions to social problems. This can be seen in the widely-held social assumption that minority groups will improve the condition of their lives through subsequent generations of education and hard work, eventually moving out of segregated areas (slums, ghettos, or the inner city) and into the suburbs, a process known in the past as “uplift” (Delaney 1998). This kind of thinking, influenced by nineteenth-century science has become a “basic feature of our ‘common sense’” (Outlaw 1990, 67).

Rather than an actual biological category, race reflects a societal valuing of some groups over others. The purpose of such a creation is questionable and complex. Some have argued that this kind of “othering” in terms of racial identity served (serves) to provide a bottom rung of the economy, a reserved pool of labor that can be exploited by the owners of the means of production (Wallerstein 1991). In other words, the creation of race as a significant and widely recognized social marker is intimately tied to the creation of an

exploited working class in which the racialized group—in this case Blacks—become seen as synonymous with the lower class and find themselves exploited as such. Bobby Wilson (2000) likewise argues that in industrializing Birmingham, Alabama, the owners of production manipulated racial divisions in the labor pool to make their production more profitable. And others have argued that Federal endorsement of Jim Crow policies in the South after the Civil War allowed the South to develop an exploitative agricultural and industrial economy which generated enormous profits (Gilmore 2002, 18). In this way, the use and enforcement of racial categories can be seen as an integral part of a capitalist system that requires the exploitation of some group of people who must be socially designated and isolated for such purposes. Thomas Sowell (1994), taking a classical liberal stance, points out that these workers must be attractive to employers in terms of productivity, not just because they are “cheap and unskilled” (93). Nevertheless, the implication for all of these arguments is that the continuing importance of racial categories in the U.S. emanates in part from these issues of labor exploitation and the struggles of the underclass.

Class—viewed as identity based on labor, income, and access to the means of production—is a contentious topic. Critical Theory, based on tenets of Marxism, views the realities of class and race as creations of a combination of capitalism and social practice. Despite a common understanding of both race and class as socially constructed identities, scholars in geography differ, however, in their analyses of the relationships between these two concepts, particularly in relation to political economy. While any attempts to identify which concept came first or is more important might be at best a challenging theoretical exercise, an exploration of different understandings of the connections between race and class (and labor) underpins the complex yet undeniable interconnectedness between the two concepts.

Geographers studying labor and class identity have begun to incorporate the concept of race into their analyses, even if it does not appear prominently (Massey 1984, Thrift and Williams 1987, Harvey 1996, Peck 1996). This incorporation comes from the recognition that the economic is dependent upon the social for reproduction (Lee 2000, 97). These scholars have tended to understand class as the primary identifier and race as a corollary, or at the very least, a separate social phenomenon. For instance, Doreen Massey (1984) argues, “Ideologies of race and gender criss-cross the labour market, defining which groups can do which jobs” (40). She contends that the connections between social identity and role in production are significant and cannot be boiled down to labor markets or changes in technology; they must be looked at as intersecting features of the large socio-economic structure, dependent on place. Nigel Thrift (1987) likewise explains that class is not the only determining feature of political and social action; “other autonomous or relatively autonomous social forces quite clearly act within the limits described by class structure such as race, religion, ethnicity, gender, family, and various state apparatuses” (7). Although these geographers did not focus their studies on race specifically, in their analyses of the social and spatial constructions of capitalism, race functions as a distinct social variable that enters the economic equation to shape labor and production.

In contrast, others in the economic geography camp argue that race is not only a social variable shaping labor—it is itself the result of the capitalist system. For instance, Immanuel Wallerstein, well known for his part in the development of world-systems theory, a Marxian theory of the distribution of wealth and power across the globe, argues that racism is a “magic formula” used to reconcile inherent inconsistencies in the goals of capitalism (Wallerstein 1991, 33). He describes racism as a method used to divide laborers. This has two purposes. The first is to allocate individuals to particular jobs and maintain an underclass with low labor costs. The second is preventing laborers from acting collectively

against the owners of production, and thus ensuring the stability of the capitalist system. In this analysis, race is not a distinct social variable acting on economic processes, it is an invention of capitalism to reproduce itself and an inherent part of the capitalist system.

Discussions of race and racism raise important questions with regard to theory and praxis: when looking at labor, how are racial identities and racial practices different? Can and should these concepts be separated out for purposes of analysis? Barbara Fields (2001) argues that academic scholars (particularly in whiteness studies) have a tendency to focus on *race* in their analysis instead of *racism*. She points out that the concept of race is a component of racism, a form of discrimination directed primarily at individuals of African descent solely for the purpose of exploitation. Fields (2001) calls for scholars to abandon singular studies of “race” (once again, particularly in whiteness studies) because these studies elide the fact that Black identities have been foundationally and immovably coupled with racial identities, the basis for racism (48-49). Likewise eschewing a study of “race,” Bobby Wilson (2000), in his analysis of the role of race in the building of industrial Birmingham, Alabama, focuses not on the concept of race as a social identity, but on the idea of “racial practices,” which are more measurable. He argues that racial practices are the result of the political economy, but in accordance with other contradictions within a capitalist system, are not always profitable (2-4). While making the point that the concept of race has persisted outside of changes in the political economy, Wilson (2001) shows that in industrializing Birmingham, industrialists and capital interests used the concept of race to divide white and black workers and ensure a favorable labor market. Elsewhere, Wilson (2002) goes even further by admonishing scholars of race that their work must be historically and geographically contextualized, and the focus must be on “race-connected practices in the lives of people, the particularity of the person, the body, how these concrete practices produced and reproduced themselves over time and space” (39). In other words, the starting point of scholarship on race and racism

must be particular practices, places, and people with the ending point a theory of race, and not the other way around.

While these scholars of economic geography have looked at race and racism as elements tangentially shaping economic production or as products of the economic system itself, other scholars begin with the concept of race as social identity and investigate the influences of the economy and labor. One approach geographers have taken is to look at all social and economic difference as sharing a common origin not just in the political economy but in more general and ubiquitous multi-scalar structures of power. Ruth Gilmore (2002) for instance argues that when looking at the concept of race, one cannot separate out concepts of gender, class, and power. She specifically looks at the role of the state in the creation and maintenance of difference in order to reproduce itself and the capitalist system which sustains it. For Gilmore, “racism functions as a limiting force that pushes disproportionate costs of participating in an increasingly monetized and profit-driven world onto those who, due to the frictions of political distance, cannot reach the variable levers of power that might relieve them of those costs” (16). To put it simply, race has intimate connections with class because of overarching structures of power and difference.

Other scholars researching the spatial nature of race and class have determined that race ultimately plays a determining role in intra-class experiences. Hershberg, et al. (1979), in their oft-cited study of immigrants and Blacks in Philadelphia, determined that even when the economic and structural differences of the city had been accounted for, racial discrimination ultimately shaped the experience of Black workers in Philadelphia, especially when compared to the experiences of European immigrants of the nineteenth century. This particular study was published several years before the idea of race as a social construction widely imbued academic work on identity.

Since the socially-constructed nature of race has become widely accepted in academic circles, some scholars have argued that race has permeated every aspect of American life—trumping class. Laura Pulido (2000) for instance argues that the spatial arrangement of Black and Latino residents and their disproportionate exposure to toxic industry in Los Angeles are the results of *racialized processes*. This means that even when things such as the availability of loans or locations of specific industry outwardly do not occur because of racial differentiation, the legacy of racial discrimination, curtailed access to power, and exclusion still affect the outcomes of contemporary economic activities. The strength of the structure of race continues in that privilege and access to power tend to remain white-controlled and perpetuate themselves because of racialized outcomes such as residential segregation. It follows that class configuration also would be produced as a result of these racialized processes. Dalton Conley (1999) similarly points to the legacy of race and racism in producing different social and economic outcomes—even when accounting for income, occupation, and education (typical markers of class). *Within the same class*, the effects of a social system historically based on race produces very different results for families of different racial groups. This is in part because whites typically have had greater opportunities to amass assets and pass their accumulated wealth (no matter how small) on to their children, providing a economic cushion and possible avenue for property ownership (14-16).

The body of literature known as whiteness studies has roots in the idea that achieving a white identity has been as strong a force as—if not stronger than—class in the determination of social and economic outcomes. David Roediger (1991), while using a Marxist oriented economic approach, nevertheless finds that racism against persons of African descent occurred in an extremely virulent way within the working class itself. The conclusion of this work is that race—as a historically and ideologically distinct concept—cannot be equated with or produced by class alone. Even within the working class itself,

racial identity indicated status. Grace Elizabeth Hale (1998) demonstrates how the construction of whiteness as a racial identity in the South depended on the dissolution of the perceptions of differences based on class. She argues that whites in the South achieved this by fortifying the boundaries between “white” and “black.” But this summation is not specific to whiteness studies. Fifty years ago C. Vann Woodward (1993) argued that racism against people of African descent had become the cornerstone of Southern identity because no economic or political issue could unite white Southerners (who were exceptionally diverse in terms of culture, income, occupation, and politics) quite as successfully or steadfastly.

Despite the fact that scholars grappling with the concepts of race and class have taken different approaches and may have given one priority over another, the discrepancies in the academic debate concerning the two indicates the difficulty in separating them out in terms of effect or importance. Anthropologist Sherry Ortner (1998) reached the following conclusion regarding the analytical separation of race and class:

...at the level of discourse, class, race, and ethnicity are so deeply mutually implicated in American culture that it makes little sense to pull them apart...there is no class in America that is not always already racialized and ethnicized, or to turn the point around, racial and ethnic categories are always already class categories. (10, emphasis original)

While the connections between discourse, thought, and social structure will not be addressed here, nevertheless Ortner’s statement above has implications not only for discourse but for ways of understanding and practice.

This research is presented from the position that both concepts are important and inextricably linked, particularly in the U.S. South and in St. Tammany Parish. I explore the ways in which white and Black workers and owners in St. Tammany Parish made a living, and which industries were more closely associated with white or Black racial groups. I also discuss the economic changes in the parish, and how it affected racial groups differently. At the end of the time period covered in this dissertation, 1956, the Lake Pontchartrain

Causeway was constructed, which connected western St. Tammany Parish directly with New Orleans and its suburbs and reflected the changing orientation of the parish economy from agriculture to the development of a white suburb.

This understanding of race as inextricably tied to class has significant explanatory power in illuminating changes in the economy and politics of the area in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The conflict between the piney-woods folk, plantation owners, railroad entrepreneurs, and recently freed Black residents of the area emanated in part from rivalries between old and emerging economic powers and the creation and shifting of social classes in the area (Hyde 1996). Class conflict generated by workers frustrated with paternalistic yet dominant lumber companies in the early twentieth century increased the level of violence and racial tension in the Florida Parishes (Wyche 1999). Furthermore, the development of white supremacist organizations in the area, such as the Ku Klux Klan and the Knights of the White Camellia, is representative of racial tensions concomitant with these economic and social shifts (Hyde 1996). And the association of whiteness with the development of subdivisions in the 1940s and 1950s shows the importance of examining the connection between race and class.

In addition to class, the state plays a crucial role in the social construction of racial identities because it has the power to sanction certain social categories and build policies based on those categories. Of course the state and the economy are inextricably linked and support each other; therefore, they can act to mutually reinforce racialized policies. In this way, the state demonstrates its power in the construction of racial identities through its relationship with capital. For instance, racial discrimination and exploitation may be indirectly sanctioned by the state through the state's involvement or absence from business owners and the owners of capital. This can be seen in the federal farm programs initiated in the early twentieth century to reduce cotton production in the South, which resulted in the

eviction of thousands of Black tenant farmers and the destruction of small Black-owned farms (Davis and Donaldson 1975). The state's role in construction and reinforcing racial identities through capitalism can also be seen in the local government's historical role, particularly in the South, in arresting "vagrant" Blacks much more frequently than whites and supplying both plantation and factory with cheap labor through the convict labor system (Davis and Donaldson 1975, Wilson 2002). Additionally, David Delaney (1998) shows how the legal system in the United States helped to defend or defeat segregation based on arguments concerning property rights. But the combination of economic exploitation and state action against Black people in the United States has prompted consideration of Black America as a colony of the U.S. (Davis and Donaldson 1975).

The state need not work through capitalist systems in order to construct racial identities. Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1986) aver that "the state from its very inception has been concerned with the politics of race. For most of U.S. history, the main objective of the government's racial policy was repression and exclusion" (75). They argue that the racial state is composed of institutions that are inherently racial and "enforce the racial politics of everyday life" (77). The state seeks to control society within its territory by structuring social and political relations which in turn helps to shape social and political identities (Marx 1998).

Often the social identities are racial identities that reinforce and are reinforced by the government's policies and actions toward the particular group. Kay Anderson (1987) shows how the extension of governmental service, policing, and restrictions on the Chinese in Vancouver reinforced negative stereotypes about the Chinese, which then in turn informed further racist government policy toward them. An understanding of the extension of government services and policies with racialized goals and outcomes in St. Tammany Parish

and reflects the power of local and state government to sanction popular understandings and constructions of race and shape local racial geographies.

The state's role in racial formation can function at a more national rhetorical level as well, not merely with local understandings. The creation of the *idea* of the nation utilizes two main concepts; homogeneity and an "other" against which to define itself. Etienne Balibar (1990) argues that the construction of racial identities, the creation of a racialized other contrasted with an "unracialized" majority within the nation, allows the nation to appear both cohesive and universal against the threat of the "other." In the context of U.S. history, this homogeneity primarily referred to racial "purity" and the maintenance of a white state (which in fact had never been solely white). In practice, "states bind the nation they claim to represent by institutionalizing identities of racial inclusion and exclusion. The extension of citizenship rights has been blocked by constructing racial boundaries" (Marx 1998, 5).

The desire to be a cohesive, white "nation-state" has imbued much of U.S. history, particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For instance, Hale (1998) argues that national unity (of whiteness—to be discussed later) was restored in the United States through a "compromise" of allowing southern states to develop Jim Crow policies. After being divided on the topic of slavery (among other things), the U.S. reinvented its national identity with continued, although altered, racist practices that attempted to clearly differentiate between whites and Blacks. Benedict Anderson (1991) explains that this process of creating nationalism and an "imagined community"—the nation—occurs, among other things, through official education and the dispersal of evidence of the nation's common history in the form of maps and museums. The education element of this process in the U.S. certainly demonstrates the role of marginalized racial groups in the imagined community of the American nation. George Davis and Fred Donaldson (1975) and William

Bunge (1971) demonstrate that in terms of both quality and content, education for Black children within the U.S. has been vastly inferior to whites, a fact which places the value of white children over Black children in the country and in the notion of “American schoolchildren.” Furthermore, Bunge (1971) calls for the removal of the white bias in education, that is, for the teaching of African American history as a part of U.S. history and for the equal education of whites and Blacks: “No American child should go to school to learn he [sic] is a foreigner” (189).

This rhetorical constructions of Blacks as outsiders to a white American nation underscores the essential role of “foreigners” in the construction of racial identities and nation building. During different time periods certain racial groups became more desirable than others, and this often has to do with the idea that some racial groups inherently function more compatibly with U.S. social and political institutions. Certain immigrant groups, such as the Irish and Sicilians were not consistently considered white (despite their origins in Europe), but were often considered threats to the American nation (Roediger 1991). On a more recent version of racialized anti-immigrant sentiment in boosting nationalism, Colin Flint (2004) argues that hate groups’ violence toward foreigners directly reflects a belief in a white American nation and its superiority that can only be maintained through racial purity. Furthermore, the rhetoric utilized by the government itself in defense of homeland security relies on fictional geographic binaries defining “us” against “them” (Flint 2004, 165). In addition, racialized identities are used by political parties claiming to have “national” interests in mind, such as the Labour and Conservative parties in Britain, which take different strategies on racial differences in their definitions of “Britishness” (Gilroy 1997).

Race at the Individual Level

Scholars also argue that racism functions on a much more personal, individual level. That is, in addition to economic and political bases for the construction of race and racism, racism also emanates from certain elements of Western culture and society that are completely internalized at the individual level. While Peter Jackson (1987) argues against considering racism a part of human nature, Barbara Fields (1982) describes the strength of the idea of race in individual perception as “living in the minds of men and women and [it] cannot escape contagion, so to speak, of the material world these men and women inhabit” (153). In other words, the construction and meaning of race must work through individuals who are influenced by the world around them; therefore, race necessarily means different things to different people at different times and places.

Focusing on the individual level, much has been written about the caustic effects of racism on both whites and Blacks. Frantz Fanon (1991[1967]) describes being forced to look at himself, a Black man, through white eyes; because of the dominance of racist discourse, Fanon initially learned about himself and developed his identity through white racist conceptions of Black people. W.E.B. Du Bois (1998[1920]) argues that the first effects of white supremacy are superficial and amusing: “the strut of the Southerner, the arrogance of the Englishman amuck.” But after these initial effects, whites make “children believe that every great soul the world ever saw was a white man’s soul” (185), a practice which causes Blacks to suffer in numerous ways and whites to be mentally imprisoned and miserable (187). Beliefs and actions at the individual level are structured in specific political, social, and economic contexts that give belief value and relevance in an individual’s life. This includes aesthetics and personal tastes, which are always political (and racial) and cannot be considered separately from the context in which they are formed. For instance, preference of a certain house type, certain neighbors, and certain lot sizes has an inherently political

component which often equates with the construction of white identities (Duncan and Duncan 2004). David Sibley (1995) likewise argues that a personal taste for a level of cleanliness or selection of furniture and personal belongings defines boundaries around an individual and thus excludes others—racial or ethnic groups—in a very constructed and personal way. Despite the outward personal effects of racism, such as job discrimination or segregation, at an individual level, everyday actions, beliefs, and preferences are created in a social and political context that in the U.S. is always racialized. As such an individual may continue to participate in activities or believe certain things that have racist outcomes despite intentions. So in both obvious and subtle ways, the construction of race and racism affects and works through individuals as well as through government, and social and economic structures, and collective practices.

Whiteness Studies

Whiteness Studies outside of geography is a relatively new field, and even newer inside geography. The beginning of an academic engagement with whiteness studies across disciplines emerged in the 1990s from the work of labor historians such as David Roediger (1991) and Michael Ignatiev (1995) in their association of the construction of race within the development of class in the U.S. Alistair Bonnett and Anoop Nayak (2003) are quick to point out that the study of whiteness itself is not new, citing geographic scholarship from the early twentieth century. In addition, environmental determinism, an area of study emphasizing the role of the environment in the direct causation of human variation, culture, and activity, stressed the creation of different races and peoples in different climates and environments and hence their suitability for institutions such as democracy and Christianity (Semple 1911, Taylor 1951). This research of course mapped directly onto different races. On the other hand, Black scholars such as W.E.B. DuBois (1998[1920]) critically tackled the adoption of the notion of the white race in the early twentieth century. The difference

between studies of whiteness in the past and more recent research is that whiteness studies as they exist today importantly reflect the influence of a Marxist and post-structuralist approach to the concept of race and the increased participation of people of color in academia (Pulido 2002; Johnson 1999); the theoretical configuration is new while the topic is not. Additionally, the focus on racism rather than race in the 1970s directed scholars away from seriously examining the social construction of white and Black identities themselves (Jeater 1997).

Phillip Wander, Judith Martin, and Thomas Nakayama (1999) argue that there is a historical distinction between *white* and *whiteness*. That is, “whiteness” is actually a system of ideas, institutions, and principles founded on historical racist ideas that continue to function in society through these things; whereas “white” is a racial category that had historically been considered superior to other racial categories, the foundation of the historical systemic structure called whiteness. They make the distinction in part to facilitate the discussion of race and racism without assigning blame to all white people. The category “white,” however, still has much significance in identity formation in the United States.

Much of the cultural power of whiteness, the construction of a white identity, is that it often goes unnoticed. In fact, whiteness largely remains invisible to whites and many people of color (Sibley 1995; Martin, Krizek, Nakayama, and Bradford 1999; Stage 1999). The power in whiteness refers only in part to its connotations of superiority (a legacy of racism in the U.S.) but also importantly to its use as a standard with which to measure “others”: Blacks, Asians, Hispanics, etc. Being “white” in the U.S. is considered normal, normative, and desirable in dominant discourses. In recent years, much of the ostensibly racist language has been dropped from national rhetoric in exchange for cultural or ethnic comparisons with the “normal” American white person, thus reinforcing racism in much less obvious ways (Gilroy 1987, Jackson 1988, Frankenberg 1993).

Some scholars, primarily labor historians, have criticized recent growth and scholarship in whiteness studies for a number of reasons. First, some scholars point to the “faddishness” of whiteness studies, the rapid growth in its study, as a reason why fastidious and serious scholars would be wise to avoid it (Arnesen 2001, Brody 2001). Second, labor historians Eric Arnesen and Eric Foner point out the inconsistent use of the words “white” and “whiteness” and argue that depending on choice of definition, the claims of whiteness scholars that some immigrant groups were not considered white comes into question. To look at one aspect of this argument, just because immigrants were considered inferior does not mean they were considered “non-white” or “black” (Arnesen 2001, Foner 2001). Third, the majority of labor historians who are critical of whiteness studies question methodology based on postmodern techniques of interpreting language and meaning when, they argue, it is very difficult to historically reconstruct meanings and intentions through the documents that historians use to examine the past (Arnesen 2001, Brody 2001, Reed 2001). Despite the criticism of methodology and inconsistent definitions, whiteness scholars have nevertheless historicized the construction of race and drawn it to the center of the study of American history (Hattam 2001), focusing attention on the construction identity for people of all races.

Space, Environment, and Health

The creation of racial identity therefore has many components including class, gender, government, and culture. Thus far, however, the component of space has been left out of the discussion because it undergirds all of the above categories in the construction of race; it is the anchoring component of race. For example, government utilizes space to preserve racial classifications. For example, this is evident in the legal structures enforcing segregation historically in the U.S. South but also in the apartheid system in South Africa (Marx 1998). Race and class also vary together in and across different spaces (Hartigan

1999). And the construction of a white identity requires social, conceptual, and physical distance from other racial groups.

David Delaney (2002) articulates the connection between race in space in the context of the United States, “race—in all of its complexity and ambiguity, as ideology and identity—is what it is and does what it does precisely because of how it is given spatial expression” (7). He points out the importance of scale in the construction of racial identities, which may be different at different scales, and the importance of *place* in the racialization process. Race helps shape and give meaning to a place, and the reverse is also true; in this way all places are racialized, and all racial identities are given structure through place.

Raka Shome (1999) similarly argues that the interlocking axes of power, spatial location, and history make race (whiteness) concrete. To illustrate, she shows that racial constructions vary with location, across postcolonial spaces, by comparing racism in India, her home, to racism she experiences in the U.S. In India, the racism she feels is indirect, a legacy of a colonial education and administrative system that operated under the assumption that whites were superior to colonial subjects of color. In the U.S. however, she feels a much more direct, violent gaze of whites who immediately see her as a foreigner. In this way, her body itself becomes the site of a struggle over racial definitions, and the white gaze confronts her wherever she goes. Her own “racial” identity changes as she travels from India to the U.S. because the whiteness that has been constructed in the American context is more prevalent. The renowned Black scholar Frantz Fanon’s work and experiences with racism also have a geographical component. Steve Pile (2000) underscores the spatial connections between Martinique, France, and Algeria, all places Fanon resided, based on power relations and colonial history. Political possibilities and the construction of race differed from place to place.

The importance of space goes far beyond the fact that race varies across space. The location of racialized people helps define them, allows people to “see” racial differentiation on the ground. Of course one of the biggest spatial components of race has been the forced segregation of Blacks since their emancipation. Davis and Donaldson (1975) aptly describe the restrictions on Black mobility in U.S. history:

Until the larger society’s definition of the inmate group changes, social institutions will be developed to confine them. Thus, with the destruction of one such institution, the plantation, by external forces, the inmates are transferred to another form of restrictive institution, the ghetto. The restrictive forces of the ghetto may be more diffuse than those of the plantation; but they share the same spatial function, to exercise custody over the different and unequal. (4)

They argue that segregation reflects *definitions* of racial groups, which in turn implies (although not discussed in exactly these words by the authors) that those who are not explicitly segregated are defined differently—in other words, white (although clearly many whites choose and have chosen to be segregated as well). The authors also suggest a change in the spatiality and the scope of segregation in the large scale movement of Black people from rural areas to urban neighborhoods. To some extent this represents a change in the scale of the application of “restrictive forces,” particularly as large numbers of Black men and women migrated from rural to urban areas, and then from South to North, but who interestingly also stayed within certain migration paths.

Ira Berlin (1974) argues that segregation was a way to create social distance and a power differential between whites and free people of color. The way this occurred was in the fixing of ostensible differences through geographic separation and the creation of a cultural of segregation to stop the success of Black people after their emancipation (Hale 1998, 21). Larry Ford (1999) and David Roediger (1999) demonstrate that white racial definition was essential to the formation of the American Republic, and that controlling Black people in terms of their mobility and in other ways in part allowed this myth to be

created. Kay Anderson (1987, 1988) shows how to preserve the “superiority” of the white race in Canada and its birthright of the nation, government restrictions and societal intolerance segregated Chinese immigrants in Vancouver to an area that became known as Chinatown. Chinatown in turn became an official spatial area treated differently and with racist policies by the government. In all of these cases, people of color threatened the idea of the “white nation” and thus had to be spatially contained. Their social and spatial isolation reinforced a system of racial classification and segregation, in part through continued public policy toward marginalized racial groups.

The state plays a large role in the maintenance of segregated areas and thus racial construction. For instance, Linda Peake (1993) argues that the design of cities reflects a desire to keep both women and minority groups in their “traditional” places. Davis and Donaldson (1975) methodically demonstrate the government’s role in reinforcing and creating segregation in numerous ways including building racially segregated public housing in “black” neighborhoods and building interstates through the middle of Black communities. The government’s placement of the interstate in Black neighborhoods began in part with the relocation of Black people who would be displaced by the interstate construction into other “Black” neighborhoods in the city, reinforcing segregation through both physical barriers (the interstate) and relocation policy (Rose 1965). The creation of “ghettoes,” or poor Black neighborhoods in inner city areas, reinforces stereotypes of Blacks (Morrill 1965) and thus reifies their racial identities.

Government control over the space occupied by racial groups has been a determining factor in racial relations, but so have institutional practices such as lily whitening, blockbusting, and redlining (Ford and Griffin 1979) that preserve and propagate segregated neighborhoods. Racial deed restrictions and neighborhood covenants have also contributed to the maintenance of segregated neighborhoods (Delaney 1998). David Delaney (1998)

argues that legal interpretations of these practices, the arguments made for and against them in court, resulted from the intersection of legal space and racialized space, both of which are conceptual spaces but have real meaning for the people who occupy those spaces.

The meaning of space (and thus the construction and negotiation of place) often begins in part with the association with or designation of a specific space for certain racialized groups. Sibley (1992, 1995) argues that space is essential in the social creation and recognition of identity. Space allows stereotypes to become fixated and oversimplify reality (Sibley 1995), and this spatial purification is the key feature in the organization of social space. Western cultural values of cleanliness, whiteness, and order filter into individual thinking and meaning, causing the individual to want to “expel the abject” (Sibley 1995, 8; Douglas 1966). But of course the impossibility of creating socially “pure” space causes tension and anxiety (the source of which may be directed at the “othered” group) in Western societies. Through the creation of boundaries, however ineffective, (white) individuals attempt to overcome these feelings of anxiety and fear that may be associated not only with the othered group but with the actual place that helps define that group. For instance, a white person may experience fear walking in a part of a city that he or she recognizes as “Black” with or without the presence of Black individuals. Likewise, a white person may see a Black man in a white neighborhood and become fearful or angry because the stereotype of Black people locates that person elsewhere (Sibley 1995, 100).

James Duncan and Nancy Duncan (2004) focus on this creation of identity through place and landscape. They argue, “people produce their identities in and through places, especially homeplaces such as houses, gardens, and home communities” (3). In this way, identities not only emerge from the location of social groups in different places, places are built to reflect and create those identities, a point also made by Sibley (1995). Landscapes are performative, and a person’s tastes and preferences reflect a position within the political,

social, and economic context in which they are formed (Duncan and Duncan 2004). Through the maintenance of large lot sizes, architecture and style reflecting English pastoral history, and aggressive town enforcement of these standards, the wealthy white community of Bedford, New York has maintained an elitist, white identity. This does not imply, however, that this identity is assumed or desired by all residents in the town, and the creation of identity there is made more problematic by the ubiquitous presence of Hispanic hired help who commute from a nearby city to work. A major component in the creation of landscape in Bedford is the emphasis local residents place on the maintenance of natural and wooded areas, areas which are cultivated and protected to preserve their natural look. In this case, the meaning of nature for the residents is quietude and distance from the issues and aesthetics of nearby New York. This contrasts greatly with eighteenth and nineteenth century connotations of nature as wild, uncivilized, and dangerous. It shows how the meaning of nature, preferences and aesthetics, change depending on the context and the identity of the person doing the viewing (Duncan and Duncan 2004).

Stephen Hoelscher (2003) shows the importance of the culture of segregation in the contemporary creation of place and group identity. Natchez, Mississippi has recreated its history and defined the identity of the town through the romanticizing of plantation life and stereotyping the role of Blacks as subservient. The spatiality of segregation contributed to the creation of a mythic Southern past and the creation of a white, Southern place. Importantly, the enforcement of segregation allowed elite white women's historical groups to actively construct the history and identity of whites in Natchez through tourist booklets, advertisements and historical plays that became a part of normal, everyday traditions.

The environment of a place can help shape identities and reflect social and political power hierarchies. In the past, there has been a strong association between environmentally degraded, unhealthy areas of cities (and rural areas) and marginalized racial groups (Radford

1976, Kellogg 1977, Galishoff 1985, Anderson 1987, Sibley 1995, Pulido 1996, Delaney 1998, Landphair 1999, Bullard 2000, Colten 2002, Duncan and Duncan 2004). Historically, cheap housing available to immigrants was located in low-lying areas and poorly constructed buildings, often on the outskirts of more affluent, white downtown areas in the South (Galishoff 1985, Kellogg 1977, Radford 1976). Segregation also forced many immigrants and racialized groups into these urban areas, creating unhealthful places often attributed to racial characteristics of the groups themselves (Galishoff 1985, Anderson 1987, Ward 1989). Place names such as the “Bottoms” often reflect the poor environmental quality such a place had for its inhabitants, while diseases such as “Neck fever” were named for the geographic place (mostly inhabited by Blacks and the poor) where the disease predominated (Radford 1976). The creation of places “suitable” for racialized groups and the recognition of these areas as unhealthful often reinforced negative beliefs about the people residing there.

Davis and Donaldson (1975) argue that poor health and terrible living conditions for Blacks in the South served as a emigration “push” factor to Northern cities, which in itself created negative images of Blacks. Sibley (1995) shows how disease, disease metaphors, and uncleanliness became associated with “othered” groups in Western society, solidifying white fears of these groups and justifying feelings of white superiority. Through this association, the idea of health applied not only to the body, but crime and social problems were seen as a social disease of the city, a symptom of the influx of inferior foreigners.

The extension of water and sewerage services, health services, and drainage improvements has historically had a racial component as well as economic and humanitarian components. That is, the allocation of sanitary and health services to residents across the city has often depended on the racial composition of different neighborhoods, with white and wealthy residents often being the first to receive such services (Melosi 2000, Colten 2002). For example, despite a theory of public health that called for extending services such

as sewerage to all areas of the city to protect health city-wide, Jim Crow politics and racism prevented many services from being extended to minority areas in New Orleans in the early part of the twentieth century (Colten 2002). In the early twentieth century, Atlanta's reputation as a healthy place began to erode with spreading knowledge about the high death rate due to disease, forcing the city to make sanitary improvements by extending water and sewer access and providing additional hospitals and schools. Many of these improvements necessarily had to be placed in Black neighborhoods because of the increased knowledge about the ability of disease to spread across color lines. The discussion of the extension of services to Black areas was often couched in paternalistic terms of whites helping Blacks (or the poor) help themselves to be healthier and in the protection of white health across the city (Galishoff 1985).

The fact that many immigrant and other marginalized racial groups were in poor health and lived in deplorable conditions in or on the outskirts of cities reaffirmed their "inferior" racial identity to whites; nonetheless, the environment outside of the city also has had meanings intertwined with race and space for racialized groups. Topography, drainage, wind and rain patterns, and vegetation all contributed to health according to nineteenth-century medical belief. Warrick Anderson (2003) and Conevery Bolton Valencius (2002) argue that racial understandings in the nineteenth century were married with these ideas of health and geography. Valencius (2002) shows that some Blacks' resistance to tropical diseases confirmed white belief that Blacks were more suited for strenuous labor in conditions unhealthful to whites. She further demonstrates that racial designations on the frontier had great importance because of the "equalizing" effects of harsh frontier living, something that whites feared. For instance, working in the hot sun made white skin darker, more indistinguishable from black skin, and living in an "uncivilized," uncultivated environment where whites and Blacks interacted more freely made whites fearful that some

aspects of their racial superiority might be eroded through disease and loss of civility. W. Anderson (2003) argues that a similar fear of becoming Aboriginal in the Australian frontier drove the British in Australia to defend their whiteness (and with it concomitantly their culture and “Britishness.”) Part of this defense of their white identity included moral and behavioral prescriptions for the treatment of disease. As knowledge of microbes grew in the late nineteenth century, scientists believed certain groups and races (such as the poor and Aborigines) more likely to carry germs and thus more threatening to the strength of the white national health (Anderson 2003).

Historically and more recently, a combination of marginalized racial groups’ comparative lack of economic and political resources and the legacy of racialized financial institutions has made Black and Hispanic neighborhoods disproportionately affected by the location of toxic industry in proximity (Bullard 2000, Pulido 2000). The direct cause for the location of these industries near minority communities and the extent to which minorities are disproportionately affected has been debated, although many researchers generally agree that toxic industries tend to be located near those with relatively weak political power and few economic resources (Cutter 1995). This discourse on environmental justice and environmental racism shows that despite progress made in public health in the last 100 years as a result of modern medicine, health and dangerous environments still contribute to the construction of racialized spaces and racial identity.

This research builds upon the extensive work of geographers and other scholars who investigate racial disparities and the influence of government, the economy, and the environment in the production of both white and Black racial identities. These processes occur in both rural and urban areas. While focusing specifically on a unique rural area in Louisiana, this case study nonetheless is situated in the broader context of racial studies because of the significance of the environment, labor, and politics in the forced bifurcation

of racial identity in an otherwise very complicated racial setting. Processes and patterns in St. Tammany—although very rooted in a particular place—can tell us a great deal about the processes and patterns of the social construction of race on a regional and national scale in the ways they mirror and diverge from those trends. I argue that economic conditions and labor, while vitally important, were part of an overall reflection of societal divisions—a constructed hierarchy—based on race. This hierarchy and the recognition of individuals as “Black” or “white” also hinged on perceptions and use of the environment and the political culture of the parish. So while the unique elements within the parish remind us that racial constructions necessarily depend on local context and place, the building blocks of race are omnipresent at a national scale, tying the importance of this study to larger discourses of social difference.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

This research seeks to uncover the historical influences and geographic patterns in the construction of race in St. Tammany Parish. Because my research questions have been focused on *understanding* the elements and processes of racial construction in their original setting and context, I have generally taken a qualitative approach toward answering these questions (Cresswell 1998, Denzin and Lincoln 2000, Vidich and Lyman 2000, Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2004, Flick 2006). This research has not been oriented toward testing relationships between known variables as much as *discovering* what variables have been important and how they have contributed to the determination of racial identities in the first place. An initial literature review and cursory familiarity with the history of St. Tammany Parish directed my research questions toward the environment and economy, but my specific questions, research location, and available sources clearly demonstrated a need for a qualitative study. This work, however, does have a quantitative component in the use of census data, which I will discuss below.

I emphasize my choice of qualitative study with quantitative components because discussions and debate over the existence of a qualitative/quantitative divide and ways to overcome it circulated through academe during the design, research, and creation phases of this work. Geographers and other scholars have argued that the division between quantitative and qualitative work does not reflect a dichotomy between “hard” and “soft” science; they argue that qualitative methodologies typically entail inductive theory building (rather than theory or hypothesis testing), situatedness and reflexivity, a focus on textual analysis and description, and process-oriented ways of discovery (Miles and Huberman 1994, Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000, Twine 2000, Auerbach and Silverstein 2003, Yeung 2003, Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2004, and Knigge and Cope 2006). Many qualitative scholars also “stress the socially constructed nature of reality” (Denzin and Lincoln 2000, 8) as well as the research and conclusions themselves (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000, 1; Garratt 2003, 109; Knigge and Cope 2006; Mazzei 2007). This means that as the researcher goes about the business of doing research, s/he realizes that such things as ontology and epistemology, personal identity, time and place of the study, availability of sources (and how the sources were produced) affect the creation of that picture or pattern as a whole that answers the original questions of “how” or “why.” This thinking reflects the influence that postmodernism, feminism, critical theory and other schools of theory have had on human geography and qualitative methodologies (Sprague and Zimmerman 2004; Knigge and Cope 2006, 2022).

This emphasis on multiple ways of capturing multiple realities, situatedness, and place- and time-specific process requires that qualitative researchers use thorough, relevant, and rigorous research methods (Wolcott 1994, Bailey et al 1998, James 2006). Social scientists—including geographers—have argued that those doing qualitative work should seek standards of validity, reliability, and rigor that are defined by the purpose and methods

used in the study (Wolcott 1994, Denzin and Lincoln 2000, Romm 2001, Auerbach and Silverstein 2003). Some ways to accomplish these goals in a qualitative study are to seek triangulation of methods, transparency of research design and results, and internal coherence. Of course the subject, methods, and purpose of the study determine what triangulation, transparency, and coherency mean in the context of a particular qualitative study (Romm 2001, Yeung 2003, James 2006). For this particular research, drawing upon a number of sources including newspaper accounts (a privately owned enterprise), federally produced census records, city council minutes, interviews, and other sources provides triangulation of sources and data. Using a variety of sources and *types* of information—qualitative and quantitative, for instance—can yield richer, more nuanced answers to research questions. I attempted to maintain coherency within the research design by referring back to the original questions throughout the course of collecting, coding, and analyzing data. I sought to maintain transparency by keeping careful records of my research design and decisions. Transparency and rigor can also be achieved through careful description and analysis of data, (see Wolcott 1994, 350), allowing readers to “see” much of the primary material and interpret it for themselves. This is something I aimed to achieve throughout the writing of this dissertation.

Research Approach: Critical Social Theory and Grounded Theory

Qualitative research has a history of different theoretical underpinnings, both in terms of paradigm and methodology. Critical theory and grounded theory have strongly influenced this research. Critical theory has been particularly important in the underlying theoretical assumptions of this research, while grounded theory has heavily guided my methodology.

While critical theory relies to a large extent on hermeneutics to explain the nature of structures of power, my own research has been more influenced by its ontological and

epistemological assumptions, especially pertaining to race and class. Critical theory emerged in the social sciences in Germany in the early 1900s as a reaction to positivist and empirical scientific philosophy and a reevaluation of Marxist economic determinism. The core group of critical theorists—including Hebert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Jürgen Habermas—were based at the Institute for Social Research at Frankfurt and had as their aims an interdisciplinary, reflective critique of dominant scientific epistemologies (Jay 1973, Finlayson 2005).

Critical theorists, with many differences between them, have as their primary goals the study of societal inequalities and their underlying mechanisms, whether structural or cultural. They sought to use their scholarship to overcome these inequalities (Kincheloe and McLaren 2000, 280) and achieve emancipation by exposing the falseness of dominant ideologies (Geuss 1981). Although there are significant differences between critical theorists, they all have in common a belief in interrelated types and scales of power (based on economics, gender, race, sexuality, language) and the rejection of the idea of a common truth that can be discovered and systematically applied (Kincheloe and McLaren 2000, Romm 2001, 67). This is not to imply that critical theorists see no value in empirical or positivist studies. Habermas, addressing some of the limitations of mid-century critical theory, in particular warned against the rejection of any particular epistemology (with the exception of one that tries to silence others), instead calling for the purposeful intersection of the empirical/analytical science with historical/hermeneutic science to produce the type of emancipatory epistemology lauded by critical theorists (Gregory 1978, 157).

In my own research, critical theory has emphasized the recognition of significant power differentials in society based on race and class as well as the idea that there are many conceptions of truth based on many different human experiences. Critical theorists evaluate history as

teleologically determined: it is a function of human praxis based on an awareness of goals and intentions to realize them. An appropriately developed critical social philosophy must thus be a synthesis of descriptive-explanatory knowings that focus on “objectivities,” and interpretive knowings that concentrate on the grasp of the meaningfulness of existence as experienced by human subjects. (Outlaw 2005, 20)

In other words, critical scholars can interpret historical and geographical events as the result of human intention intersecting with the unequal effects and axes of power; however, concomitantly, they must realize that living, breathing individuals experienced and interpreted these events in uniquely individual ways.

Critical theory in the last fifty years has adopted ideas of social constructivism and relativism that also have strongly influenced my theoretical orientation. Lucius Outlaw (1995, 94-98) argues that while critical theorists have never quite been able to completely grapple with ideas of both race and class, critical theory nevertheless contributed to the social constructionist idea of race (with critical race theory) by evaluating (with a “critical” eye) dominant anthropological, scientific, and legal assumptions that race was a natural and unchanging category (Ladson-Billings 2000). For the critical theorists, the goal of the elimination of racism was the impetus to even begin the evaluation of such a steadfast, “scientific” idea as race.

As mentioned above, critical theorists typically have utilized methodologies that involved the interpretation of texts (Kincheloe and McLaren 2000), although Stephen Yanchar et al. (2005) argue that a critical methodology would necessarily avoid any particular model or prescription. Instead they argue that

a critical methodology would thus rest on the notion that within any program of research, contextually sensitive strategies are required, existing questions and strategies must be continually examined and often changed with context and experience, and new questions and strategies must be formulated based on the practical demands of research. (Yanchar et al. 2005, 36)

As this research project concerned the *history* of a particular place, *St. Tammany Parish*, the types of questions I asked and sources available in some ways dictated my methodology. Critical theory therefore functions well with grounded theory, which to a large extent guided the way I tackled those available historical sources.

Geographers (and other scholars) doing qualitative work have argued that grounded theory (or any method of doing research where qualitative data are broken into manageable, logical categories by the researcher (Kitchin and Tate 2000) provides an excellent way to address past criticisms of qualitative work as “soft” science and still maintain the freedom and specificity that a qualitative study might demand (Strauss 1987, Auerbach and Silverstein 2003, Charmaz 2004, Flick 2006, Richards 2005, Knigge and Cope 2006). Grounded theory is based on achieving standards of rigor in qualitative research in terms of structure, transparency, and analysis in the research design. It incorporates the inductive purpose of much qualitative research by allowing the researcher to develop theories or explanations of social phenomena through analysis of data collected. Large amounts of textual data may be collected and analyzed by the researcher through coding—that is, assigning categories (Strauss 1987, Miles and Huberman 1994, Kitchin and Tate 2000, Auerbach and Silverstein 2003, Richards 2005, Knigge and Cope 2006) to pieces of text and analyzing different texts (such as interviews, diaries, photographs, etc.) within those categories. Codes may reflect categories created both by the researcher (axial coding) and the subjects (en vivo coding) who “speak” through the texts. In this way, certain themes and connections between data may become apparent and explanatory, and continuing research can build upon these discoveries. Grounded theory also calls for triangulation of methods and sources, reflexivity on the part of the researcher, and openness about the research process and method of analysis. I used many of the methods outlined in grounded theory, which will be described below in their application to specific data sources.

Research Questions and Data Sources

The methods for analysis and interpretation in this study have been very much influenced by human geography's favor of grounded theory. My research relies primarily on newspaper articles, government documents, census records, interviews, and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps (among other secondary sources of data). I coded information from newspaper articles for both events and factual information and to record "public" sentiments concerning race, health, and economics which appeared therein. I also coded town council and police jury minutes for content. My purpose in coding these documents was not so much a textual analysis (although some of that is inevitable in recognizing the limitations and biases in the production of newspapers) as much discovering what happened or—in the case of the *St. Tammany Farmer*--what the newspaper editor felt was important enough to print in the paper.

I have sought the methodological goals of grounded theory in my research—reflexivity, triangulation of sources and methods, systematic analysis; however, as in any historical research, I have utilized what sources were available. The availability of sources, particularly in historical work, can determine the methods used and even the questions asked at the most basic level of inquiry (Kitchin and Tate 2000, Howell and Prevenier 2001, Heinge 2005). Three excellent sources of information shaped my specific research questions about the historical construction of race in St. Tammany Parish: the Federal manuscript census schedules for St. Tammany Parish, the *St. Tammany Farmer* (a locally produced newspaper), and town council minutes for the towns (now cities) of Mandeville and Covington, Louisiana.

Federal census schedules are a rich source of both qualitative and quantitative data. I used three manuscript census schedules for this research: 1880, 1900, and 1920. Additionally, I used census data from the 1940 and 1960 federal census, although the

manuscript versions of these censuses are not yet available for privacy reasons. I used these manuscript censuses to answer a number of questions about race in historical St. Tammany Parish from 1878-1956, the most basic of which is where did persons of different racial and ethnic backgrounds reside in St. Tammany Parish? This question allowed me to begin to understand the issue of racialized spaces within the parish and provide a context for information from other sources. The Federal census schedules give census information by ward (a large sub-division of the parish) and village, town, or city. This defines the scales at which the above question of racial and ethnic geography can be asked.

Census marshals, as they traveled on horseback (later automobile) through St. Tammany Parish, asked the individuals they were counting for their names, age, relationship to the head of household, occupation, place of employment (1920), and place of origin or birth. Interestingly, census takers did not always *ask* an individual which racial category she or he belonged to, but *chose* whether to list “W” (for White), “M” (for Mulatto), “B” (for Black), or “I” for Indian (Native American) based on the individual’s appearance. Sometimes the census enumerators did not follow these guidelines and inserted their own descriptions. Sometimes the Census taker lived within St. Tammany Parish, and other times he did not; this fact generates a perplexing variable in the assignation of racial designation in the census. Did the Census taker assign a racial label based solely on appearance? Did he have the privilege of knowledge of the history of the family about which he inquired? Did the race of the neighbors make any difference in the final decision when pen was put to paper? How did the nuanced racial categories used in Louisiana’s past affect whether a person of color became a “M” or a “B?” This question is even more problematic when we consider the fact that the U.S. federal government itself did not use the same racial categories across all three of these census years. The Census takers removed the category “M” from their options for the 1900 census and then reintroduced it in 1920.

These questions concerning the supposed inscrutability of the census schedules will be further addressed in later chapters; however, these issues do clearly demonstrate both the qualitative and quantitative, the objective and subjective characteristics of the census as a source. It is important to point out that not only did the Census takers hold responsibility for the information that appears in those manuscripts, but those individuals who answered questions about themselves helped to construct both the census itself and census categories in their replies (see for instance, Botting 2004). The subjectivity of information in the census does not stop with the census taker and the individual dispensing information, either. In many ways, I interpreted the data that I counted in the census—the very same data that has been written, photographed, and microfilmed, and has been sitting in Middleton Library for decades—in a subjective way. While counting the census data, I created forms to list different characteristics about individuals that I thought were important—race, sex, birthplace, occupation, and entered them into a spreadsheet for manipulation. In other words, I subjectively selected information from the census for the purpose of my study, taking it out of its original context on the page. I also interpreted which categories certain occupations should fall into based on secondary sources and other information, which necessarily favors some information over others. Interpretive data has emerged from this numerical source; the census has proven to be invaluable both quantitatively and qualitatively, objectively and subjectively.

As alluded to in the preceding paragraphs, I took a variety of information from the census in addition to race and place of origin. I also looked at occupation, which allowed me to ask the questions, in what way were people in St. Tammany employed, and how did this vary by ward and town? How did employment vary by race, and how did this vary by ward and town? I compared the results of the census to what historians and other have written about St. Tammany, particularly with respect to the most well-known industries in St.

Tammany Parish: the lumber, ship-building, and the health/resort industries. Counting employment in the census gave me some very interesting statistics about which occupations tended to be predominantly white, Black, or Mulatto (to use the most commonly found racial categories in the census). In addition, I discovered which industries in St. Tammany actually had the largest number of employees and how this changed over the census years.

The 1920 Census for St. Tammany Parish also contains some data at a street level within urban areas. The census takers actually recorded the street they were on when they visited each household, which creates a more specific picture of something that data at the Ward level cannot—residential segregation. This information allowed me to ask the question, did whites and people of color live segregated from each other in the urban areas in St. Tammany Parish? Unfortunately, census takers only documented this information consistently in the 1920 census, so longitudinal comparisons are impossible.

Two other sources were extremely important in shaping the questions I had about racial geography in historical St. Tammany Parish—the *St. Tammany Farmer* (a local newspaper), and the town council minutes for both Covington and Mandeville, the two biggest urban areas in western St. Tammany Parish. The editors and proprietors of the *St. Tammany Farmer* issued the paper each Saturday (or Friday in later years), and it continued to be a weekly publication through the time period of my survey, 1878-1956. I utilized this source of information extensively, reading/skimming all of the newspapers between these two bookend dates, over 4000 papers in total. I searched for articles that I believed might be pertinent to the issue of race, health, environment, and socioeconomics in the parish, particularly focusing on western St. Tammany Parish. I either copied or transcribed those selected articles, and I coded the information for analysis. Additionally, I also selected advertisements, photographs, and cartoons when they met the above criteria as well. In searching through these newspapers, I attempted to find some balance between what Harris

(2001) refers to as the problematic “poles” of collecting too much information without a clear course and trying to find too much specific information thus eliminating useful bits of knowledge.

As researchers following grounded theory methodology describe (Cresswell 1998) there is a point of data saturation, when no additional information changes or contributes more to a particular issue or subject. Because of the volume of material I combed through, I reached this point with certain themes fairly frequently, so the data that I selected from the *Farmer* varies in terms of the percentage of the total numbers of articles on each theme and category. For example, during the early 1900s, particularly until 1920, the editor frequently included the race of a person arrested for a particular crime. I selected quite a number of these reports in the paper but not all of them unless there was something unique about the case.

My main purpose with analyzing the content of the *Farmer* was to discover events, socioeconomic conditions, and public opinion (admittedly to a very limited extent) concerning the racial, health, environmental, and economic history of St. Tammany Parish before the construction of the Pontchartrain Causeway in 1956. My selection of different articles, cartoons, and advertisements was not intended for a textual analysis *per se*. Rather it was intended to help rebuild the context—historical and geographical—and mechanisms for the construction of race in western St. Tammany Parish. Many scholars have published admonitions concerning the use of historical sources such as newspapers without understanding the creation, ownership, and history of the source (Howell and Prevenier 2001). While the editors of the *Farmer* made it clear what political and ideological stance they held on issues such as economic development and community cohesiveness, other contextual variables that affected the delivery of information through the newspaper remain unknown. These factors limit my use of the newspaper to collecting information and

seeking connections rather than a “de-construction” of the discourse presented in this source.

The third most extensively utilized source for this research was the town council minutes of Mandeville and Covington. I also utilized the Police Jury minutes for St. Tammany Parish. These sources help address the question, how did the municipal and parish governments address issues of race, environment, health, and the economy and thus contribute to racial constructions? Within this overarching question lie a number of important interrogations as well—what areas of race, health, environment and economy did those levels of government address, and why? How was the scope of their ordinances limited and by what factors? How did their policies change over the years? What were the most pressing issues requiring government action? These sources proved to be exceptionally valuable. I utilized the Mandeville Town Council minutes directly—reading the old, handwritten (and later typed) council minutes at Mandeville City Hall; and the Covington Town Council minutes and the St. Tammany Police Jury minutes consistently appear in the *St. Tammany Farmer*.

To complement and verify these three sources, I used a variety of other sources as well. Interviews constituted a large proportion of my early research, as I questioned a number of local residents about the history of St. Tammany Parish. I conducted ten open-ended interviews with residents of western St. Tammany Parish, seeking a variety of perspectives and information about the history and geography of the North Shore area. I learned of specific individuals to interview based on recommendations of others, specific knowledge I was seeking, or through secondary sources and local histories. I contacted individuals for interviews, tape recorded and then transcribed the interviews. One of the goals of using interview data was to have access to historical and geographic information that did not appear in locally produced histories of the area. Issues such as water and

sewerage, for example, are not issues that historians have spent a great amount of time writing about (see Galishoff 1985, Melosi 2000, and Colten 2002 for exceptions). Regarding St. Tammany Parish, no histories of the infrastructure—except for some generalized histories of the rail road and brick yards—exist. In order to remedy these voids in information, I interviewed employees of the Mandeville public works and presidents of homeowner associations.

In addition, race has not been an issue present in many of the published histories of St. Tammany parish, with the exception of slavery. The history of people of African descent (at least those recognized as having African descent) in St. Tammany as different and distinct from the white population does not exist (or at least has not survived). Interviewing elderly white and Black residents helped me to have access to some of those social histories left out of general histories written about the area.

The four interviewees I have directly quoted in this dissertation came from diverse economic backgrounds—but all grew up in or near Mandeville (with the exception of Judge Ellis, who moved to the parish as a young man). The first is an elderly white woman named Inez Thomas, a retired school teacher in her 80s who was born and raised in Mandeville. Her father worked on a schooner in Lake Pontchartrain, and she was one of the first young women from Mandeville to attend Louisiana State University. The second is a Black minister, also in his 80s, who still works as the principal minister of the First Free Mission Baptist Church on Lamarque Street in Mandeville, which the founding members constructed in 1873. The third is retired District Judge Steve Ellis, a white man in his early 80s, who still works as a lawyer in downtown Covington. Judge Ellis wrote one of the first and only well-documented, detailed early histories of the parish. The fourth is Adelaide Boettner, a white councilwoman in her 80s who continues to serve on the Mandeville Town Council. I located these individuals for interviews through referrals or archival materials.

Social scientists have brought into question methods that researchers may use to obtain and conduct interviews (Fontana and Frey 2000, Kitchin and Tate 2000). Of particular value to this research is how these scholars address issues of race in the interview process. Many scholars (Gallagher 2000, Warren 2000, Sangarasivam 2001, Holloway 2005) address how personal characteristics of the interviewer (such as race and class) may affect the direction, quality, and content of the interview. I attempted to minimize these effects by meeting with these residents in public places or places of their choosing, such as churches or local businesses. I also asked the interviewees if they would like a copy of a list of questions I would be asking in advance of the interview, and several took advantage of that offer. I tried to communicate to the residents I interviewed my love of the history of the parish and that I was interested in finding information that only he/she possessed—information that may not have been included in history books. Containing the effects of my interview style and personal characteristics on the material I learned in the interviews was impossible, of course. Interviews are dialogues, constituted in part by the individuals engaging in that dialogue, the experiences those people have brought with them to the interview, the locations and time of the interview (Fontana and Frey 2000, Sangarasivam 2001). However, my purpose for the interviews was to learn about major events and socioeconomic conditions, rather than very personal experiences, although some of the interviewees shared those with me. Once again, I did not utilize these interviews for textual analysis per se, but rather for information and perspectives about events and conditions. Because of the purpose of my interviews and my method of analysis, some of the issues (not all) that researchers have identified with conducting interviews were minimized.

In addition to the *Farmer*, the census, interviews, and municipal council and police jury minutes, I also used a variety of other archival sources, such as Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps and other historical maps for the towns of Covington and Mandeville, various

published materials from the early 1900s—such as business directories, etc.—and land records (including neighborhood covenants) from the parish courthouse and the State Land Records offices. I used municipal and State Board of Health documents as well.

These methodologies and sources have provided a great deal of valuable information regarding race, economics, health, and environment in St. Tammany Parish. I have attempted to achieve data triangulation, internal cohesiveness, logical structure, and thoroughness with the sources that were available to me and within the questions which ultimately guided my research.

CHAPTER 3: THE GEOGRAPHY OF RACE IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH

INTRODUCTION

A key factor in the construction of race is the *geography* of race: how the concept of race becomes salient and observable through its spatial consideration (Anderson 1987; Delaney 1998, 2002; Schein 2006). Because of this, understanding the distribution of people belonging to different racial groups is extremely important in unearthing the historical and geographical concepts of race in St. Tammany Parish. Using census data, information from interviews, and newspaper accounts, this chapter will begin to map the spatiality of race and ethnicity in St. Tammany Parish between 1880 and 1960. This chapter also serves as an important framework for data presented in subsequent chapters on the economic geography, environmental geography, and cultural geography as they pertain to race in this mostly rural parish.

This chapter will demonstrate how despite marked population growth between 1880 and 1960, the ratio of whites to non-whites (those classified as “Black” and “Mulatto”) in the parish did not change dramatically until after 1950. From 1880 to 1940, census enumerators counted a little more than one-third of the parish as either “Black,” “Mulatto,” or “Negro,” a number significantly larger than the one-tenth proportion that Black residents comprise in the parish today (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). By 1960, four years after the completion of the first span of the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway connecting the North Shore with New Orleans, “Negro” residents accounted for a quarter of the total population. This relative increase in the white population of the parish marked the beginning of a trend that continues today.

Looking only at the overall proportion of white residents or Black residents in the parish obscures a geography of race within the parish. In other words, the distribution of people of color within St. Tammany Parish was by no means even or equal within the parish

boundaries. This chapter investigates the distribution of individuals of different racial groups within the parish at the ward and the town level from 1880-1960 and at the street level for 1920 (the only census year covered by this project for which it is available).

In addition to race, this chapter presents information on the number and distribution of immigrants from outside the U.S. residing in St. Tammany Parish during this time period. Whiteness scholars (Hershberg et al 1979, Jackson 1987, Roediger 1991) have discussed the importance of ethnicity or nationality in the racial classification of individuals. Ethnicity and nationality were very powerful concepts in St. Tammany, and they intersected with concepts of race in interesting ways. This chapter presents census data concerning the origin of St. Tammany immigrants and how this changed between 1880 and 1940.

This chapter is designed to provide spatial reference to the information presented in the rest of the dissertation and to fill a void conspicuously missing from other historical works on St. Tammany Parish. Through analysis of this information, I contend that the historical racial geography of the parish is complex and fluid. This conclusion is hardly surprising; scholars of race have had the goal of “re-complicating” the racial picture for quite some time in order to reflect the vagarious nature of race as a concept. This fact is important in the context of St. Tammany Parish, however, for a number of reasons. First, St. Tammany was primarily a *rural* place, and studies of race have tended to focus on urban areas (with notable exceptions—McCarthy and Hague 2004). Second, perhaps because St. Tammany now has such a large white population, the history and geography of Black people (see Ellis 1981; Nicholls 1990; City of Mandeville 2008) has gotten subsumed by “general” (i.e. *white*) history. Third, certain places within St. Tammany became well-known for their large “mixed-race” (African, Choctaw, and primarily French) populations, and this included areas both inside and outside town limits in different parts of the parish. Local residents (if not of multiple ancestries themselves!) would have been quite aware of these groups of

people at the very least and likely interacted with them in work and travel, especially in the southern part of the parish. Presentation of evidence of the distribution of people with nebulous racial identity is an important starting point for uncovering the realities of race in the daily life of residents of St. Tammany during this time period.

Federal racial categorization schema changed significantly across census years. In this chapter, therefore, I use the classifications—white, Black, and Mulatto—used by census enumerators. Although census takers did have instructions to count Chinese, Filipino, and Indians (Native Americans), very few Native Americans lived in the parish by 1880, comprising 1 percent of the population in only Ward 4, and this number declined every year. Three Chinese people lived in Covington in 1920, according to the census enumerators, and operated a laundry. In 1920, the census takers also counted nine people as Mexican and three people as Filipino. While it is clear that these people did not count as “white,” newspapers and other secondary sources give little or no information about these particular people or other “non-white” ethnic or racial groups residing in the parish. This fact, combined with the fact that census enumerators counted over 99 percent of the population in St. Tammany as white, Black, or Mulatto, has prompted me to focus primarily on these three racial classifications. Throughout this chapter, I use the terms “people of African descent” and “people of color” to refer jointly to those listed as “Black” or “Mulatto;” in this chapter, the term “Black” applies very specifically to people with that census designation. My lack of consideration of other racial classifications does not imply that they were not important; however, it does reflect a general lack of information to corroborate census data.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. TAMMANY PARISH BEFORE 1878

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, the French explored St. Tammany and made contact with the largest Native American tribe there, a group they

referred to as the “Colapissas,” who resided on (what later became) the Pearl River in eastern St. Tammany. The early relationship between the Colapissas, the Natchitoches (who resided in the area as well), and French resulted in the movement of these groups between sites in St. Tammany and other nearby areas. During the early years of French involvement in southern Louisiana, a few hundred Choctaw and Biloxi people settled in St. Tammany as well; small numbers of Choctaw people continued to reside near Bayou Lacombe until the early 1900s (Ellis 1981).

Like the French in New Orleans in the early eighteenth century, the French in St. Tammany left a legacy of racial mixing and fluidity. In the 1730s, the French—notably Claude Vignon (called Lacombe) and others—established a handful of settlements to produce resin, tar, and pitch on the North Shore for the French residing in New Orleans. They brought enslaved men and women of African descent to manufacture the products and raise free-roaming cattle, also sold to residents in New Orleans. Some of the French freed their slaves, creating a small group of free people of color who probably had both French and African ancestry. Early accounts also describe Bayou Lacombe as a destination for fugitive slaves (Ellis 1981, 38), aided by the Choctaw and perhaps the free population of color.

Between 1763 and 1810, the area north of Lake Pontchartrain changed political hands a number of times. As a result of the 1763 Treaty of Paris, the British took control of the North Shore of Lake Pontchartrain and allowed several New Orleans French who were disgruntled by Spanish occupation to move there and practice Catholicism. Settlers of British origin from Georgia, New York, and Virginia moved there as well seeking asylum, and a few brought slaves with them (Ellis 1981, 48).

After the Revolutionary War, in 1783 the British ceded St. Tammany to the Spanish as a part of the West Florida territory, and the population began to grow with increased land

grants by the Spanish colonial government. Settlers came from both the Gulf Coast and from other parts of the American territories. The “Americans” resided along rivers further in the interior of the parish, while Spanish and French families tended to settle along the southern part of the parish near creeks and bayous and along the shore of Lake Pontchartrain. (Ellis 1981, 58). This settlement pattern, developed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, reflects the early establishment of a “colonial” population consisting of people of African, Native American, French, Spanish, and British ancestry (often mixed) near the lake and a British/“American” (i.e. upland South) population residing in the northern part of the parish.

By 1810, residents of West Florida had grown weary of the ineffective and often absent Spanish government and decided to form their own republic. They listed as their main grievances the fact that the Spanish government had allowed deserters and fugitives from neighboring territories to take up residence there; that the Crown entirely neglected laws concerning slaves, cattle, and other livestock, and roads; and there were no legal consequences for assault, battery, and slander (Ellis 1981, 72; Hyde 1996, 22). A few short months of chaos for the West Florida Republic ended the same year when the U.S. Congress took control of the territory, and Congress finally settled the matter in 1812 when they added the Florida parishes to the new state of Louisiana. Chaotic and lawless conditions persisted despite the political determination of the territory. Governor Claiborne remarked to Congress that influence of law in St. Tammany was “scarcely felt” and that he had difficulty in appointing leadership there because of a “scarcity of talent” and a lack of “virtuous men” (Ellis 1981, 84-85; Hyde 1996, 22).

In the context of this transitional period, individuals bought land and laid out plans for the first two towns in St. Tammany: Covington (first called Wharton) in 1813 and Madisonville in 1814, incorporated in 1817 (Boagni 1980, Ellis 1981). These towns took

advantage of existing trade routes and stops on the way to New Orleans markets. Twenty years later in 1834, Bernard de Marigny, a wealthy New Orleans businessman and landowner, purchased property along the lakefront intended for his own private use as a sugar plantation (worked by slave labor) on the east side of Bayou Castain (today this land is Fontainebleu State Park) and as a planned town on the west side of the Bayou. Marigny sold individual lots in Mandeville, and within four years steamboats began carrying passengers from New Orleans to the North Shore to take advantage of the new hotel, casino, and healthy environment of the area (Baughman 1962, Ellis 1981, Nicholls 1990).

Despite these beginnings as a spa for New Orleanians and the increased population in St. Tammany, the parish continued to have economic and social problems. In 1854, capitalists completed the Orleans, Jackson, and Great Northern Railroad (New Orleans-Jackson Railroad) around the west end of Lake Pontchartrain, despite concerns about the railroad causing the spread of yellow fever during a massive outbreak in 1853. The construction of this corridor for transportation and trade made obsolete old roads and depots of importance in St. Tammany. As a result, the white and slave populations of the parish decreased from approximately 6000 to 5400. This economic decline, however, did not cause the free population of color to decrease; this population increased from approximately 350 to 400 (Ellis 1981, Hyde 1996).

In the final two decades prior to 1878, the Civil War and Reconstruction in St. Tammany proved to be a difficult time as it was elsewhere in the South. St. Tammany was one of nine parishes in Louisiana that voted against secession (one of four in the Florida Parishes), but soon supported the Confederacy as war began. Attacked by both Confederates *and* Union troops trying to squelch illegal supply running and serving as a hideout for gangs of Confederate deserters, the economy in St. Tammany had basically disintegrated with the destruction of manufactures, fields, and cattle (Ellis 1981, Hyde 1996).

The tourism business that had thrived in the 1830s and 40s stopped entirely during the Civil War and began to revive slowly after the cessation of hostilities. Though it had recovered to some extent by 1870, corruption in Reconstruction politics, political turmoil between Democrats and Republicans, and social and cultural changes associated with the abolition of slavery created a less-than-stable social and economic situation in the parish (Ellis 1981, Hyde 1996).

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE, 1880-1960

Racial Composition by Ward

By 1880, the population of St. Tammany Parish had regained—and surpassed—numbers lost during the 1850s and 60s, reaching a total of 6,887 (U.S. Census Bureau 1880; Seamus 1906). Of this number, census enumerators labeled approximately 60 percent of the population as white, 20 percent as Black, and 17 percent as Mulatto. Within the parish, however, racial composition varied dramatically from one ward to the next. Table 3.1 indicates the specific numbers by ward. This table does not list the percentage of the population counted as Native American, another historically important racial group in St. Tammany because the census records list only 34 people, primarily in Ward 4 (Mandeville). The total number of Native Americans in the parish by 1880 amounted to less than one percent of parish population and decreased with each census.

In 1880, the population of individuals listed as Black or Mulatto in St. Tammany consisted of almost 40 percent of the population. Wards 1 (Madisonville), 7 (Lacombe), and 9 (Bonfouca—later Slidell) had the largest populations of color; in Wards 7 and 9, the majority of this population is listed as *Mulatto*. Within the non-white population, the number of individuals classified as Black parish-wide outnumbered those classified as Mulatto by only three percent. In other words, approximately half of the population of color in St.

Tammany had both European and African ancestry, and census enumerator recognized and recorded this information.

TABLE 3.1. RACIAL COMPOSITION (TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES) BY WARD, 1880

	White	Black	Mulatto
Ward 1	544 (57.6%)	215 (22.8%)	186 (19.7%)
Ward 2	549 (78.2%)	95 (13.5%)	56 (8.0%)
Ward 3	823 (65.9%)	252 (20.2%)	172 (13.8%)
Ward 4	798 (61.2%)	334 (25.6%)	140 (10.7%)
Ward 5	350 (89.7%)	40 (10.3%)	0
Ward 6	266 (79.4%)	49 (14.6%)	20 (6.0%)
Ward 7	214 (31.5%)	183 (26.9%)	283 (41.6%)
Ward 8	409 (68.2%)	105 (17.5%)	86 (14.3%)
Ward 9	149 (29.7%)	130 (25.9%)	223 (44.4%)
“Old” Ward 10*	169 (98.3%)	2 (1.2%)	1 (0.6%)
Parish	4,271 (62.4%)	1,405 (20.5%)	1,167 (17.1%)

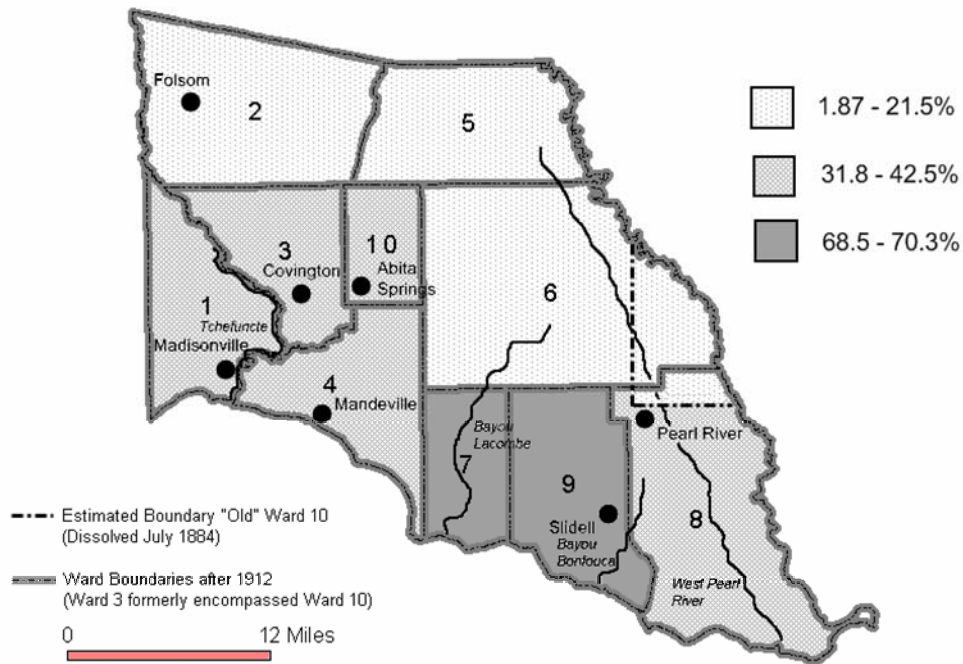
Source: U.S. Federal Census Schedules 1880

The fact that the census enumerator held the responsibility for racially classifying individuals meant that he (in St. Tammany the enumerators were always male) undoubtedly made some errors in judging ancestry, basing his judgment on reputation, appearance, or perhaps input from the individual in question. Enumerators followed instructions handed down by the federal government on which racial categories to use, but these instructions were less than explicit. The instructions directed the numerators to count “anyone with a perceptible trace of African blood” as Mulatto, but to be careful in dealing with this class of people—“important scientific results depend upon the correct determination of this class.” An enumerator, in evaluating statements he knew to be “erroneous,” could enter the

information as “nearly as he can ascertain them” (Ruggles et al. 2004). In effect, if the enumerator disagreed with the information presented by someone, he could enter into the schedule whatever information seemed the most plausible to him.

Despite the extreme likelihood of errors, census enumerators—by whatever method—listed a significantly large percentage of the population of perceptible African descent as Mulatto, particularly in Wards 7 and 9. There are two main possibilities that explain these numbers. First, this may have reflected the continuation of French and Spanish colonial practices with regard to race (see Hall 1992, Hangar 1997)—in other words, the continued practice of interracial sexual relationships through marriage and otherwise and recognition of the offspring of these relationships as racially distinct. And, secondly, this may represent the perpetuation of “mixed-race” communities through exclusivity or isolation. Local knowledge of distinct mixed-race communities around Bayous Lacombe and Bonfouca appears to corroborate at least the second possibility (Judge Steve Ellis, personal interview, 8 Feb 2007).

The racial composition of wards within St. Tammany in 1880 also attests to settlement patterns in the late 1700s and early 1800s placing French, Spanish, and African settlers (and their children) near Lake Pontchartrain and British and “American” settlers in the interior of the parish. Map 3.1 depicts percentage population of color (those counted Black and Mulatto). Both those counted as Mulatto and Black resided more frequently in Wards 7 (Bayou Lacombe) and 9 (Bayou Bonfouca), followed by Wards 1 (Madisonville), 3 (Covington), 4 (Mandeville), and 8 (Pearl River). Wards 2, 5, 6, and 10, primarily in the northern end of the parish, had relatively fewer numbers of people of color, although Wards 2 and 6 both had over 20 percent people of color (a number still larger than the total percentage of Black people in the parish today). The “old” Ward 10 and Ward 5 had the lowest with 1.8 percent and 10.3 percent respectively.



MAP 3.1. PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR BY WARD, 1880

In 1900, this pattern of racial distribution within the parish continued; an oblique axis running northwest to southeast through the parish divided those wards with higher concentrations of people of color from those wards with higher percentages of whites. Table 3.2 lists the racial composition figures by ward. The U.S. Federal Government instructed the census enumerators to list the race of an individual—either “W” for white, “B” for Negro or Negro descent, “Ch” for Chinese, “J” for Japanese, or “In” for Indian (Ruggles et al. 2004). This eliminated the “Mulatto” classification for this year, ostensibly reclassifying as Black the majority of individuals previously listed as Mulatto. Despite this change in classification procedures, in many ways the statistics for 1900 are similar to the numbers from the 1880 census.

Overall, the total percentage of people of color decreased by less than one percentage point in the parish; however, in terms of total population, the population of color increased by nearly 2300. The white population grew by nearly 4100 during this period. The

biggest gains in the total individuals classified as Black (compared to those counted as both Black and Mulatto in 1880) occurred in Wards 9 (with an increase of 663), 3 (with an increase of 507), and 8 (with an increase of 399). The increase in populations of color in these wards may reflect the economic growth of the parish. Ward 9 in particular witnessed remarkable economic growth with planning and construction of the town of Slidell, built around a creosote works on the newly constructed New Orleans and North Eastern Railroad in 1883 (17 March 1883 *Farmer* 4).

TABLE 3.2. RACIAL COMPOSITION (TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES) BY WARD, 1900

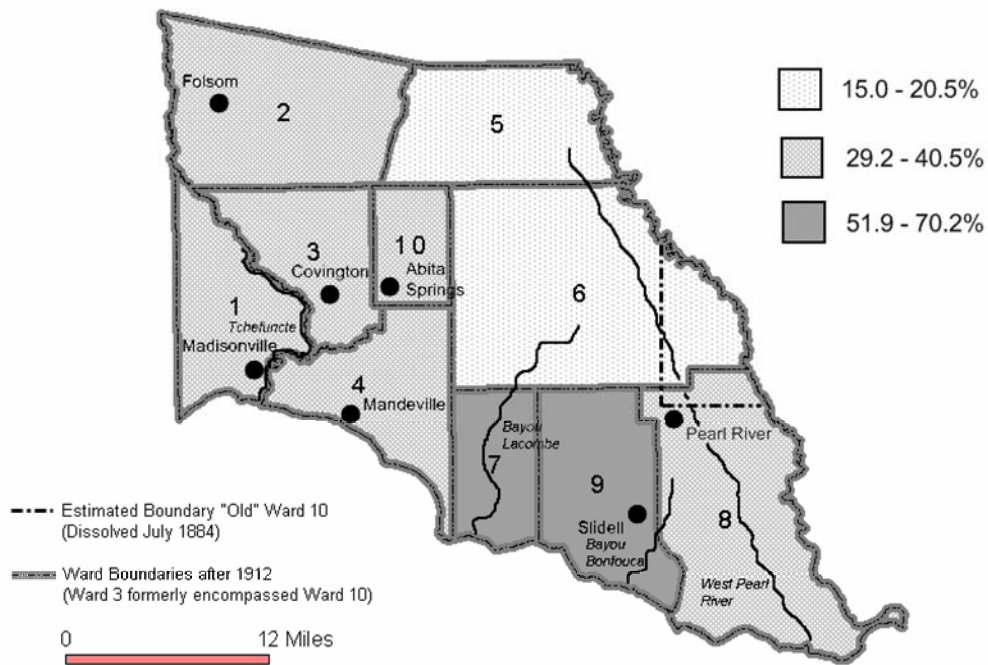
	White	Black
Ward 1	916 (59.4%)	625 (40.5%)
Ward 2	1,070 (70.8%)	442 (29.2%)
Ward 3	2,103 (68.7%)	951 (31.1%)
Ward 4	1,139 (65.8%)	577 (33.3%)
Ward 5	595 (85.0%)	105 (15.0%)
Ward 6	516 (77.6%)	136 (20.5%)
Ward 7	182 (29.8%)	429 (70.2%)
Ward 8	904 (60.5%)	590 (39.5%)
Ward 9	920 (47.0%)	1,016 (51.9%)
Parish	8,345 (62.9%)	4,871 (36.7%)

Source: 1900 U.S. Federal Census Schedules

Although Ward 9 (Slidell) had the largest increase in *total* numbers of individuals of color, in terms of *percentages*, Wards 2 (Folsom) and 8 (Pearl River) had the most sizeable growth. Populations of color in both of these rural wards increased by 7.7 percent of the entire population. Ward 9 actually had the largest *decrease* in percentage population of color, from 70.3 percent in 1880 to 51.9 percent in 1900. Although this ward had a large number of

people of African descent enter the parish between 1880 and 1900, the number of white residents grew dramatically as well, significantly increasing the ratio of white to Black residents by nearly 20 percent. Ward 7 (Lacombe), which had the second highest percentage people of color in 1880, became the ward with the highest percentage in 1900, growing by almost 2 percentage points to 70.2 percent people of African descent.

Map 3.2, using approximately the same percentage scale as Map 3.1, illustrates the continuation of the overall distribution of people of color in the parish despite significant changes in percentages in Wards 2, 8, and 9. In 1884 the St. Tammany Parish Police Jury had dissolved the “old” Ward 10, located in the eastern end of the parish, and divided the area between Wards 6 and 8; therefore census enumerators no longer recognized this political division in their schedules.



MAP 3.2. PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR BY WARD, 1900

Map 3.2 shows that the 1900 distribution of people of color in the parish is very similar to the 1880 distribution. In fact, the distribution appears to be exactly the same with

the exception of Ward 2, which moved up from the lowest category to the middle category with an increase of 7.7 percent. Ward 8 also increased by 7.7 percent but remains in the middle category. This map also does not reflect the significant decrease in percentage population of color in Ward 9 because the “Black” population there—despite the 20 percent decrease—still remained over 50 percent.

When looking at the demographic changes with regard to race that took place in St. Tammany between 1900 and 1920, some problems arise because of inconsistencies in enumeration. By 1920, the U.S. Census Bureau had reverted back to using the category “Mulatto,” which indicated a Negro “having some proportion of white blood” (Ruggles et al 2004). Despite this “one-drop” law for determining application of the descriptor “Mulatto,” not all census enumerators in St. Tammany utilized the category, and it is impossible to determine how the enumerators conceived “a proportion of white blood” in their entries. For example, Ward 1 suspiciously lacks a single person classified thusly. Considering the large number of individuals listed as “Mulatto” in 1880, it is rather inconceivable that Ward 1 had no person fitting that description.

Table 3.3 lists the racial composition by ward for the census year 1920. The 1920 census uses “Ward 10” as a political subdivision, but this is not the same Ward 10 that existed in the 1880 census. In 1912, the St. Tammany Police Jury created the “new” Ward 10, located around the town of Abita Springs, primarily from area that was formerly a part of Ward 3 (Covington). Overall, by 1920 the ratio of the white population to the population of African descent across the parish as a whole barely changed from 1900; the percentage population of color increased by one-half of a percentage point. Once again, however, these percentages disguise the tremendous amount of growth in both the white and population of color between 1900 and 1920. The white population grew by roughly 4600

individuals (both through birth, immigration, and migration—and increase of over 50 percent,) and population of color grew by over 2800 (also an increase of over 50 percent).

TABLE 3.3. RACIAL COMPOSITION (TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES) BY WARD, 1920

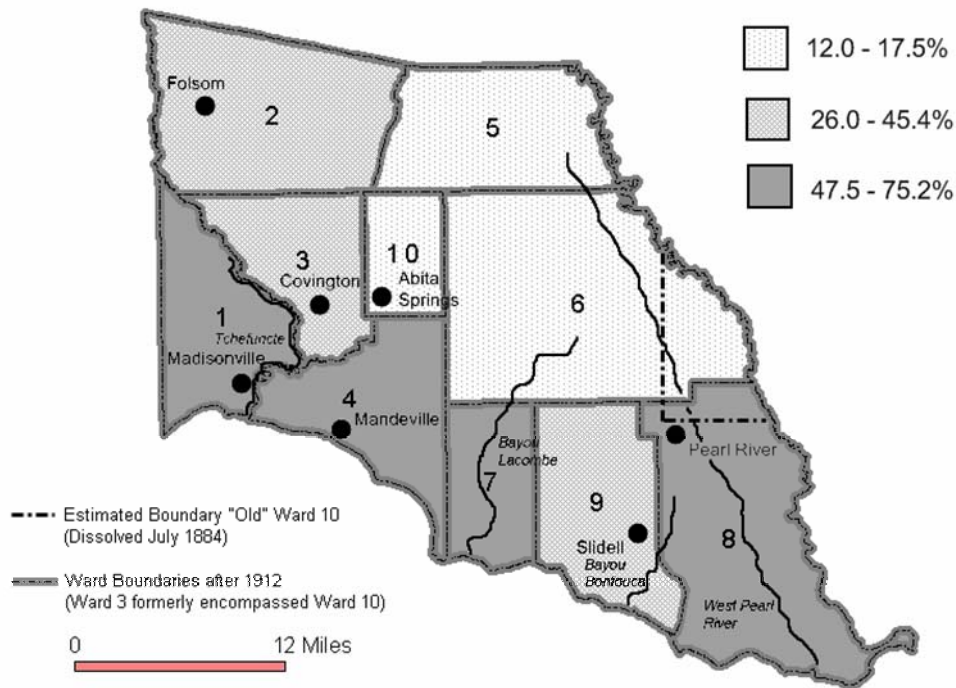
	White	Black	Mulatto
Ward 1	1,026 (51.2%)	979 (48.8%)	0
Ward 2	1,511 (74.0%)	361 (17.7%)	170 (8.3%)
Ward 3	3,096 (73.2%)	1,071 (25.3%)	62 (1.5%)
Ward 4	1,088 (52.5%)	977 (47.2%)	7 (0.3%)
Ward 5	929 (87.5%)	113 (10.6%)	20 (1.9%)
Ward 6	1,060 (83.9%)	203 (16.1%)	0
Ward 7	216 (23.7%)	217 (23.9%)	467 (51.3%)
Ward 8	711 (48.1%)	472 (31.9%)	296 (20.0%)
Ward 9	2,499 (54.4%)	1,158 (25.2%)	928 (20.2%)
Ward 10	810 (82.5%)	170 (17.5%)	0
Parish	12,946 (62.7%)	5,723 (27.7%)	1,950 (9.5%)

Source: 1920 Federal Census Schedules

This very slight increase in the population of color as a percentage of the total parish-wide population also hides some significant changes at the ward level. Wards 1 (Madisonville), 4 (Mandeville), and 8 (Pearl River) saw significant increases in the percentage population of color with growth of 8.3 percent, 14.2 percent, and 12.4 percent respectively, making the populations of these wards roughly 50 percent Black or Mulatto. These increases may reflect the growth of the ship-building, lumber, and brick industries in these wards, all industries which relied heavily on Black labor. Ward 7 (Lacombe) also increased the population of color as a percentage of the total population by 5 percent, keeping its

position as the ward with the highest concentration of people of color in the parish. Ward 9 (Slidell) continued the trend of a declining population of color, falling to 45.4 percent.

Map 3.3 demonstrates the continued and changing pattern of racial distribution in the parish in 1920. Continuing the pattern of the northeast corner of the parish as predominantly white, the wards with the lowest percentage people of color are Wards 5, 6, and the new Ward 10, all below 20 percent (i.e. over 80 percent white). Wards 1 (Madisonville), 4 (Mandeville), and 8 (Pearl River)—wards with the highest growth in percentage individuals of color—also became the wards with the highest percentage population of color. Interestingly, the wards with the two largest towns—Ward 3 (Covington) and Ward 9 (Slidell) again gained whites as a percentage of the total population of those wards.



MAP 3.3. PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR BY WARD, 1920

TABLE 3.4. RACIAL COMPOSITION (TOTAL AND PERCENTAGES) BY WARD, 1940

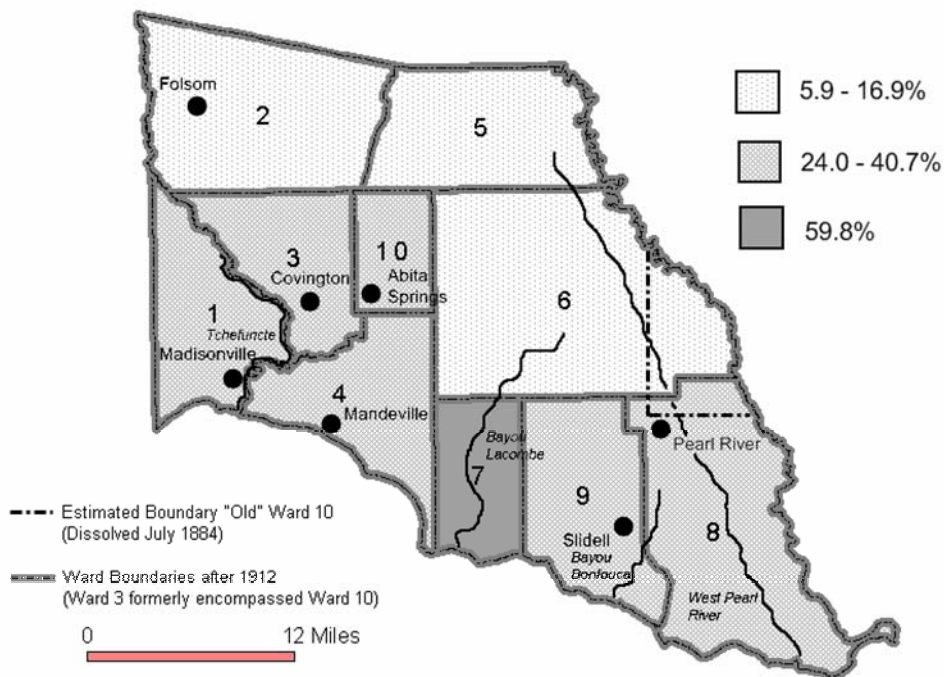
	White	“Negro”
Ward 1	1,138 (61.9%)	700 (38.1%)
Ward 2	2,220 (83.1%)	452 (16.9%)
Ward 3	4,099 (70.0%)	1,754 (30.0%)
Ward 4	1,374 (65.4%)	727 (35.6%)
Ward 5	1,193 (94.1%)	75 (5.9%)
Ward 6	1,266 (87.9%)	175 (12.1%)
Ward 7	368 (39.6%)	556 (59.8%)
Ward 8	1,277 (61.1%)	812 (38.9%)
Ward 9	2,654 (59.3%)	1,823 (40.7%)
Ward 10	727 (76.0%)	229 (24.0%)
Parish	16,316 (69.1%)	7,303 (30.9%)

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1943

Between 1920 and 1940, the lumber and shipbuilding industries had already begun to decline as a result of the Great Depression, a post-war decline in demand for ship-building, and the almost complete depletion of the virgin tracts of pine trees within the parish. Growth in St. Tammany between 1920 and 1940 reflects the “slowing down” of economic growth compared with the 1900-1920 period. Table 3.4 lists the population in St. Tammany in 1940 by race and ward. The white population between 1920 and 1940 grew by 3370 people, a significant increase of 26 percent, but it grew more slowly than it had between 1900 and 1920 when it increased by over 50 percent. Between 1920 and 1940, over 340 people of color left the parish; this number constitutes an almost five percent decrease in the total population of color. With the expansion of the white population and the decrease in the population of color, the ratio of white to “Negro” in the parish shifted sizeably for the

first time. By 1940, whites made up nearly 70 percent of the entire population of St. Tammany, and “Negroes” approximately 30 percent.

Map 3.4 demonstrates this changing demographic trend in St. Tammany between 1920 and 1940. Using roughly the same scale of percentages as in the maps for previous census years, the decline in the percentage population of color is quite apparent, especially in Wards 1 (Madisonville), Ward 2 (Folsom), 4 (Mandeville), and 8 (Pearl River). All of these wards saw marked decreases in the population of color as a percentage of the total population. Ward 1 decreased by over 10 percent, Ward 2 decreased by 9 percent, Ward 4 decreased by 12 percent, and Ward 8 decreased by 13 percent; these wards moved from the highest to the middle category on the map (with the exception of Ward 2, which moved to the lowest category). Ward 9 continued its decline in population of color as well, falling five points to 40.7 percent of the total population. The population of color in Ward 7 (Lacombe) fell by over 15 percentage points as well, but the majority (nearly 60 percent) of its population continued to be classified as “Negro.”



MAP 3.4. PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR BY WARD, 1940

Between 1940 and 1960, the population in St. Tammany once again grew by leaps and bounds, increasing by over 60 percent in these two decades alone. This growth in population can be attributed to post-WWII economic prosperity (often called the baby boom); however, one event in St. Tammany facilitated this major demographic change more than any other: the construction of the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway in 1956. Breaking down this period into two decades supports this claim as well. Between 1940 and 1950, the population in St. Tammany increased by a total of 3364, or 14 percent. In contrast, between 1950 and 1960 the population grew by a total of 11,655, or 43 percent—three times as quickly!

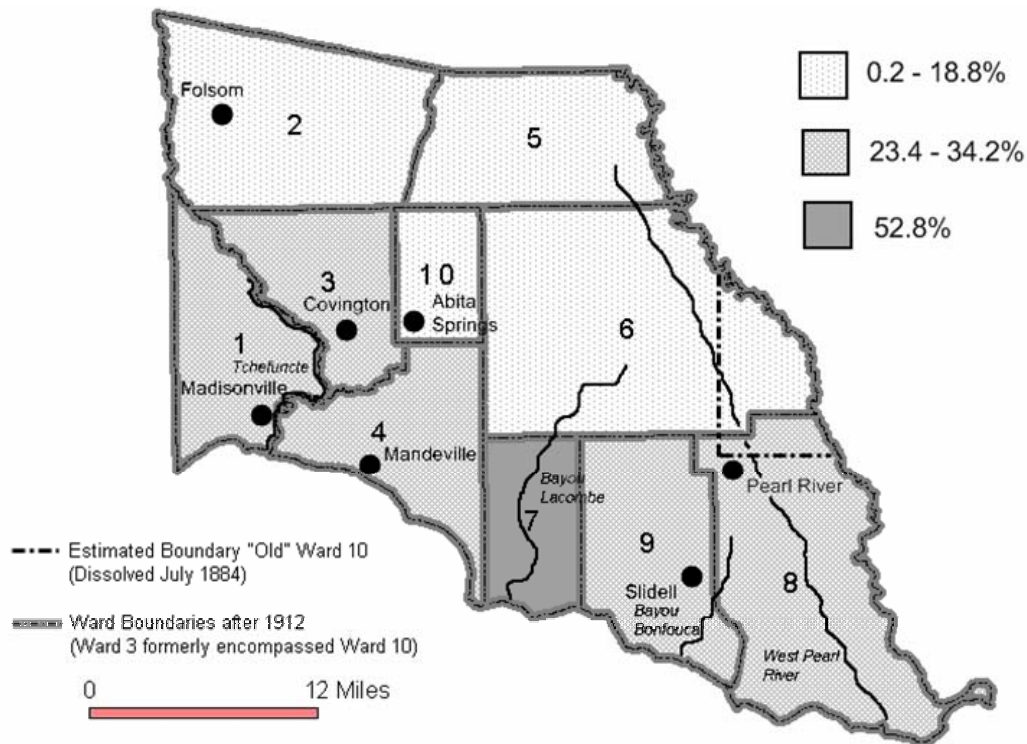
TABLE 3.5. RACIAL COMPOSITION (TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES) BY WARD, 1960

	White	“Negro”
Ward 1	1,350 (73.1%)	497 (26.1%)
Ward 2	2,804 (81.2%)	648 (18.8%)
Ward 3	6,860 (72.4%)	2,600 (27.5%)
Ward 4	2,557 (76.5%)	781 (23.4%)
Ward 5	1,257 (87.0%)	188 (13.0%)
Ward 6	1,636 (99.8%)	4 (0.2%)
Ward 7	945 (46.8%)	1,066 (52.8%)
Ward 8	2,943 (74.0%)	1,025 (25.8%)
Ward 9	6,786 (65.6%)	3,542 (34.2%)
Ward 10	893 (80.0)	181 (16.2%)
Parish	28,031 (72.7%)	10,532 (27.3%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1961

These two decades also witnessed the continuing decline of the population of color as a percentage of the total population of the parish. Table 3.5 displays these statistics. The

overall white population grew by roughly three percent of the total population, while the population of color declined concomitantly. The white population grew by over 11,700, compared to the growth in the population of color of 3200. Despite this increasing ratio of whites to blacks within the parish, it is important to note that the population of color did increase in this time period by over 40 percent. The increase in the population of color may suggest that migration to St. Tammany as a result of the completion of the Causeway was not only a white phenomenon, only *primarily* a white phenomenon.



MAP 3.5. PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR BY WARD, 1960

Only three wards increased the number of “Negroes” as a percentage of the total population. Wards 2, 5, and 10, which historically had some of the lowest numbers of individuals of color, increased by 1.9 percent, 7.1 percent, and 3.3 percent respectively. All other wards increased the numbers of white individuals as a percentage of the total population. This may indicate that some of the Black families previously living in the

southern part of the parish moved to these more rural wards as developers began to build subdivisions near the Causeway approach.

Map 3.5 depicts the distribution of racial groups across the wards for the census year 1960. Overall, the distribution pattern once again appears to be very similar to the pattern twenty years earlier with the exception of Ward 10, which moved into the lowest category. Importantly, however, the highest value has been reduced by four percentage points, and the middle value on the map has been reduced by six percent. Even though the pattern of “mid-range” wards with populations of color between 20 and 40 percent continues for Wards 1 (Madisonville), 3 (Covington), 4 (Mandeville), 8 (Pearl River), and 9 (Slidell), the highest values these wards once exhibited has been reduced significantly, mirroring an overall decline in the percentage people of color parish wide. Ward 7 (Lacombe) likewise continues to be the ward with the highest percentage people of color, but the percentage there has dropped by four percentage points.

Between 1880 and 1960, the population in the parish as a whole grew dramatically, particularly between 1900 and 1920 and between 1940 and 1960. These two periods correlate to the peak of the lumber industry in St. Tammany and the construction of the Causeway, respectively. Despite the commonality of population growth during these periods, each twenty-year period witnessed the differing effects on the percentage population of color. During the “lumber era” in the parish, populations of color became more concentrated in the wards bordering Lake Pontchartrain—Wards 1, 4, 7, and 8. Between 1940 and 1960, however, the overall population of color declined as a percentage of the parish-wide population despite some increase in total numbers; this was primarily due to the rapid increase in the growth of the white population, particularly in the same wards that forty years previously had experienced a concentration of populations of color.

Growth of the Towns: Population, Rurality, and Segregation

Over the eighty-year period that this research encompasses, the towns in St. Tammany grew tremendously as well. This trend reflected a broader pattern across the South. In the 1920s, for instance, the urban population of the South grew more quickly than in any other region of the United States, reflecting the rising importance of manufacturing in the Southern economy (Tindall 1967, 95). The majority of the urban population, however, resided not in the large cities of the South—New Orleans and Atlanta, for instance—but in the *small towns*; this phenomenon continued in Gulf South until the 1950s (Cobb 1984, 78; Goldfield 1997). Small towns in the South grew in importance in the late 1800s and early 1900s with the arrival of investment in both the lumber industry and the expansion of the railroads (Woodward 1971, Cobb 1984). Small towns across the South maintained their importance partially because, in the 1920s and after, the automobile freed workers from living so proximate their workplaces (Tindall 1967, 95), generating a commuting labor force.

The importance of the lumber industry, the expansion of the railroads between 1880 and 1920, and the “rurbanization” (movement of Southerners into small towns as suburbs in the 1950s [Woodward 1993, 6]) of the South played a crucial role in the development of the towns in St. Tammany. The growth and development of Covington, the parish seat in Ward 3, and Slidell in Ward 9 in particular followed these regional trends. Covington, lying at the intersection of the Baton Rouge and Hammond Railroad and the New Orleans and Great Northern Railroad (owned by the Great Southern Lumber Co., one of the largest in the country), was an important hub for trade and shipping as well as the center of parish government. Slidell was also a railroad and lumber town, located on the New Orleans and Northeastern Line connecting the North Shore with New Orleans. After 1900, Slidell and Covington were the two largest towns in St. Tammany; both grew dramatically between 1900 and 1920 with the ascendancy of lumber in the parish. Both towns saw negative or reduced

growth during the difficult economic times between 1920 and 1940. And both Covington and Slidell had substantial growth between 1940 and 1960 facilitated by the construction of the Pontchartrain Bridge (connecting New Orleans and Slidell) in 1928 (18 February 1928 *Farmer* 1, 5) and the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway in 1956.

Table 3.6 demonstrates the growth in town population and percentage change from twenty years earlier. Covington and Slidell, out of all the principal towns in St. Tammany Parish, grew the fastest and had the largest populations. Mandeville, which had the largest population in 1880, soon lost its status and never gained in population as quickly as Covington or Slidell. Madisonville grew quickly between 1880 and 1920, but after the lumber and ship-building industries declined in the 1920s, its population followed suit.

TABLE 3.6. TOTAL TOWN POPULATION AND PERCENT GROWTH FROM PREVIOUS PERIOD, 1880-1960

	1880	1900	1920	1940	1960
Covington	559	1,205 (115%)	2,943 (144%)	4,123 (40%)	6,754 (64%)
Mandeville	753	1,028 (37%)	1,130 (10%)	1,326 (17%)	1,740 (31%)
Madisonville	441	779 (77%)	1,104 (42%)	915 (-17%)	860 (-6%)
Slidell	--	1079	2,956 (174%)	2,864 (-3%)	6,356 (122%)

Sources: 1880, 1900, and 1920 Federal Census Schedules; U.S. Census Bureau 1943, 1961

Census data clearly shows the fitful and rapid growth of Covington and Slidell, the steady growth of Mandeville, and the increase and decline of the population in Madisonville. This raises questions concerning the distribution of the population within the parish. Just how many residents of St. Tammany lived in the towns as opposed to the rural areas? And how did this change? The following tables examine the balance between rural and urban by ward in St. Tammany between 1880 and 1920.

Figure 3.1 presents the total population in each ward for the census year 1880 and the division of this number into those inside and outside town limits. In 1880, only four

incorporated areas existed in St. Tammany Parish (there were a number of other “settlements,” for instance at Bayou Bonfouca and Indian Village): the Town of Madisonville, the Town of Mandeville, the Village of Lewisburg (between Mandeville and Madisonville on Lake Pontchartrain), and the Town of Covington; therefore, only those Wards containing one of these towns had a population listed as “urban.” The parish as a whole was 72.9 percent rural in 1880, but as Figure 3.1 demonstrates, each ward differed significantly.

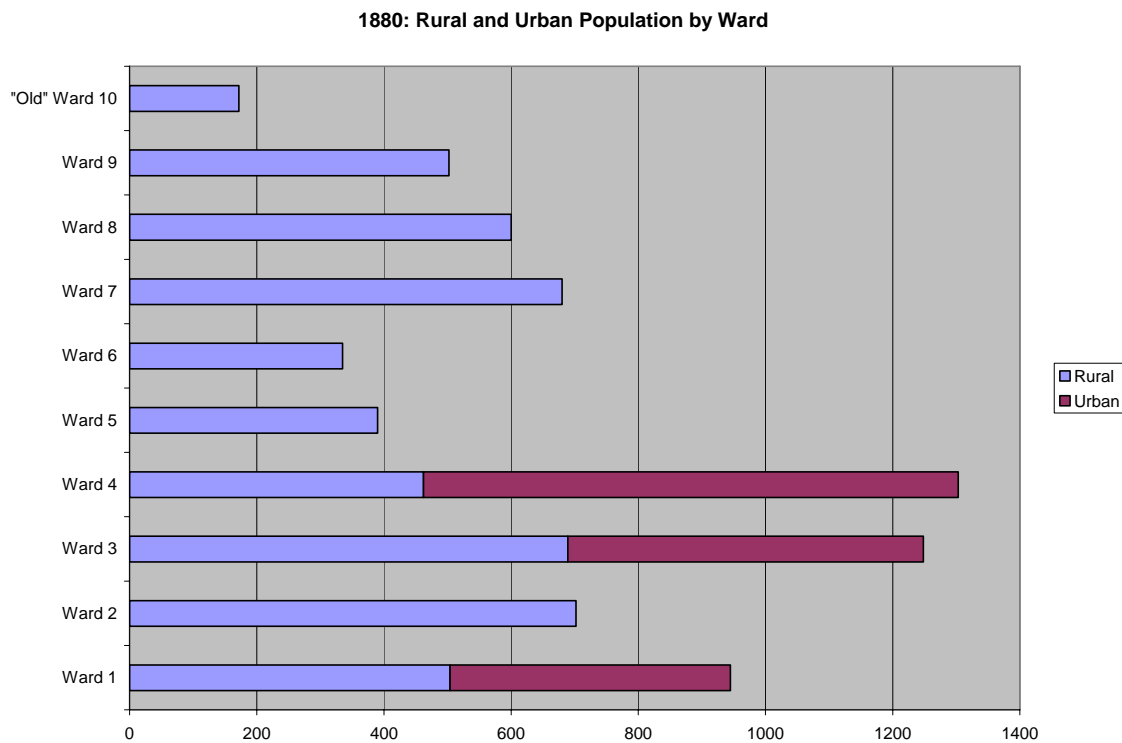


FIGURE 3.1. RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION BY WARD, 1880; SOURCE: 1880 FEDERAL CENSUS SCHEDULES

In 1880, Ward 4 had the largest population, and the majority of its residents lived in Mandeville. Ward 3 had the second largest population, with roughly half living in the Town of Covington. Ward 1 had third largest population, with roughly half living in the Town of Madisonville. The remaining seven wards had smaller populations and no towns or villages.

Figure 3.2 demonstrates how the rural-to-urban ratio changed according to the 1900 Census. By this year, the Town of Slidell had been incorporated in Ward 9 and had grown so quickly that in less than two decades, over half of the population in that ward lived in Slidell. Ward 4 (Mandeville) and Ward 1 (Madisonville) remained urban by slightly more than half. Five wards in the parish continued to lack a town or village, and 69 percent of the parish as a whole continued to reside in rural areas.

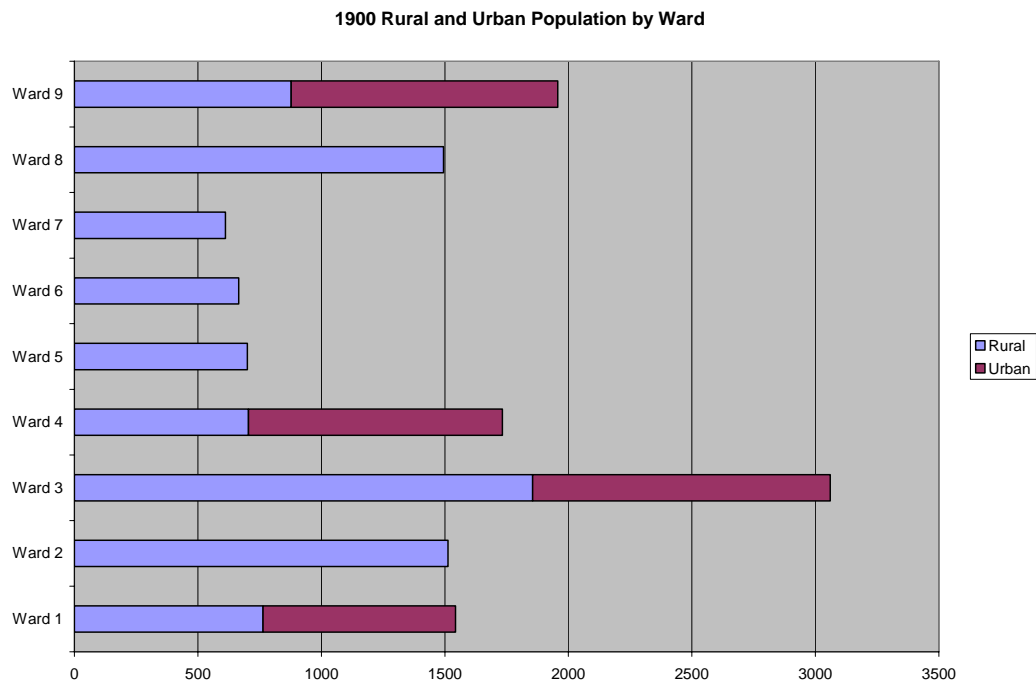


FIGURE 3.2. RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION BY WARD, 1900; SOURCE: 1900 FEDERAL CENSUS SCHEDULES

By 1920, the number of individuals living in rural areas parish-wide had dropped to 54 percent. The increasing percentage of residents residing in towns and villages in the parish continued primarily in Wards 3 (Covington), 1 (Madisonville), 4 (Mandeville), and 9 (Slidell). Also included in the 1920 census were the newly incorporated Town of Abita Springs in Ward 10, the Village of Pearl River in Ward 8, the Village of Folsom in Ward 2, and the Village of Ramsay in Ward 3. The residents of Wards 5 and 6 continued to reside only in rural areas (Figure 3.3).

Although the census schedules themselves are not yet publicly accessible for 1940 and 1960, data are available describing the rural-to-urban ratio in the parish as a whole. These data, however, suggest a different trend than in the decreasing rural population between 1880 and 1920. The 1940 and 1960 censuses break the category “rural” into two components: “farm” and “non-farm” (U.S. Census Bureau 1943, 1961). In 1940, over 70 percent of the population was rural, an increase of one percent over the 1920 statistics; of this number, 66 percent are “non-farm” rural. In 1960, 66 percent of the population is listed as rural; of this number, over 90 percent are “non-farm” rural. The 1940 and 1960 census data indicate a slightly fluctuating number of people residing within town and village limits, but the number of non-farming families living in rural areas increased dramatically. In sum, new residents lived in new subdivisions and homes outside the official town boundaries—the “rurbanization” that Woodward (1993) described.

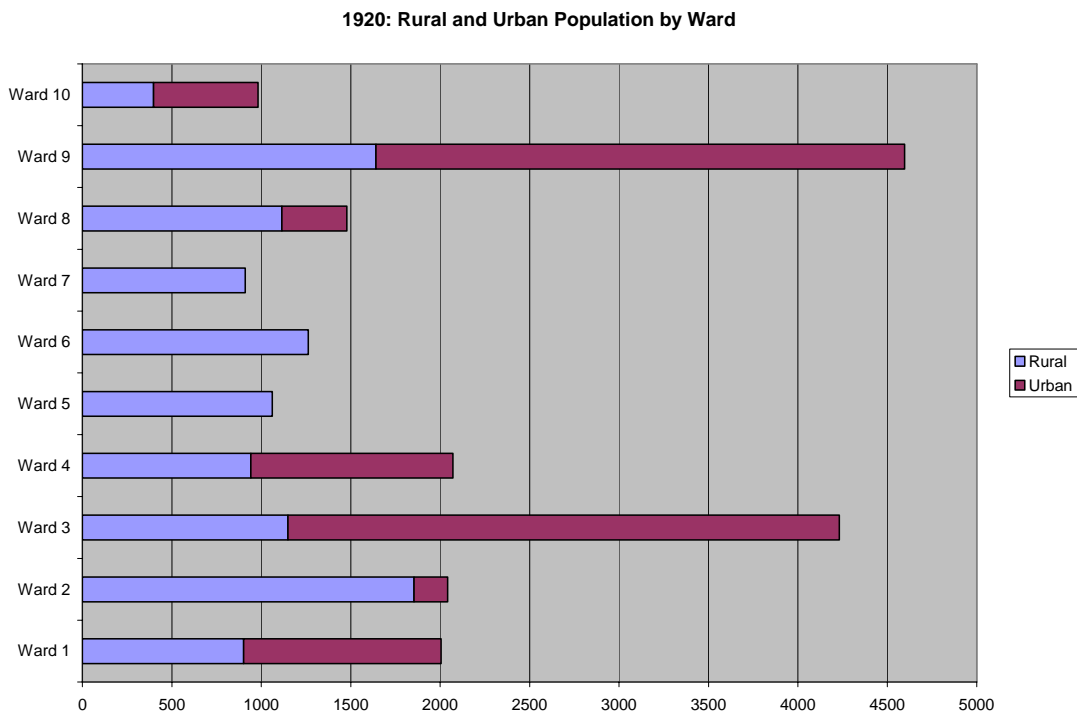


FIGURE 3.3. RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION BY WARD, 1920; SOURCE: 1920 FEDERAL CENSUS SCHEDULES

Two possible correlations arise between the number of rural or urban residents and the number of people of color per ward. Ward 7 (Lacombe) remained technically “rural” through all the census years covered in this research, but this ward also consistently maintained the *largest* population of color. In contrast, Wards 5 and 6 remained rural through all five census years and consistently had the *lowest* populations of color. This raises the question, did a higher percentage of people of color reside in rural or urban areas within the parish?

TABLE 3.7. PERCENT OF POPULATION LIVING IN RURAL AREAS IN ST. TAMMANY BY RACE, 1880-1940

	1880	1900	1920	1940
White	72.3%	68.9%	50.7%	69.6%
Black	74.4%	69.0%	52.6%	69.3%
Mulatto	75.2%	--	84.6%	--

Sources: 1880, 1900, 1920 Federal Census Schedules; U.S. Census Bureau 1943

Table 3.7 suggests that those individuals classified as “Black” and those as “White” had the *same* propensity for living in rural or urban areas when measured for the whole parish. In 1880, all three racial groups—White, Black, and Mulatto—yielded approximately the same percentage of individuals living in rural areas. Utilizing only two racial categories, the 1900 and 1940 censuses reiterate the similar likelihoods for whites and Blacks to reside in rural areas. The 1920 census lists similar rates for whites and Blacks, but Mulattoes had a 30 percent higher frequency of living in rural areas. In other words, in 1920 half of both the white and Black populations lived in urban areas, but only *15 percent* of Mulattoes lived in those areas. This number probably reflects the wild inconsistencies in racial classification during this census year (the census enumerator counted no one in Madisonville as “Mulatto”), or it may be indicative of perceptions of Ward 7 (Lacombe) as core residential area for persons of acknowledged European and African ancestry. Despite the interesting equality between racial groups in residing both inside and outside town boundaries, the

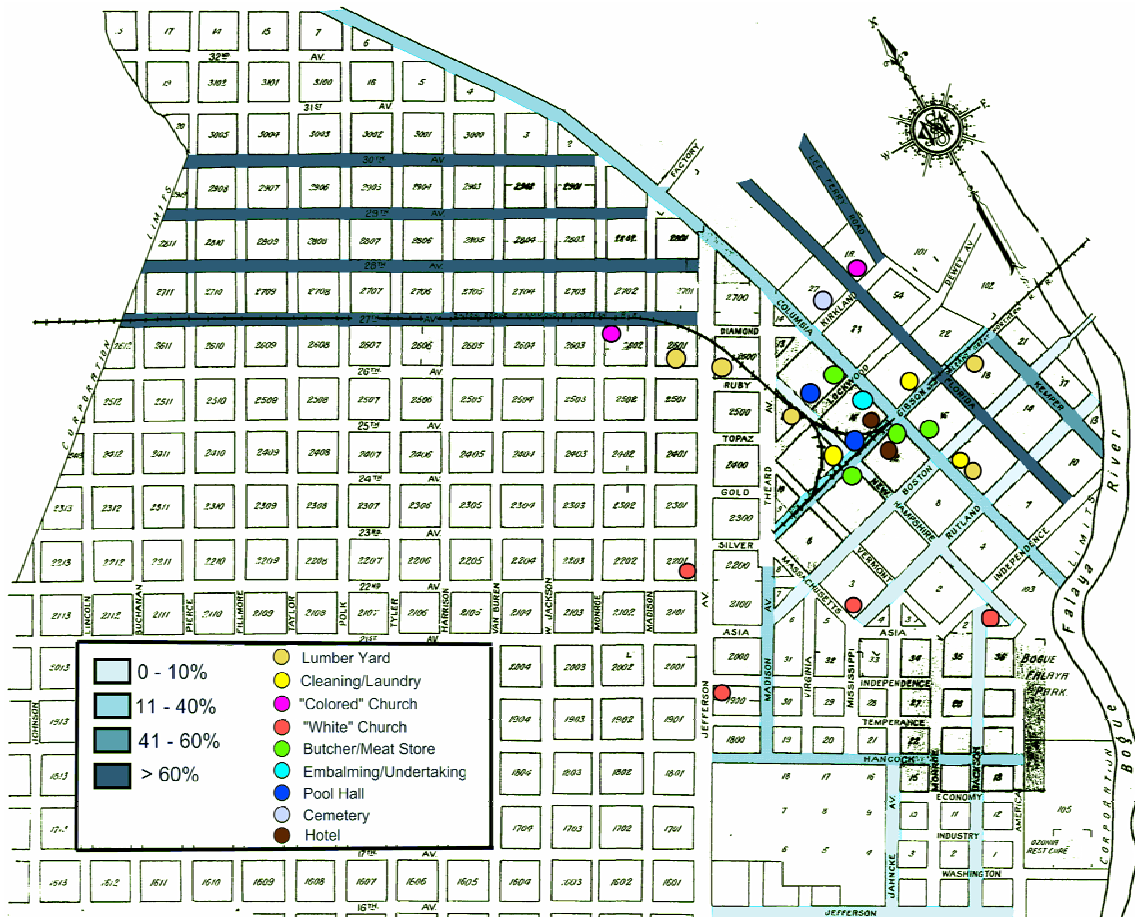
question of whether Black people or white people (or Mulatto people) were more likely to live in rural areas in reality depended on which ward a family resided in, how a person made a living, and numerous other factors.

Census information available for this time period cannot shed a lot of light on the question of segregation within the parish for a number of reasons. First, early census takers did not record the addresses of individuals (many times the property did not have an address or house number) living in the rural areas of the parish, so information only exists for towns and villages. Second, the houses in St. Tammany did not have street addresses until the 1940s, so the census enumerators recorded house numbers (if they were available). These numbers are difficult to cross-reference in light of the dearth of official documents specifying the location of the houses and street numbers before 1920. In the 1920 census, however, the enumerators listed their position by street; this provides the number of individuals (and all their characteristics) per street.

The Sanborn Fire Insurance Company in New York created detailed maps of two towns in western St. Tammany: Mandeville and Covington in 1926 and 1921. When cross-referenced with 1920 census data, a fairly striking picture emerges of the distribution of racial groups within each of these towns. While I did not match individuals with specific buildings due to inconsistencies and time constraints, combining the “street level” totals by race with the location of industry, churches, and other “color-specific” buildings identified on the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps generated impressions of which parts of the towns may have been “mostly white,” “mostly Black,” or neither (meaning both!).

Map 3.6 combines the 1920 census data for Covington at the street level with information gleaned from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, using these maps as a base. This map depicts streets that the census enumerators identified as having Black or Mulatto residents. With just census data alone, four streets stand out with over 60 percent people of

color living there: 27th Avenue (split by the Baton Rouge and Hammond Railroad), 28th Avenue, 29th Avenue, and 30th Avenue at the north end of the town. These streets also stand out in contrast to the blocks west of Jefferson Street in which census enumerators counted no persons of color. This area west of Jefferson and Columbia Streets corresponds to “New Covington,” planned in the late 1800s. In New Covington, planners designated 27th, 28th, 29th, and 30th Avenues as “Colored” streets and sold lots to individuals of color². Likewise they reserved the area south of 27th avenue for whites (Judge Steve Ellis, personal interview, 8 February 2007).



MAP 3.6. DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENTS OF COLOR IN COVINGTON, 1920; SOURCE: 1920 FEDERAL CENSUS SCHEDULES, SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE CO. 1921

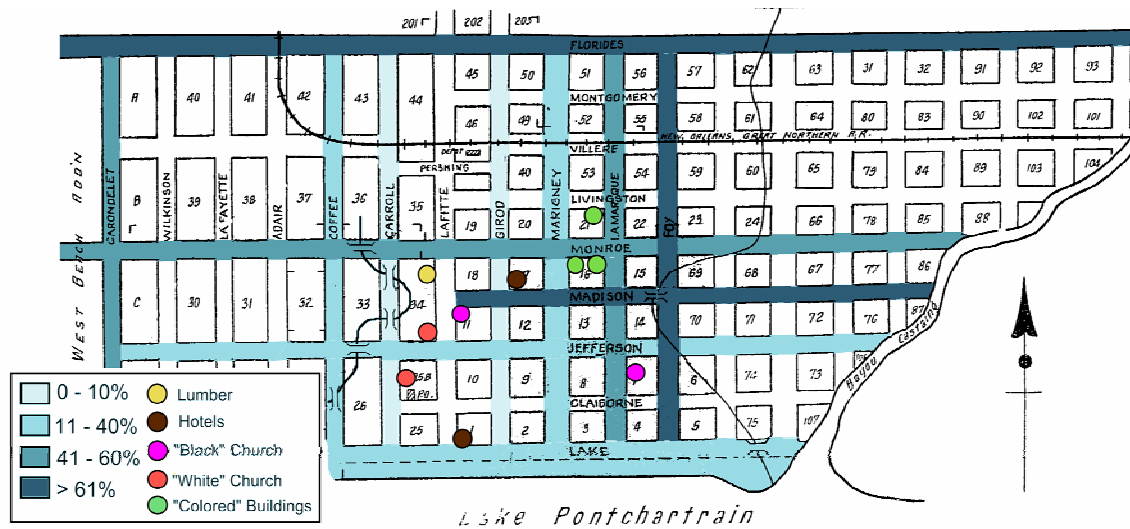
² The census enumerators only counted individuals on streets running generally east to west in New Covington. The absence of “Black” or “Mulatto” people on north-south oriented streets in the areas north of the railroad tracks represents a lack of census data rather than a predominantly white street.

In the “old” part of town, east of Jefferson Street, no clear pattern of segregation emerges except an impression that more people of color lived the eastern side of the town near the Bogue Falaya River. Florida Street and Lee Ferry Road (later Lee Road) had over 60 percent Black and Mulatto residents in this part of town. The varying percentages of Black and Mulatto residents in the older section of Covington suggests that segregation there did not follow the same strict dividing lines as the “new” part of the town. Also there is no clear visual correlation between the location of saw mills (and other lumber business buildings indicated by the bright yellow dots on the map), embalming or laundry businesses, pool halls, or hotels on streets which had a majority of Black or Mulatto residents. The location of churches provides the best marker of “Colored” and “white” areas of town. Two “colored” churches were located near the north end of town on streets with Black or Mulatto majorities, while the “white” churches were located in all white areas. Additionally, in New Covington, the railroad tracks strikingly separate white and Black streets.

The 1920 census data (see Map 3.7) for Mandeville together with the location of “Black” or “Colored” churches and other buildings designated as “Colored” show that Foy and Madison Streets were likely areas populated predominantly by Black residents. Neighboring Lamarque and Monroe Streets had 41 to 60 percent residents of color but also had a number of buildings (including a Masonic Hall and the Dew Drop Dance Hall) and a “Colored” church located there. A higher percentage population of color on two streets on the north and west edges of town (Florida and Carondelet) may indicate a sizeable number of residents of color living on the outskirts of town in both directions.

Mandeville demonstrates no clear correlation between the Black and Mulatto population and the location of railroad tracks or sawmills within the town limits. Hotels do not appear to follow any “racial” pattern other than to be located on economically important

streets (such as Lake Street facing Lake Pontchartrain). Similar to Covington, churches may provide the best marker for identifying the predominant racial group living in an area; “colored” churches in Mandeville were located on Lamarque and Madison streets. The presence of a Rosenwald school (schools for children of color funded by both foundation dollars and public school system fees) on the corner of Livingston and Lamarque Streets confirm the association of these streets with the population of color in Mandeville.



MAP 3.7. DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENTS OF COLOR IN MANDEVILLE, 1920; SOURCE: 1920 FEDERAL CENSUS SCHEDULES; SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY, 1926

These maps provide a very specific glimpse into the geographic concept of segregation. While they do not provide a precise or longitudinal image, this combination of census data with the Sanborn maps does allow some checks on accounts of segregation (or lack thereof) from other sources. These data suggest that in the “old” section of Covington white and Black people tended to live in different but overlapping areas; city officials and businessmen planned the “new” part of the town to be strictly segregated. While no such expansion occurred in Mandeville, residents of color did appear to reside primarily along a two street area—Lamarque and Foy—in the heart of the town and on Florida and Carondelet Streets on the north and west edges of town.

These maps are limited because they consider the entire street as a single unit. This means that at the most they can only suggest that some streets had higher numbers of people of color than other streets. And while this is a useful way to get an overall sense of the distribution of different racial groups within the towns, it clearly does not have explanatory power at the block level. In other words, considering the entire street as a whole may overlook segregation on a block-by-block basis, particularly in the older parts of Covington and Mandeville that appear to be more integrated.

Migration and Immigration, 1880-1920

Because manuscript census information is available for the 1880, 1900, and 1920 censuses, detailed information concerning the origins of foreign immigrants and U.S. migrants residing within the parish is also available for these years. For each of these censuses, enumerators listed the country and U.S. state of origin. While the immigrant population always remained quite small in St. Tammany, certain countries contributed more immigrants than others. Additionally, the parish and state governments found certain immigrant groups to be desirable with skill sets found to reflect “American” traits (see Chapter 4). Generally these tended to be people from northern Europe, Germany and Scandinavia in particular. In terms of migration within the United States, between 1880 and 1920 Mississippi supplied more migrants to St. Tammany than any other state; considering the proximity of St. Tammany to Mississippi and the similarities in economies, this fact is not surprising.

In the 80 years between 1880 and 1960, immigrants never made up a very large proportion of the population in St. Tammany Parish (see Table 3.8). In 1880, nearly 10 percent of the population in Ward 1 (Madisonville) was born outside the United States, but this is largest number recorded in the data. In 1880, foreign immigrants made up only 4.8 percent of the parish population and resided primarily in Ward 1, Ward 3 (Covington) and

Ward 4 (Mandeville)—the wards that also contained the parish’s only towns. The immigrant population as a percentage of the parish population continued to decline every year thereafter, but Wards 3, 4 and 10 (Abita Springs) persisted as the centers of immigrant residence. By 1960, foreign immigrants made up only one percent of the total parish population.

TABLE 3.8. PERCENT POPULATION BORN IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY BY WARD, 1880-1960

	1880	1900	1920	1940	1960
Ward 1	9.7%	5.3%	0.9%	0.8%	
Ward 2	2.6%	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	
Ward 3	6.3%	6.3%	6.2%	2.6%	
Ward 4	6.8%	6.4%	3.0%	1.6%	
Ward 5	2.6%	0.7%	2.1%	0.5%	
Ward 6	0.9%	0.6%	0.9%	0.1%	
Ward 7	2.5%	1.5%	1.4%	1.0%	
Ward 8	2.3%	0.9%	1.5%	0.4%	
Ward 9	1.0%	3.5%	2.6%	1.3%	
“Old” Ward 10	0.6%	--	--	--	
Ward 10	--	--	6.8%	3.9%	
Parish	4.8%	3.7%	2.9%	1.4%	1.0%

Source: 1880, 1900, 1920 Federal Census Schedules; U.S. Census Bureau 1943, 1961

The origins of the majority of St. Tammany immigrants remained fairly constant through the census years. Germany, France, England, and Ireland were the primary countries of origin for parish immigrants. Figure 3.4 demonstrates the ten most common origins of immigrants in the 1880 census. The largest number of immigrants came from Ireland, but in 1880 Germany had not yet unified; therefore, five of the countries of origin listed in the table below can be considered “German” for comparison purposes, making “Germany” the largest overall contributor of immigrants by far. In 1900, Germany and France were still the top two suppliers of immigrants to St. Tammany, and these overall numbers doubled during this time period (Figure 3.5).

This trend continued in 1920 (Figure 3.6), but by this year immigrants from Mexico and Switzerland also appeared in numbers in the parish. Interestingly, Italians were the third

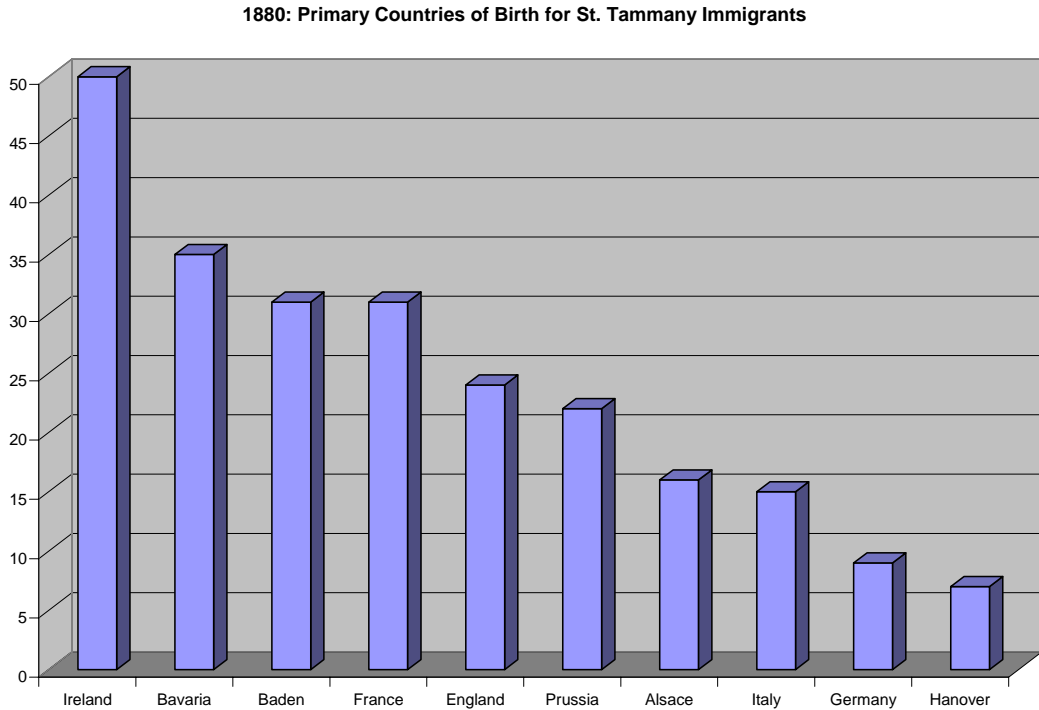


FIGURE 3.4. PRIMARY COUNTRIES OF BIRTH OF ST. TAMMANY IMMIGRANTS, 1880

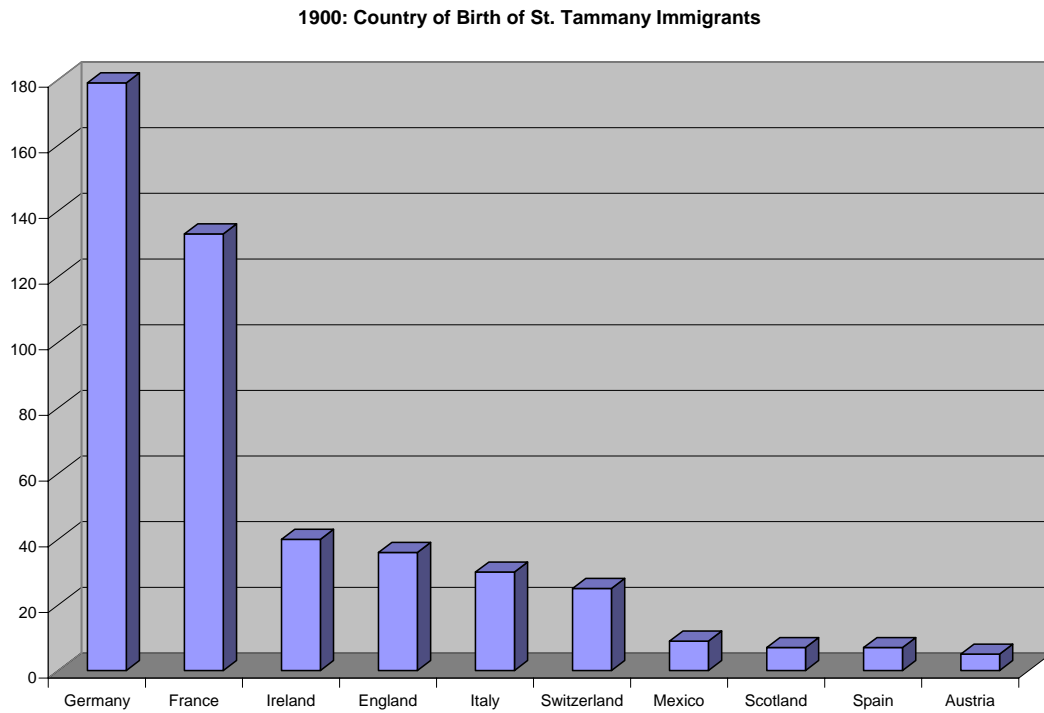


FIGURE 3.5. PRIMARY COUNTRIES OF BIRTH OF ST. TAMMANY IMMIGRANTS, 1900

1920: Country of Birth of St. Tammany Immigrants

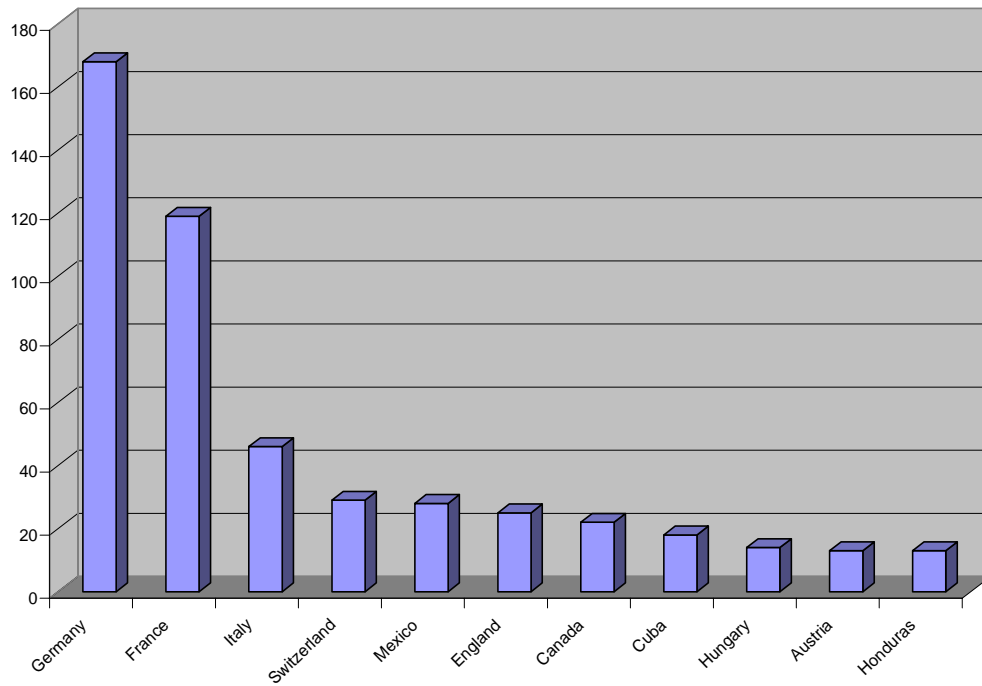


FIGURE 3.6. PRIMARY COUNTRIES OF BIRTH OF ST. TAMMANY IMMIGRANTS, 1920

1940: Country of Birth of St. Tammany Immigrants

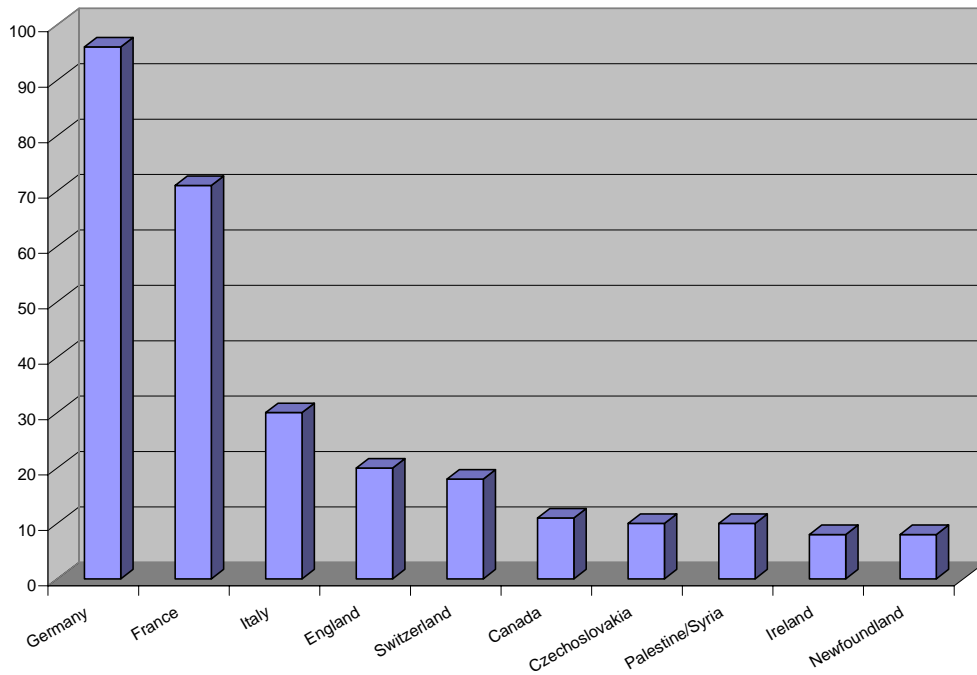


FIGURE 3.7. PRIMARY COUNTRIES OF BIRTH OF ST. TAMMANY IMMIGRANTS, 1940

largest immigrant group in this year with less than 50 residing in the parish. This number is strikingly lower than the number of Italians residing in the state, which constituted the largest immigrant group by far, three times larger than the next largest group—Germans (U.S. Census Bureau 1943). Neighboring Tangiphoa Parish had twenty times the number of Italian immigrants as St. Tammany in part because of the demand for agricultural workers.

By 1940, immigrants as a percentage of the total parish population had dropped below two percent, but the primary countries of origin continued to be Germany and France, a trend that invariably lasted across the entire period covered by this research. St. Tammany never had large numbers of Italians, Irish, Eastern Europeans, or other groups that historians believe may not have fit easily into a white racial identity (Roediger 1991). The immigrants that did reside in the parish tended to live in the more urban wards, which suggests that many residents of St. Tammany had relatively little experience with ethnic, cultural, or national groups different than themselves.

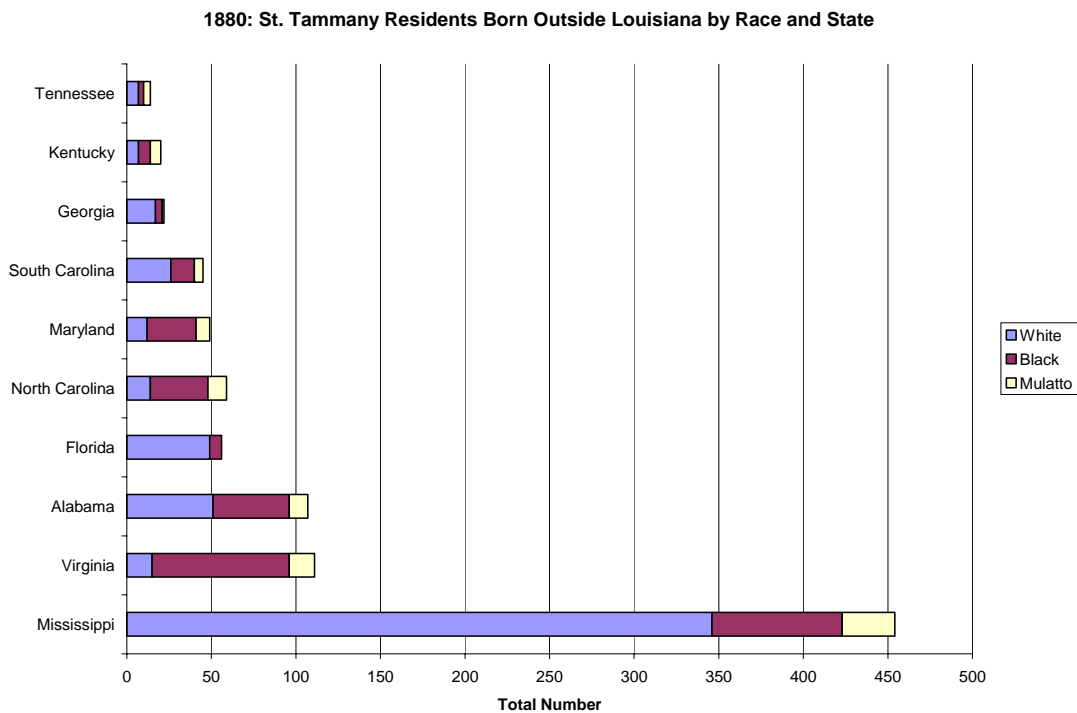


FIGURE 3.8. ST. TAMMANY RESIDENTS BORN OUTSIDE LOUISIANA BY RACE AND STATE, 1880

1900: St. Tammany Residents from Outside Louisiana, by Race and State

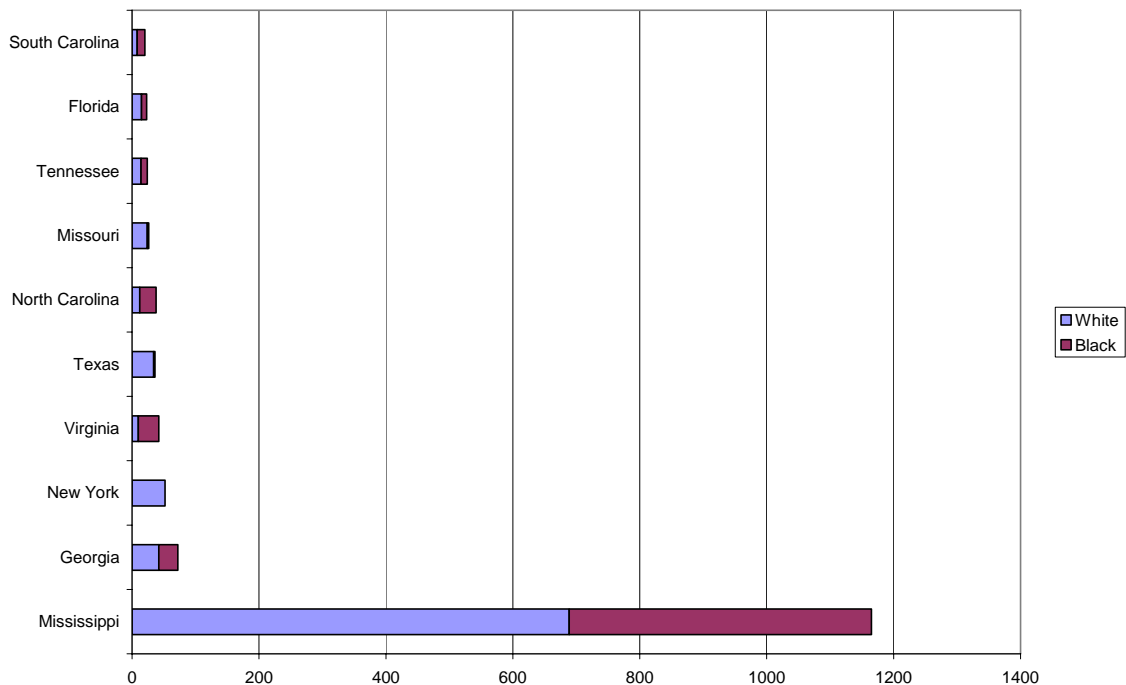


FIGURE 3.9. ST. TAMMANY RESIDENTS BORN OUTSIDE LOUISIANA BY RACE AND STATE, 1900

1920: St. Tammany Residents Born Outside Louisiana, by Race and State

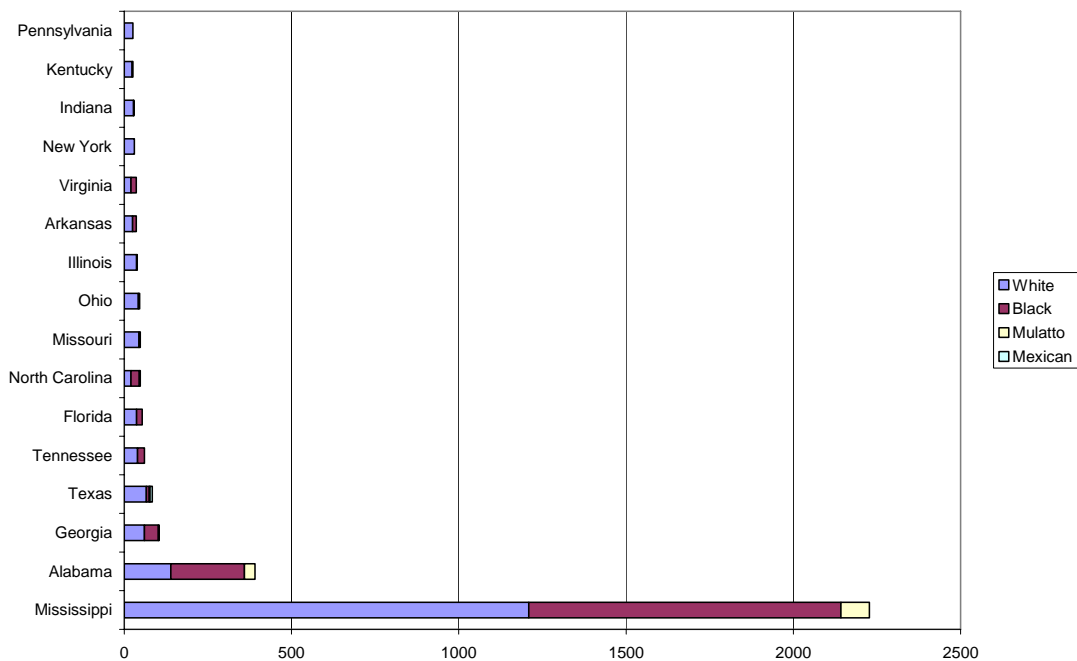


FIGURE 3.10. ST. TAMMANY RESIDENTS BORN OUTSIDE LOUISIANA BY RACE AND STATE, 1920

The population of St. Tammany grew dramatically between 1880 and 1960, and the majority of this population growth came from within Louisiana itself, either by birth or migration. A large number of American migrants from outside Louisiana, however, did arrive in the parish during this time period. The vast majority of these migrants came from Mississippi. Figure 3.8 breaks down the top ten contributing states to the population of St. Tammany in 1880 by race. Clearly the vast majority of white and Mulatto migrants came from Mississippi; however, the largest group of Black migrants came from Virginia. Importantly in 1880, most migrants came from elsewhere in the South—the Gulf South, the Carolinas, Kentucky, and Tennessee. By 1900 (Figure 3.9), migrants continued to come primarily from Mississippi; but Missouri, Texas, and New York began to break apart the core Southern migration to the parish. In 1920 (Figure 3.10), Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia continued to be important states of origin for whites, Blacks, and Mulattoes, but migration of whites from the Mid-West is also apparent, particularly from Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. As St. Tammany threw the net of migration further out across the country, people with different cultural experiences, racial experiences, and religious experiences entered the parish.

CONCLUSION

From the arrival of the French in the early 1700s, individuals living in the area that would become St. Tammany Parish encountered different racial, ethnic, and national groups. Racial mixing characterized French and Spanish colonial practices, and this occurred in St. Tammany as well, primarily along the edge of Lake Pontchartrain and the southern part of the parish. During the 1800s, migrants and immigrants came to the area, and these arrivals included individuals of British origin and from elsewhere in the upland South. They settled both in the southern part of the parish and in the interior.

The legacy of this divide can be clearly seen in the distribution of racial groups in the parish between 1880 and 1960. Ward 7 (Lacombe) continued to have the highest populations of color across this time period, while Wards 1 (Madisonville), 3 (Covington), 4 (Mandeville), 8 (Pearl River), and 9 (Slidell) also had large populations of color. The wards in the northern part of the parish (Wards 2, 5, and 6) remained largely “white” during this time period.

The association between rurality and racial distribution is not clear. Across the parish, whites and Blacks had nearly equal percentages of population living in rural areas or in towns, but Madisonville, Mandeville, Covington, and Slidell all had significant populations of color throughout this time period. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps and 1920 census data indicate that in the older part of Covington, Blacks and whites may have resided in the same areas; or at the very least boundaries between white and Black areas were not as pronounced as in “New Covington,” west of Jefferson Street. In Mandeville census data combined with the location of important “colored” buildings suggest that Lamarque and Foy Streets in addition to Florida and Carondelet on the edges of town were the primary areas of residence for people of color.

Despite the complex interactions between racial groups in St. Tammany, immigration from foreign countries proved to be less complicated. The majority of immigrants from foreign countries came from Germany and France. These immigrants, however, never comprised more than 5 percent of the population and tended to reside in the towns rather than in the rural areas. Business and civic leaders in St. Tammany welcomed immigrants from Northern and Western Europe because they considered them industrious and hard-working, a boon to economic development in the parish (Chapter 4). These ethnic groups fit very easily into the “white” racial category, thus reflecting the fact that racial identity carried more weight historically than ethnic or national differences.

Migration from within the U.S. changed between 1880 and 1920, the only years for which this data is available. In 1880, residents from outside Louisiana came primarily from Mississippi and elsewhere in the South. By 1900, however, this source of migrants had expanded to north and east, including Texas, New York, and Missouri. By 1920 Mississippi remained the most important supplier of migrants, both Black and white, but migrants came from increasingly distant places in the Mid-West and North, perhaps indicating strengthening connections between St. Tammany and the rest of the country.

**CHAPTER 4: LABOR AND RACE: AN ECONOMIC HISTORY OF ST. TAMMANY PARISH,
1878-1956**

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between economic changes and societal practices based on the idea of race is particularly important to this research on historical St. Tammany Parish. This chapter addresses the geographic effects of the changing economy in St. Tammany Parish in terms of race. In particular, this chapter will focus on land use, the pursuit of economic development within the parish, and distribution of different racial groups (acknowledging the social and economic origins of this identifier) across different industries. I contend that the economy in part influenced the geographic distribution of persons belonging to different racial categories in the parish and both reflected and reified racial boundaries. In particular I focus on men and women of African descent and address questions of labor, working conditions, and mobility. While St. Tammany Parish demonstrated patterns of labor and race evident in other parts of the South during this time period, in other ways environmental limits on agriculture and the predominance of the lumber, logging, brick, and shipbuilding industries, which relied heavily on the labor of black men, prevented a strictly delineated racial hierarchy of labor.

From 1878 to approximately 1940, people of African descent in particular played a pivotal role in the burgeoning economy of the parish in the industries based on the extensive availability of timber in St. Tammany: lumber and logging, brick, shipbuilding, naval stores, and railroads. This was in addition to their existing—although less extensive—role in farming in the parish. After the mid 1930s, most of the first-growth pine trees had been cut, and industries that at one time employed so many men and women of African descent began to fold. From 1940 to 1956, the economy of St. Tammany changed to one focused on truck farming, tung oil production, livestock raising, and—seemingly contradictory—the expansion

of St. Tammany as a suburb of New Orleans, culminating in the construction of the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway. The decline of pine-related industries significantly reduced white desire for Black labor within the parish. This economic preference on the part of whites accompanied an increasingly hostile social context in which whites considered all people of African descent in the parish legally and socially “Black.” The peak years of violence, legislation, and restrictions against Black people were the same years in which Black people helped to power the most important industries in the parish (see Chapter 6). Differences in the labor and economic and spatial mobility of white and Black people contributed to both the determination and dilution of racial identity, prompting action on the part of whites to preserve the “white” economic and social position.

Scholars have scrutinized the connections between race and labor, with special emphasis on class identity. Economic changes, perceptions of competition, and utilization of different types of labor in the U.S. South (and arguably throughout the U.S.) have reflected and produced different constructions of racial identities over time (Roediger 1991, Wilson 2001). St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, as a part of the U.S. South and the entire nation witnessed the same deep connections between labor and race. In this chapter, I will present a picture of the historical economic geography as it intersects with the idea of “race.” I argue that despite historical characterizations of the “piney woods” as primarily a center of white folk life, economic contributions of Black and immigrant labor played a crucial role in the economic growth and development of St. Tammany. I also explore the connections between labor, space, and race—in other words, how the location and organization of different industries in St. Tammany affected social constructions of race and racial practices.

St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, is situated within the “piney woods” belt that runs across nine southern states. Much of this area has soils not suited for intensive agriculture, but climate and drainage patterns make it conducive for different types of pines to grow

within this region (Ellis 1981, 13; Johnson and Yodis 1998, 59; McDearman 2006). These poor conditions for agriculture in part caused some historians and travelers (Olmstead 1860) to describe this area—particularly before the Civil War—as the poor counterpart to the rich plantation South. This description reflected a perception of a divided South composed of rich landowners and poor subsistence farmers. Some historians like Frank Owsley (1949) and geographers such as Milton Newton (1967, 1986) and Rupert Vance (1968) have attempted to dispel this cursory but nonetheless persistent bifurcated classification of Southerners. Through their research, they showed that life in the piney woods until the Civil War was much more complicated in terms of livelihoods and culture than historians had originally acknowledged. For instance, Owsley (1949), Vance (1968), and Hyde (1996) have shown that the piney woods environment was particularly suited for cattle grazing, an enterprise which sustained many families. Additionally, farmers produced cash crops such as cotton and sugarcane in some places within the piney woods, such as St. Tammany Parish, although acreages tended to be smaller. Farmers in this region also owned slaves, although once again the number of slaves owned by individual farmers tended to be smaller in comparison to the plantation parishes to the south and west of St. Tammany (Hyde 1996). Despite these commonalities with other parishes and counties in the piney woods, several crucial components of the history and geography of St. Tammany make it unique in the piney woods region of the South: its historical connection with New Orleans, its position as a health resort, and its waterways which made shipbuilding a strong industry in the region.

Using federal census schedules, this chapter will investigate the strength of these industries from 1880-1920 in terms of overall employment. This chapter will also address the continued importance of farming (and idea often brushed away with statements about poor soils in the piney woods) and other enterprises in St. Tammany Parish and their importance to and association with race. I will investigate the economy of St. Tammany

Parish from 1878 to 1956, a period of time which was characterized by the rise and decline of the lumber, shipbuilding, and railroad industries in St. Tammany and the development of the North Shore into a suburb of New Orleans. Race is a concept that has not been systematically employed in historical or geographical work in St. Tammany Parish. Many local historians, perhaps writing for mostly white audiences, appear to have been hesitant in addressing issues of race and racism within the parish, and this applies to the economic structure as well. This chapter will address important questions about the role of racial identities and race in the historical economic geography of St. Tammany Parish.

WORKING THE LAND: FARMING IN ST. TAMMANY

The Early Period 1880-1920 and Connections with Antebellum Agriculture

Farming in St. Tammany Parish proved to be one of the biggest sectors in the economy according to federal manuscript census data from 1880 to 1920. This in some ways provides a very different picture of agriculture than has been painted by historians and geographers in the antebellum period using aggregate farm data. They tend to present a picture of agriculture, with the exception of cattle-raising, in St. Tammany as small-scale and perhaps relatively unimportant for the economy of the area. For instance, Sam Hilliard (1984) has compiled numerous data to present a comparative picture of agriculture in the South in the antebellum period. According to his maps, even by 1860, upwards of 80 percent of the farms in St. Tammany Parish (then still a union of Tangipahoa and the area that today is St. Tammany) had less than 50 acres, and the average farm worth less than \$2500 (42-43).

This statement concerning the orientation and scale of agriculture is true of St. Tammany in the antebellum period—to a certain extent. St. Tammany never had an extensive number of plantations in the antebellum period and had comparably fewer slaves even than others within the Florida Parishes (Hyde 1996). Farmers in St. Tammany

produced such cash crops as cotton, rice, and sugarcane, but they did so to a much lesser extent than the alluvial and coastal parishes in southern Louisiana. However, in the post-bellum period and continuing until the 1950s, farming—particularly truck farming, small-scale cotton production, dairying, and tung oil production became a very significant part of the economy in the post-bellum period. Founded in 1874, the parish newspaper, *The St. Tammany Farmer*, reflected the intentions of the editor and publisher to write for farmers and promote agriculture in the post-bellum period, as the title suggests.

A survey of the percentage of population employed in agriculture in St. Tammany Parish illustrates the importance of this type of work to the overall economy (Table 4.1).

TABLE 4.1. PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE BY WARD

Ward	1880	1900	1920
Ward 1	27.6%	17.6%	6.9%
Ward 2	89.7	72.5	66.8
Ward 3	21.9	12.9	10.7
Ward 4	9.2	7.5	3.4
Ward 5	89.6	69.2	61.4
Ward 6	84.0	36.1	27.6
Ward 7	11.6	25.3	21.7
Ward 8	33.6	17.4	5.4
Ward 9	3.7	6.9	4.02
Ward 10*	50.0	--	25.4
Parish	24.9%	24.2%	15.5%

Source: U.S. Federal Census Schedules, 1880, 1900, and 1920

* Ward 10 in 1880 consisted of part of Wards 6 and 8. In 1883 it was split between Wards 6 and 8. In 1912 it was created in a new place in the parish for the newly incorporated town of Abita Springs.

In 1880, the large number of people across the parish in agriculture is quite apparent, but a “north-south” divide in the parish is also present. The southern wards that border Lake Pontchartrain (Wards 1, 4, and 9) have much lower numbers of individuals involved in agriculture, reflecting a predominance of swampy land. Wards 3 and 4 also represent the largest urban areas in the parish at the time—Mandeville and Covington--which created different economic opportunities for individuals living in those areas. This divide between

north-south wards and rural-urban wards in the parish closely follows demographic racial patterns as well. Those wards with the largest percentage of employment in agriculture are also the wards with the highest percentage white population (Chapter 3).

The other very noticeable trend is that agricultural employment decreases dramatically between 1880 and 1920, although it continued to be a sizeable percentage of the workforce in St. Tammany. Much of this, particularly in the northern wards, Wards 2, 5, and 6, resulted from the activities of the Great Southern Lumber Company and the Salmen Brick and Lumber Company. The lumber companies in the parish (to be discussed below) both provided employment for many residents in the parish as well as destroyed common grazing ground, forcing cattle farmers to abandon their farms (Kuhlken 1999). Cut-over lands provided agricultural opportunities for truck farmers and orchard owners, but these farmers employed fewer wage-laborers for planting and harvest.

Agriculture in St. Tammany in the post-bellum period and into the 1920s represents a distinct break from past economic endeavors in the parish; therefore, farming had little to do with the crop lien system of agriculture that developed elsewhere in the New South. In many ways, an air of excitement developed over agricultural possibilities with the use of new types of seeds and fertilizers. A promotional booklet produced by The Covington and St. Tammany Land Improvement Company in 1887 remarked on the *re-orientation* of St.

Tammany's economy after the Civil War:

The land around [Covington] was considered entirely valueless for agriculture, and nothing but bricks, lumber, tar, wood and sand were shipped from the Tchefuncta river. With the end of slavery came a new era: the brick and lumber business almost ceased, and people were forced to turn their attention to the soil. In a faint-hearted way a few experiments were made; the results were surprising to everyone. (1)

This booklet was designed to attract visitors, home-buyers, and businessmen to locate in St. Tammany Parish. While the information in this booklet may have been exaggerated to

attract these sought-after human assets to the parish, this passage has been quoted multiple times (and not always cited) in locally produced histories of the parish (see Schwartz 1953, Stafford 1960), seemingly adding some weight to the original claim.

This passage is remarkable for a number of reasons. The first is that residents of St. Tammany most certainly produced their own vegetables, grains, and fruits for local consumption (U.S. Census Bureau 1880), but not in quantities destined for New Orleans or other markets; thus, it was not the direction of their attention but the scale of agricultural enterprise that changed. The second interesting thing about this statement is that the author of this brochure indicates that the brick and lumber industries in the parish almost ceased, which places the publication date right at the beginning of the (re)growth of these industries. Later in the booklet, the author remarks, “fine bricks are now being manufactured....Parties from Michigan are now preparing to erect, at Covington, a saw mill that will cut 150,000 feet of lumber a day” (8). While the author points out that St. Tammany has an “abundance of cheap lumber and the cheap transportation,” no mention is made of the laborers who would support such industries. The third and most important reason why this reorientation of agriculture in St. Tammany Parish is important is because it means that the scale of agriculture, the crops selected for production, and systems of labor used in farming after the Civil War were basically new to the parish. In other words, agriculture in St. Tammany did not have as much in common with other areas in the South that had relied so heavily on slavery. It did not have the same connections to the plantation South (those old “tried and true” methods of controlling labor) as tenant farming and sharecropping did with farmers in those systems, although free, remaining tied to the land and largely dependent upon and indebted to the landowner, landlord, and store manager (Woodward 1971, Rodrigue 2001). This had significant implications not only for men of African descent (and women, but to a

lesser extent) employed in agriculture, but for white men (and women) also, most of which worked for *wages* if they themselves were not landowners.

The first implication of the “new,” non-plantation agriculture in St. Tammany was that the number of tenant farmers and sharecroppers in the Parish was very low. According to the 1880 U.S. Agricultural Census, census takers counted only seven out of 300 farmers in St. Tammany as tenant farmers or sharecroppers. Although the Agricultural Census for this year does not indicate the race of these farmers, the vast majority of farmers listed in the Agricultural Census—presumably white and Black (and “Mulatto”, depending on the Census year)—in St. Tammany Parish owned their land. This result does seem rather surprising considering the numbers of Black families across the South that farmed as a part of the crop lien system. Woodward (1971) argues that landowners in South preferred Black farmers to white as sharecroppers and tenants (208), and as a result, by 1900, over 75 percent of the “Negro” farmers in the South as a whole were either sharecroppers or tenants (204). The juxtaposition of farm life in St. Tammany against the experiences of Black (and white) sharecroppers and tenants in the South begins to illuminate some significant differences between them. One implication is that the cycle of poverty and indebtedness associated with the crop lien system that in many ways limited the economic, social, and spatial mobility of Black farmers in the South did not affect Black (or white) farmers in the same way or to the same degree in St. Tammany Parish.

To illustrate, perhaps, the amount of physical and economic mobility some Black farmers had in St. Tammany, around 1880, white landowners (and perhaps Black, for their voices are not necessarily heard at this time in the newspaper) grew nervous about keeping Black farmers in the parish. In 1879 and 1880, the *St. Tammany Farmer* printed a number of articles depicting the fear that Black farmers and farm laborers would leave the parish and threaten the livelihood of the parish as a whole. Black farmers left the parish “in large

numbers” to go to Kansas, but the editor of the paper—perhaps concerned for their safety or in an attempt to convince them not to go—felt that they were being tricked into going there, where they would “likely starve” and suffer other “hard conditions” as a result of their exodus (17 May 1879, 4; 26 July 1879, 4; 5 June 1880, 5). Regardless of the connections of agriculture in St. Tammany to plantation systems of agriculture, the paternalism demonstrated throughout much of the South by whites toward Black Southerners living there clearly comes through in the editor’s reaction to Black farmers “going North.”

Of course just because the crop lien system was not widely used in St. Tammany in the late 1800s does not imply that the majority of white or Black farmers or agricultural workers had an easy life or more social or economic mobility. Those agricultural workers dependent upon wages would have been largely seasonally employed, and may have moved or traveled around the parish to wherever work could be found. Grady McWhiney (1986) and John Napier (1986) argue that day labor—or temporary employment for wages or barter—and a subsistence lifestyle were essential components of the culture of the Florida Parishes; economic independence, the freedom to “sell” one’s labor to an employer of one’s choice and then move on to other jobs or leisure activities remained a cherished element of folk culture. Such a lifestyle would have generated unpredictable income at best and a reliance on subsistence farming and barter in the worst of times (Newton 1967). In this way the agricultural system in St. Tammany paved the way for the lumber companies by generating a large number of spatially mobile, seasonally employed workers who were quite used to receiving wages in exchange for difficult work and actively sought out employment.

Though the limited use of the crop lien system may have had some benefits (spatial mobility, reduced amount of debt) and costs (reliance on seasonal wages) for both whites and Blacks in the parish, there was nevertheless a very striking distinction between these racial groups in terms of their agricultural labor. When looking at individuals employed in

the agricultural sector, either “farm laborer” or “farmer” in the 1880 census, the majority across all racial groups are listed as farmer rather than farm laborer, an indication of higher levels of permanence and ownership (see Table 4.2). Despite the fact that men in all three racial groups had higher numbers of farmers than farm laborers in 1880, a higher proportion of Black men worked as farm laborers when compared to the other racial groups. The ratio of farmers to farm laborers can demonstrate this. Farmers were individuals who made a living doing principally farming and rented or owned their farms. Farm laborers were individuals who “hired out” for the day or season (or longer) and received wages or other compensation from the farmer. For the whole parish in 1880, Mulattoes had the highest ratio of farmer to farm labor employment at 3.1, followed by whites with 2.5, and Blacks with 1.2.

TABLE 4.2. TOTAL NUMBER OF FARM LABORERS AND FARMERS BY RACIAL GROUP AND WARD IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH, 1880

	FARM LABORER			FARMER		
Ward	White	Black	Mulatto	White	Black	Mulatto
Ward 1	2	0	2	50	4	9
Ward 2	17	3	1	85	14	10
Ward 3	21	8	4	27	0	1
Ward 4	2	2	1	11	0	3
Ward 5	42	12	0	62	5	0
Ward 6	35	3	1	42	6	2
Ward 7	4	0	1	7	0	2
Ward 8	2	1	0	24	7	3
Ward 9	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ward 10	2	0	0	18	0	0
TOTAL	127	29	10	326	36	31

Source: 1880 United States Federal Census Schedules

Black agricultural workers had the lowest ratio of farmers to farm laborers out of the three racial groups in all three census years counted for this study: 1880, 1900, and 1920 (see Tables 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4). These ratios are 1.2, 0.5, and 1.0 respectively, indicating that across these census years, Black agricultural workers were at least equally divided between farmers

and laborers and at most twice as likely to be laborers as farmers. Whites had the second lowest farmer-to-farm-labor ratios with 2.5, 0.7, and 3.5, indicating that this racial group had a significantly larger number of farmers than farm laborers. The large decrease in the number of farmers may be attributed to lumber company control of grazing lands. Although smallest in total numbers, the mulatto racial group had the highest farmer-to-farm-labor ratio with 3.1 in 1880 and 2.9 in 1920 (census takers did not use the category “mulatto” in 1900, presumably placing the majority of these individuals under a designation of “Black”).

TABLE 4.3. TOTAL NUMBER OF FARM LABORERS AND FARMERS BY RACIAL GROUP AND WARD IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH, 1900

	FARM LABORER			FARMER		
Ward	White	Black	Mulatto	White	Black	Mulatto
Ward 1	24	9		29	7	
Ward 2	131	55		132	36	
Ward 3	44	3		59	7	
Ward 4	10	5		2	0	
Ward 5	129	23		28	2	
Ward 6	52	0		8	0	
Ward 7	0	1		4	1	
Ward 8	23	22		21	8	
Ward 9	0	0		0	0	
Total	413	118		283	61	

Source: 1900 Federal Census Schedules

The total number of individuals employed as farmers and farm laborers varied wildly in the forty years encompassed by these three census years. The number of Black farmers increased from 36 in 1880 to 53 in 1920, although this number includes sharecroppers and tenant farmers (discussed below). The number of mulatto farmers decreased from 31 in 1880 to 20 in 1920, although this number is extremely suspect because of the inconsistencies in racial classifications across census years. The total number of white farmers increased from 326 in 1880, dipped to 283 in 1900, and grew again to 445 in 1920, encompassing the largest number of farmers for any racial group. According to these statistics, white families

in St. Tammany farmed and worked on farms in greater numbers than any other racial group. One can speculate that residents of St. Tammany would have been very aware of this numerical disparity, which may have contributed to beliefs about white and Black labor.

TABLE 4.4. TOTAL NUMBER OF FARM LABORERS AND FARMERS BY RACIAL GROUP AND WARD IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH, 1920

	FARM LABORER			FARMER		
Ward	White	Black	Mulatto	White	Black	Mulatto
Ward 1	0	0	0	15	2	0
Ward 2	25	0	0	106	34	16
Ward 3	25	19	1	54	5	0
Ward 4	10	4	0	0	0	0
Ward 5	33	7	0	120	8	2
Ward 6	1	0	0	80	0	0
Ward 7	7	7	6	4	0	1
Ward 8	6	4	0	11	1	1
Ward 9	15	2	0	?	?	?
Ward 10	6	9	0	55	3	0
Total	128	52	7	445	53	20

Source: 1920 Federal Census Schedules

We can see evidence in the *Farmer* that whites (or at least the editor of the paper, believing he was producing good reading for his subscribers) saw Black farmers as exceptions, or rare and less successful counterparts to white farmers during the period 1880 to 1920. In 1887, the *Farmer* reprinted an article written by a Southern author in the *Weekly World* characterizing the “happy nigs” of the piney woods. In it the author Florence Gill described the log homes of people living in the area around Mandeville, and she explained the rarity of finding black residents in the countryside: “the negro cannot endure isolated country life, he is too sociable for that, and remains in the towns” (16 July 1887 *Farmer*, 4). An article printed in the January 24, 1914 edition of the *Farmer* described the successful efforts of Frank Cloud, a “prosperous negro farmer...that is doing something, making a living, making money, and doing it on the farm” (1). The writer stated that “if this negro, who has no education at all, can make a success at farming, can build a nice residence and

other improvements to match...why cannot others who are blessed with some education buy a place and improve it as this negro has done?" 24 January 1914 *Farmer*, 1).

Whites in St. Tammany Parish did not perceive successful farming to be an accomplishment of the Black population. The low numbers of people of African descent working as farmers and farm laborers in the parish provide some evidence of a basis for this perception. Strangely enough, the 1920 U.S. Agricultural Census found that there were 74 farmers in the parish classified as "negro and other non-whites" and that 570 farmers were "native-born white" (U.S. Census Bureau 1922, 601). This number of white farmers in the parish is 125 higher than the number of farmers listed by occupation in the population census, a difference curiously close to the number of white individuals in the population census listed as *farm laborers*. While some accounting errors by the Census Bureau, the enumerators, or myself may explain a part of this discrepancy, perhaps it reflects an "overstatement" in self-reporting on the part of white farm laborers or those enumerators who saw rural whites as *farmers*, and not laborers. In other words, it may reflect a racist perception on the part of the enumerators that Black people provided the labor for farms but that they did not farm—a division of labor reflecting racial identity.

Agriculture in St. Tammany Parish for the period of 1880-1920 consisted primarily of beef and dairy cattle, hog production, and the growth of staple products such as corn, oats, Irish potatoes, and sweet potatoes, although some farmers continued to grow sugar cane and cotton (U.S. Census Bureau 1922, 607, 613). The *St. Tammany Farmer* referred to the money-making crops in the parish as the "three c's": cane, corn, and cotton (4 April 1885, *Farmer*, 4). Farmers in St. Tammany and throughout the Florida Parishes—even dairy farmers (Stafford 1960)—allowed their cattle and hogs to graze freely in the woods, which created some issues with regard to cattle ownership and fenced-in properties (Hyde 1996 and Owsley 1949). Frank Owsley (1949) quotes the historian Samuel Brown's description of

the area around Madisonville, in western St. Tammany Parish, as particularly suited to cattle and hog grazing because the animals could be virtually unattended and had plenty of vegetation to consume (31).

Cattle and hog grazing freely in the piney woods continued in St. Tammany well into the twentieth century, as evidenced by several town ordinances in Covington (the parish seat) and Mandeville forbidding individuals to let their cattle, hogs, and sheep to run through the center of the town (1 September 1879 *Mandeville Town Council Minutes*, 217; 6 February 1886 *Mandeville Town Council Minutes*, 297; 9 July 1898 *Farmer*, 4; Inez Thomas, *personal interview*, 15 Nov 2005). Cattle and hogs, particularly until the 1920s when streets in towns began to be paved or graveled, would frequently wander onto the main thoroughfares, make passage down city streets impossible, and contribute to the destruction of the already muddy, rutted dirt roads. Kuhlken (1999) argues that this practice of letting branded cattle wander freely continued into the 1960s and 70s.

Cattle farmers (who were predominantly white) in St. Tammany Parish developed a reputation for such fierce (and stubborn) independence that they often faced off with business interests and officials in the parish when it came to following laws or recommendations. Sometimes they expressed their dissatisfaction with local authority or business with sabotage. Kuhlken (1999) argues that acts of rural incendiarism (purposefully setting fire to pine trees) were in part protest against lumber companies' control of those common grazing grounds. Lumber companies restricted cattle grazing in those lands and in other areas deforested cattle grazing grounds. "Settin' fire to the woods" was only one act of sabotage committed by cattle farmers within the parish. Stafford (1960) reports, after interviewing elderly white dairy farmers from St. Tammany Parish, that cattle farmers dynamited dipping tanks and assaulted a health inspector that were a part of the parish's tick eradication program because they found mandatory dipping ordinances "too intrusive."

Even though white farmers in St. Tammany Parish lived in rural areas, they were quite capable of mobilizing and dealing with what they considered threatening, and in some cases they perceived Black men as threats (See Chapter 6).

This violent independence may reflect what Grady McWhiney (1988) has termed “Cracker Culture.” Southerners of British origin—Celtic specifically—often continued lifestyles their forebears had lived in Ireland, Scotland, or Wales. This lifestyle included a reliance upon grazing cattle and subsistence crops as foodstuffs, fierce independence to the point of violence, and preference of occasional or seasonal work with large amounts of leisure time. As most of the agriculture was done in the northern part of the parish in areas where British and other whites from the Upland South settled most heavily, an association developed between a white identity and agriculture. There is also some evidence to suggest that in particular, agriculture within the parish—particularly in the northern wards—became associated with Southern whites of Celtic ancestry, as McWhiney (1988) found between 50 and 60 percent of white Southerners to be of Celtic origin (14-18). The arrival of the lumber companies in the late 1880s helped to solidify this racial association with labor (or the disassociation of Black people with agricultural work) by employing hundreds of Black men in logging, sawmill work, and turpentine orchards.

Development of Agriculture: Immigrants, Truck Farming, and the Problem of Cut-Over Land

After the Civil War, many across the South struggled with the conversion of slave labor to free labor, and many whites feared that labor shortages would cause economic ruin. State and local governments dealt with perceived and actual shortages of labor by advertising for immigrant groups to take up agriculture in their state or parish. In the period 1890-1917, Louisiana attempted to attract as many white immigrants as possible for farming.

Governments and local residents often viewed white European immigrants, even those

considered not fully-white or racialized, as superior to Black labor, particularly in rural parishes (Shanabruch 1996). For instance in Tangipahoa parish, a neighbor parish to St. Tammany, local government and residents often viewed Sicilians, despite their perceived negative qualities, as industrious and inclined to own property, something not widely believed about persons of African descent at the time (Scarpaci 2003, Berthoff 1951). So many Sicilians came to Louisiana during this time period—particularly to agricultural and urban areas where Black workers had been predominant, in 1904 the State Department received an inquiry from the Italian government concerned that this displacement would incur “the enmity of negro laborers” (10 September 1904 *Farmer*, 1).

St. Tammany frequently sought immigrants to settle in the parish and pursue agriculture, but the parish government and civil organizations that recruited foreign farmers did not want just any immigrants—they wanted northern Europeans. In some ways, St. Tammany Parish had a love affair with northern Europe, or at least northern European immigrants, ethnic groups that fit easily into white racial categories. Two of the most famous businessmen in the parish were German and Swiss by birth, respectively: Fritz Jahncke, owner of the Jahncke Shipyard in Madisonville, and Fritz Salmen, owner and founder of the Salmen Brick and Lumber Company in Slidell. In 1885, the *Farmer* printed an article lauding the recruitment of Germans to Louisiana and St. Tammany Parish. An immigration recruiter in New Orleans had assured business interests in the parish that these German immigrants were “well-to-do people, having ample means to buy homes and building improvements, and they were practical agriculturalists, thrifty and industrious” (13 June 1885 *Farmer*, 4). W.G. Kentzel, editor of the *Farmer*, drew attention to the fact that “if [the German immigrants] devoted their efforts to wine, St. Tammany would soon be the richest parish in the state. Nature has given us a beautiful country, immigration will fill our waste places, and the grape and wine industry will bring prosperity” (13 June 1885 *Farmer*, 4).

In January of 1906, the Governor of Louisiana issued an order for all parishes in the State to create their own immigration leagues, with the purpose of recruiting white agricultural labor to the parish (27 January 1906 *Farmer*, 1). Just two months later, the immigration commissioner for the state urged parishes to pursue white immigration “to balance the industrial power in the hands of Caucasians” (3 March 1906 *Farmer*, 1). By April of 1906, St. Tammany had organized an immigration league, which among other notable members, included Mayor Galbraith of Mandeville (7 April 1906 *Farmer*, 1). An article in the June 2, 1906 *Farmer* reflected much excitement about the possibility of German arrivals in the parish, calling them “frugal, industrious, and law-abiding,” and proclaiming that “they will be cordially welcomed in the South” (4).

This raises some questions as to why northern Europeans and Germans in particular made such attractive candidate immigrants to authorities and businessmen in the parish. First, Germans clearly maintained a white identity—even in the conflation of nation with race, many white Americans saw Germans as biologically and socially superior to other nationalities or races (Roediger 1991). In other words, they were considered a “people” who could assimilate *and* benefit local economies. Second, clearly Germany’s reputation for productive and innovative agriculture appealed to those in St. Tammany who sought to make agriculture the cornerstone of the parish economy. This particularly came at a time when agriculture in St. Tammany, although an important part of the economy, never brought the riches seen in other parts of the state. The production of grains, sweet potatoes and beef could not compare with agricultural revenues generated in the former “plantation” parts of the state and even in burgeoning Tangipahoa, which was developing the production and sale of strawberries and other crops on its more suitable soils. In 1909, Tangipahoa had over 3,000 acres of farmland devoted to the production of strawberries alone, yielding revenue of over \$400,000 and almost completely reliant on Sicilian labor. The total value of

all crops produced in St. Tammany in 1909 amounted to just over \$240,000 (U.S. Census Bureau 1913, 695).

St. Tammany did not look to its neighbor for a transferable model for economic growth because of one factor: Tangipahoa Parish heavily utilized Sicilian immigrant labor, which higher-ups and others in St. Tammany considered to be racially inferior to German immigrants. Desirable immigrants all came from northern Europe: Germans, French (the exception, perhaps a cultural acceptance based on Louisiana's history), British, and Scandinavians, while eastern and southern Europeans had inferior qualities and should be rejected (20 April 1907, *Farmer*, 5).

The technical knowledge and practicality associated with northern Europeans—but Germans specifically—attracted the attention of business owners and government in St. Tammany Parish at this time because they saw truck farming as key to future prosperity. Truck farming was the production of high-value fruits and vegetables destined for long-distance markets; in St. Tammany this consisted of strawberries, cantaloupes, cauliflower, and eventually Satsuma orange trees in the 1920s. A combination of German ingenuity with the expansion of truck farming was—as leaders in the parish thought at the time—a recipe for success. For instance, the editor of the *Farmer* in 1908, in an article entitled “As to Truck Farming,” gave the following justification for encouraging German immigration to the parish:

It will be noticed that wherever a settlement of German immigrants becomes located that section of the country becomes agriculturally prosperous. It matters not whether the soil be light and sandy or heavy and waxy. It is made successfully productive, and thrift and independence mark the career of the community...Having determined where they wish to locate, they proceed to conquer all obstacles. To learn this lesson we do not have to go beyond our own parish. Land that some ten or fifteen years ago was sneeringly designated as unfit to grow cow peas or sweet potatoes is now producing fine Irish potatoes, cabbages, cauliflowers, egg plants, onions and tomatoes. (4 January 1908, 4)

The formula for truck farming across the state—not just in St. Tammany Parish—required the use of immigrant labor. For instance in 1905 the Louisiana State Board of *Agriculture and Immigration* sponsored a Truck Farmers Institute to teach proper methods of cultivation (4 March 1905 *Farmer*, 4).

This association with specifically German immigration is one reason to describe truck farming in St. Tammany Parish as a *white* enterprise. Truck farming required a great amount of capital investment in seeds, implements, and a truck to move the produce from the farm to the railroad depot. It provided very seasonal income that was often unpredictable; uneven rainfall patterns and a climate nurturing the quick growth of weeds and grasses often made a mess of the growing seasons (4 January 1908 *Farmer*, 4). The risk and capital accompanying truck farming must have precluded many farmers, Black and white, from producing truck crops. One thing that *white* truck farmers specifically could do to supplement their income was take in white boarders during the summer months, when visitation to St. Tammany reached its peak. Even though income and race dictated to a large extent who took up truck farming in the parish, truck farming nevertheless was extremely difficult work. A description of truck farming in 1896 told of the role that a woman's garden could play in the economic survival of her family: "If you take two dozen eggs, a bushel of potatoes, and a lot of watermelons [to sell at Covington, the local market], you can get a bar of soap and a dime's worth of washing soda" (6 June 1896 *Farmer*, 5).

Truck farming was a solution to a very significant problem in St. Tammany Parish and in many parts of the South—what to do with land after lumber companies had denuded it (Clark 1984, Williams 1989). This is particularly true after 1910. As early as 1912, the Great Southern Lumber Company, working out of Bogalusa in Washington Parish but owning a great amount of land in St. Tammany, began to sell cut-over lands by encouraging residents to construct either farm homes or stock ranges (Myrick 1970, 49). The company

even set up demonstration farms to show farmers the proper agricultural techniques for these types of landscapes (ibid.). W.L. Houlton, owner of the Houlton sawmill in Madisonville, sold his enterprise and began a demonstration truck farm called “Uneedus” on cutover lands just inside the Tangipahoa parish line. The *Farmer* described his transition this way:

As long as the timber lasted, they made lumber. When that was gone, they developed the land. W.L. Houlton had the courage of his convictions, and he turned raw piney woods into profitable farms and cattle ranges. He took advantage of labor-saving machinery. He introduced high-class stock. He built good roads and adopted scientific principles in the conduct of his farms. (19 July 1919, 1)



FIGURE 4.1. MR. STRAWBERRY GREETING COUSIN CANTALOUPE. THIS CARTOON ILLUSTRATES THE BELIEF IN THE PROFIT AND PROSPERITY THAT TRUCK FARMING COULD BRING TO ST. TAMMANY PARISH. FROM THE *ST. TAMMANY FARMER*, 28 MARCH 1925, 2.

By 1920, the Great Southern Lumber Company had changed its intentions for cut-over land and pushed for reforestation (Chapter 5). Most attempts to initiate agriculture on denuded lands were not successful (there was, after all, a reason why people had not been extensively growing crops to begin with!), and the Lumber Company owned over 30,000 acres of completely stripped, stump-filled land that was still assessed at its original value (Myrick 1970). After 1910 in Louisiana, lumber companies could have their land reassessed for \$1.00 an acre if they had the acreage re-planted in seedlings—the Reforestation Law; and in the 1920s, the Great Southern Lumber Company signed reforestation contracts with a number of the Florida Parishes—but not St. Tammany. Myrick (1970) contends that the St. Tammany Police Jury refused to sign a reforestation contract because of the loss of tax revenues it would incur in acreage reassessed at a lower value (62), but that is only part of the story.

Many in St. Tammany clung to the belief that truck farming and Satsuma orchards would be profitable for the parish, and re-forestation efforts would ruin these plans. An editorial by D.H. Mason in the *Farmer* in 1924 pleaded against a reforestation contract:

Whenever we go into reforestation, instead of making our lands valuable while we have a chance, and the Great Southern Lumber Company cuts off its timber, we will be just the kind of place the President speaks of [undeveloped land without prospects for employment]. We know that this timber is to be cut off right after the turpentine has been extracted. This is why we are trying to develop our lands. If the causeway is built, then we will have no trouble, except that we will look wistfully at any lands that may be reforested and bearing taxes on a valuation from three to eight dollars alongside *our* lands that will probably be valued at \$50 or \$100 an acre. (29 November 1924, 1—emphasis added)

Mason also referred to reforestation as a “rich man’s law” that promoted the interests of a company rather than of the local farmer. This editorial ends eerily with the statement, “Let us light fires because fires are destructive. But no reforestation” (29 November 1924, 1).

This last sentence may refer to the “fire” of public protest and political mobilization against

the Great Southern Lumber Company, or it may actually refer to incendiaryism. By the mid 1920s, many in St. Tammany viewed reforestation as an avoidance of paying taxes due the parish, another self-interested action by a heavy-handed national company, and an industry that really offered little opportunity for long-term economic development. An interesting aside is that these opinions of employment opportunities provided by the Great Southern Lumber Company overlooked (purposefully?) how important this company had been in providing economic opportunities primarily for Black men.

STRAWBERRIES

WILL BRING PROSPERITY TO THE PARISH OF ST. TAMMANY

**MR. FARMER, EARN \$50 EXTRA THIS YEAR
BY A BIT OF EXTRA ENDEAVOR**

To the Farmer in the Parish of St. Tammany raising the largest number of crates strawberries per acre this season a cash prize of \$50.00 will be offered. Second prize \$25.00 in cash.

We do not ask the farmers to go into any business that we have not enough confidence in to go into ourselves.

WE ARE PLANTING STRAWBERRIES.

We give this prize to encourage you to do the same, and to do it in an approved manner.

For further information apply directly to the undersigned.

Poitevent & Favre Lumber Company

Mandeville

Louisiana

FIGURE 4.2. POITEVANT AND FAVRE LUMBER COMPANY STRAWBERRY PROMOTION.
SOURCE: 25 OCTOBER 1924 *FARMER*.

There were other lumber companies in St. Tammany that took different routes toward making cut-over land productive again. The Poitevant and Favre Lumber Company, headquartered at first outside Pearlington, Mississippi, and later just outside the town limits of Mandeville, and the Salmen Brick and Lumber Company both promoted the sale of their cut-over lands for strawberry and other truck production. The Poitevant and Favre Lumber Company themselves actually expanded into planting strawberries (Figure 4.2).

As agriculture expanded and developed in St. Tammany Parish during the early twentieth century, hope for future possibilities and profits imbued decision making at all levels. Some farmers took risks on growing valuable fruits and vegetables for outside markets, while others clearly struggled to make a life for themselves and their families. During this time period, the association between farming and race became even stronger because whites often had a greater range of avenues to pursue to earn income. Additionally, the state and parish government scrambled to attract German and other desirable white European immigrant to the parish to drive the transition in production from staple crops to truck crops. Tensions grew between farmers, business interests, and city officials over long-term planning and the use of cut-over lands owned by the lumber companies. The conflicts and dramatic changes that occurred in the 1910s and 1920s, however, only foreshadowed big changes that would take place in the following three decades.

Economic Hardship and Rebound in Agriculture after 1930

Beginning in 1930, optimism that leaders and residents in St. Tammany felt about the growth of the parish turned to stoicism and survival as the worldwide economic depression began to affect rural places in the U.S. Two things in particular compounded the deleterious effects of the Depression on agriculture felt in the parish: drought which marred the growing season of 1930 and a massive screw-worm infestation of cattle in 1934. Both of these had

disastrous consequences for the cattle industry in St. Tammany, one of the cornerstones of the economy.

In August of 1930, Governor Huey P. Long requested federal assistance to help farmers in the areas of the state particularly affected by the drought, including St. Tammany (30 August 1930 *Farmer*, 1). The editor of the *Farmer* observed,

The corn crop has been almost ruined as compared with other years...It does not seem possible that rain at this late hour would help the corn crop very much. The loss suffered on account of the drought is irreparable. This does not only mean a shortage of corn but it means a shortage of fodder for the livestock. (30 August 1930, 2)

In 1930, St. Tammany farmers faced a severe feed shortage for their cattle, and presumably the drought conditions also reduced the amount of vegetation available for consumption in the woodland that remained in the parish where farmers still allowed their cattle to roam freely. Many farmers in the parish lost a significant proportion of their herds, which caused local shortages in the beef and dairy industries. This loss of livestock and revenue occurred again in 1934 when the screw-worm began to infest herds across the parish. Reproducing in open wounds on cattle, the screw worm sickened and killed many cattle at a time when many farmers did not have the extra money to combat the infestation. In October of 1934, the St. Tammany Parish Police Jury passed a resolution asking the federal government for assistance in ending the epidemic, which readily “devastate[ed] the livestock and thus caus[ed] irreparable harm and financial loss to the livestock owners of this parish” (12 October 1934, *Farmer*, 1).

By early 1931, residents of St Tammany Parish became aware of the hard conditions faced by farmers elsewhere in the country, and they began a massive campaign to raise money for the Red Cross to use in battling the resulting famine (7 March 1931 *Farmer*, 1). While residents of St. Tammany did not experience extreme shortages of food that people living in cities—even nearby New Orleans—faced, they nevertheless had significant

economic problems to deal with (Inez Thomas, personal interview 14 November 2005). Many farmers and others in the parish lost much of their incomes because the price of agricultural products declined so drastically during this time period. For instance Gavin Wright (1996) argues that real farm wages in 1929 were no higher than they had been in 1890 (203), and this statistic was taken before the full effects of the Depression were really felt in the South (Tindall 1967). Many defaulted on their mortgage payments and property taxes, causing the parish to assume ownership of the property (see annual Tax Sales in the *Farmer* in these years for numerous examples).

The federal government offered aid to workers and others in St. Tammany Parish by providing financial assistance to farmers and providing employment for men in the parish, the wages from which helped to pay property taxes and mortgages to forestall foreclosure. In 1934, the *Farmer* reported that the Civil Works Administration would eliminate 1,550 men from its work eligibility list because St. Tammany had the highest per capita enrollment in the program in the entire state (23 February 1934 *Farmer*, 1). The distribution of financial assistance, however, was inequitable between different racial groups within the parish. George Davis and Fred Donaldson (1975) and Gavin Wright (1996) argue that the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and the Farmers Home Administration, both New Deal programs to help fight poverty during the Depression, demonstrated racially discriminatory practices partially because they were administered by local agents who would have been very much immersed in local racial and other social practices. Additionally, considering the greater number of white farmers in St. Tammany Parish, financial aid, even if assistance went primarily to land owners and large-scale planters, would have benefited whites in the parish based only on these economic lines.

Two other programs, the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Civil Works Administration, provided employment opportunities for primarily *white men* in the parish.

The Civilian Conservation Corps housed men (in racially segregated facilities) and paid them weekly wages in exchange for their service in the parish; in St. Tammany, their activities were devoted to preventing and extinguishing forest fires (Inez Thomas, personal interview, 15 November 2005). The Civil Works Administration provided employment for both white and Black men in the parish for work on various improvements throughout the parish, including road and sidewalk work. The employment of Black men for these projects became highly contentious in the parish, however, and in 1931 the St. Tammany Police Jury wrote the Chairman of the Louisiana Highway Commission to urge employment of *white* people and residents of St. Tammany on road construction within the parish. The Chairman, O.K. Allen (later to become Governor of Louisiana), replied, “I am this day instructing our chief construction engineer to look into the matter mentioned in your letter. Assuring you that I stand for white Louisiana labor first of all and am ready to assist in this matter in any way that I can...” (19 September 1931, *Farmer*, 1). Parish and local government did not completely abandon Black men during this difficult time period, but often the payment for employment came in the form of meal provision rather than the dollars or scrip issued to whites and was considered “volunteer” work (2 March 1934, *Farmer*, 1). Discrimination against Black farmers and workers prevented them from having the same avenues for income as whites did.


Toward the end of the 1930s, the focus in St. Tammany once again recentered on agriculture, although a reforestation contract with Great Southern was finally signed in 1936, just two years before the company closed shop (3 March 1936 *Farmer*, 1; Myrick 1960). In the 1930s, farmers focused on Satsuma orange production “the gold that grows” (11 December 1936 *Farmer*, 1) and tung oil production (28 February 1936 *Farmer*, 1). Tung oil, used mainly in paint production, was created from crushing the pods of tung oil trees. The U.S. had mostly imported tung oil from China, but political conditions there increased

demand for tung oil to be produced within the U.S. Business leaders in St. Tammany immediately began to plant acreages with the trees, including the Great Southern Lumber Company, which concluded that tung tree orchards would bring greater profit than reforested land (28 February 1936 *Farmer*, 1). Dairying and cattle ranching also attracted many farmers, including former Governor Leche (Figure 4.3), who built a huge home and demonstration farm in St. Tammany, convinced he could provide an impetus for financial growth in the parish (11 December 1936, *Farmer*, 1; 8 September 1939 *Farmer*, 1). The increase in dairying and cattle ranching in the parish was in part due to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's purchase of thousands of acres in Louisiana, including some in St. Tammany, which were seen as "unfit" for farming (after many failed attempts!) and were converted to reforested land, grazing land, game refuges and recreational use (5 March 1937 *Farmer*, 1).

By 1940, St. Tammany Parish was one of the biggest producers of tung oil and satsumas in the parish. Farmers continued to grow strawberries, but never came close to its neighbor to the west—Tangipahoa. In 1940, 61 St. Tammany farmers had over 500,000 tung trees in the parish (U.S. Census Bureau 1942, 205). One hundred sixteen farmers had nearly 12,000 satsuma trees producing 6,850 bushels of satsumas per year (U.S. Census Bureau, 209). By 1950, however, fruit production (both Satsuma and tung) had begun to fall off with only 32 farms dedicated to their production, and 19 by 1954 (U.S. Census Bureau 1954, 85).

Agriculture in St. Tammany between 1930 and 1954 saw a period of growth, particularly in cattle farming and farms producing multiple crops or doing a combination of cattle and crop farming. Between 1930 and 1950, the total number of all types of farms increased from 1,179 to 1,455 (U.S. Census Bureau 1942 and 1954), a sizable increase. From 1950 to 1954, the number of farms overall decreased from 1,455 to 1,409.

ATTENTION CATTLEMEN!
**BRED UP CATTLE THRIVE IN THE PINY WOODS
 OF ST. TAMMANY**
**USE PUREBRED BULLS AND IMPROVE
 YOUR STOCK**



**REGISTERED HEREFORD COWS AND CALVES ON
 PASTURE IN ST. TAMMANY**

R. W. LECHE STOCK FARM
 COVINGTON-MANDEVILLE HIGHWAY

BETTER THAN EVER
ST. TAMMANY PARISH FAIR
 COVINGTON, OCTOBER 6, 7, 8, 9

FIGURE 4.3. R.W. LECHE STOCK FARM. SOURCE: 22 SEPTEMBER 1939 *FARMER*, 2.

In the 1940s, St. Tammany Parish saw a decrease in share and tenant cropping, perhaps reflecting the shift in agriculture from truck crops and cotton to cattle grazing and orchards. Or perhaps it was a scarcity of labor. An ad in the *Farmer* in August 1941, for instance, sought a “good colored farmer with family as tenant or sharecropper for 30 acres of fertile land growing strawberries, corn, and truck crops” (1 August 1941 *Farmer*, 3). The number of tenant farms in the parish increased from 29 in 1900 to 87 in 1920 (21 of which were Black), 266 in 1930, peaking at 402 in 1935, decreasing to 222 in 1940 (44 were Black, 178 white) to 63 in 1950 (8 Black, 55 white).

A GIFT OF THE PINES: LUMBER AND RAILROADS

Other significant elements in the economy in St. Tammany during the period 1878-1956 were the lumber and concomitant industries: naval stores, railroads, and sawmills. And of course other businesses sprang up around these: particularly saloons, dry goods stores, groceries and others. Lumber companies required a large amount of mobile labor that worked for wages, and they primarily turned to Black men to supply this labor. Both the lumber and railroad industries relied extensively on the availability of men of color to work in the harvesting and processing of trees and in the construction and maintenance of railroad lines; the absence of large-scale tenant farming and share-cropping in the parish made this possible.

While the St. Tammany Land and Improvement Company in 1887 remarked that after the Civil War the lumber and brick industries had almost ceased (1), they clearly referred to the small, locally owned saw and brick mills that existed in St. Tammany before the Civil War (Newton 1986). The development of the lumber and brick industries after 1878 differed significantly from these early mills in terms of scale of production, the ownership, and the sheer numbers of men that they employed. Three very large lumber companies operated in St. Tammany during this period: the Poitevant and Favre Lumber Company near Mandeville, the Salmen Brick and Lumber Company in Slidell, and the Great Southern Lumber Company in Bogalusa (while not in St. Tammany Parish, nevertheless owned a significant amount of acreage in the northern end of the parish and employed many men from St. Tammany). These three companies staged a “three-pronged” cutting campaign against the pine trees of St. Tammany.

The Arrival of the Lumber Companies: Importance of an Industry on Race and Segregation

In October of 1883, residents of St. Tammany saw the first train chug through their parish. The train belonged to the New Orleans and North Eastern Railroad Company (NONERR), and connected the eastern end of St. Tammany Parish (near Pearl River) with New Orleans. This first venture was not explicitly tied to any lumber company, but established a connection between New Orleans and northern areas of the U.S. (Ellis 1981, 166-167). The arrival of the railroad in St. Tammany Parish beckoned to lumber company owners, for this allowed them to cut trees not only near rivers but in parts of the parish they could not previously access (Ellis 1981, 161). Lumber companies constructed almost all subsequent rail lines in the parish.

In approximately ten years, railroads spanned the entire length of the parish, thus connecting both lumber companies and passengers with New Orleans. Between 1885 and 1892, the Poitevant and Favre Lumber Company built rail lines under the name East Louisiana Railroad Company to connect the NONERR to towns in western St. Tammany: Abita Springs, Covington, and finally Mandeville (Ellis 1981, 167). In another ten years, companies laid additional tracks to points north of Covington and from Slidell to Lacombe (Ellis 1981, 167). In 1904, the Great Southern Lumber Company purchased the east Louisiana Railroad and renamed it the New Orleans and Great Northern Railroad (NOGNRR). The following map (Figure 4.4) depicts the routes of the rail lines in 1905.

The NOGNRR survived and flourished in Louisiana for two reasons. First, the Great Southern Lumber Company always intended for the NOGNRR to be a permanent railroad (as was the East Louisiana Railroad), and thus signed agreements with the New Orleans and North Eastern Railroad and eventually the Gulf, Mobile, and Northern Railroad companies to run passenger cars in addition to hauling timber freight. Second, the Great

Southern Lumber Company itself and the railroad were owned and developed not by local interests but by wealthy “Yankee” businessmen: the Goodyears from Buffalo, New York (Lemly 1953, 274).

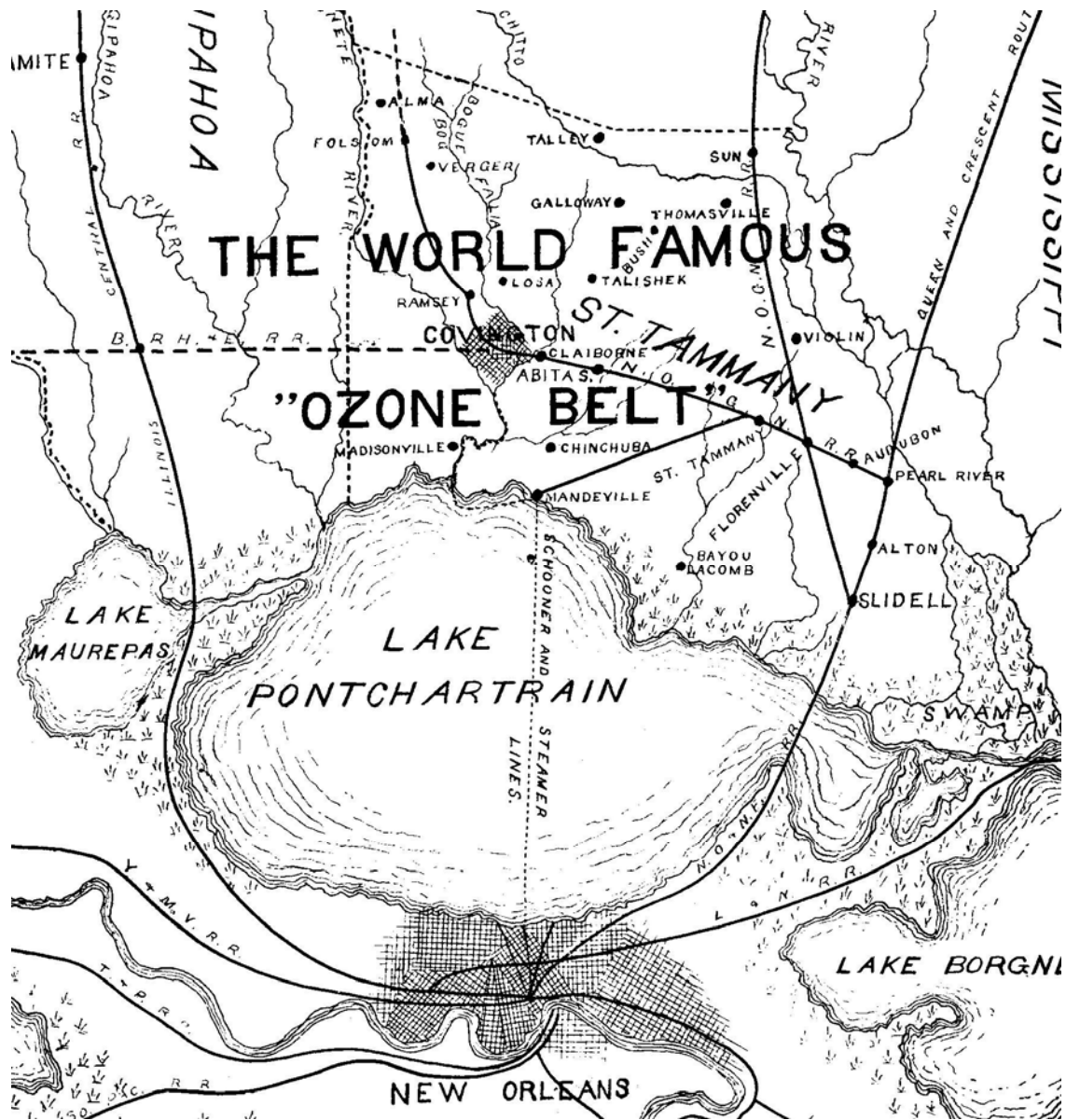


FIGURE 4.4. THE WORLD FAMOUS OZONE BELT; THIS MAP WAS PUBLISHED IN A PROMOTIONAL BOOKLET CALLED *THE WORLD FAMOUS OZONE BELT* (SANFORD AND SANFORD 1905) THAT DESCRIBED THE EXCELLENT TRANSPORTATION, BUSINESSES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITIES THAT WOULD MAKE ST. TAMMANY THE IDEAL PLACE FOR SETTLEMENT.

A successful railroad that took passengers as well as freight built by lumber interests allowed for a great amount of movement within St. Tammany and with important outside

connections. The trains carried visitors and working men and women between the North Shore and New Orleans, and they also brought visitors and workers from all over the country. The lumber companies in St. Tammany therefore not only had transportation for the hauling of their products to outlying markets, but had access to large amounts of labor across the Gulf South. For the lumber companies, this labor consisted primarily—although by no means exclusively—of Black men. And in St. Tammany, as discussed in the previous section on farming, a large percentage of the Black population was mobile and accustomed to working for wages.

From the completion of the East Louisiana Railroad by the early 1890s, the lumber industry in the parish continued to grow rapidly. During the peak years of the 1910s, in 1911 and 1912 alone, business owners *incorporated* twelve lumber or other pine products industries (compared with just starting a business), quite a number for a relatively small and rural parish (see *St. Tammany Farmer*: 14 January 1911, 6 May 1911, 15 July 1911, 14 October 1911, 27 June 1912, 26 October 1912, 4 January 1913). In 1913, the Poitevaut and Favre Lumber Company switched its main sawmill from Pearlington, Mississippi, to the lake front in Mandeville (just east of where the Causeway is today). Charters of lumber/pine products companies continued into the 1920s.

Despite initial enthusiasm over the money the lumber industries injected into the parish economy, by the 1920s, the aftermath of this industrial activity began to confront parish residents. Ellis (1981) describes the results of the flurry of lumber company activity in the first two decades of the twentieth century:

And did they cut the timber, and cut and cut, until, by the 1920s, it was all gone. The rolling hills of northwest St. Tammany Parish and the flats of the south presented the same unbroken vista of stumps, as far as the eye could see. (173)

Wright (1986) similarly describes the lumber industry as beginning to decline precipitously by the 1920s (162). It was for precisely this reason that reforestation became a huge issue in St. Tammany; the controversy around reforestation represented the nexus of claims on the future of the parish in its healthful environment, its truck farms and orchards, or its new pine growth.



FIGURE 4.5. THE GREENLAW LUMBER COMPANY, 1905; THIS PHOTO SHOWS HOW LUMBER WORKERS USED THE RAIL LINES TO HAUL CUT LOGS. THE LOGS WOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO A SAW MILL, CUT INTO LUMBER, AND THEN SHIPPED BY RAIL OR BARGE TO MARKETS OUT OF STATE. THE FOREGROUND GIVES AN INDICATION OF HOW THE DENUED LANDSCAPE APPEARED. FROM *THE WORLD FAMOUS OZONE BELT*, 1905.



FIGURE 4.6. REFORESTATION BY THE GREAT SOUTHERN LUMBER COMPANY; SOURCE: MYRICK 1970, APPENDIX.

The transformation of pine trees into lumber, turpentine, rosin, cough syrup, disinfectant cleaners, shingles, crates, and charcoal required a huge amount of labor. In the processing of lumber alone, an engineer drove the train; joiners attached the cars; laborers shoveled coal into the engine furnace (later switched to gasoline); lumber jacks and log cutters chopped the tree down, stripped it, and cut it into smaller pieces for transport; log haulers guided teams to drag the logs to the train; laborers loaded and unloaded the logs; sawyers sawed the logs into planks; planers leveled the surfaces; more laborers stacked and sorted the lumber; a counter kept track of all the lumber; laborers loaded the train car again; and the railroad engineer and conductor took the lumber to market. This does not even take into consideration the watchmen (hired to patrol the laborers and prevent theft), the firemen, the time keepers, the accountants, the buyers, the managers, the mechanics, the secretaries, and the operators, all of whom provided essential tasks in the functioning of the saw mill.

The following tables begin to present a picture of just how many individuals (as a percentage of those listed with employment in the Census) were employed by the “pine industries”: lumber, saw mill, naval stores, and pine products in 1880, 1900, and 1920.

TABLE 4.5. PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYED POPULATION WORKING IN LUMBER INDUSTRIES

	1880	1900	1920
Ward 1	0.4%	1.45%	17.4%
Ward 2	0.7	2.4	20.7
Ward 3	6.5	2.3	14.8
Ward 4	13.22	8.0	52.2
Ward 5	0	8.0	16.1
Ward 6	0	3.35	53.0
Ward 7	3.5	8.0	32.9
Ward 8	4.7	2.0	32.4
Ward 9	1.5	25.0	25.8
Ward 10	2.5	--	22.0
Parish	5.3%	6.7%	24.1%

Source: Federal Census Schedules 1880, 1900, 1920

Table 4.5 lists the numbers of men and women working for lumber companies, saw mills, planing mills, turpentine orchards, and pine products companies as a percentage of the total number of employed individuals in the parish (both white and black) by ward. Clearly Ward 4 (Mandeville) had an early jump on employment in this sector, and by 1920, over half of those persons with employment in this ward worked for lumber companies. In 1913, the Poitevant and Favre Lumber Company located its main sawmill on the lake shore in Mandeville, and this demonstrably had a profound effect on employment in the Fourth Ward, represented by a huge increase in numbers of workers by 1920.

Another pattern present in these statistics is that by 1920, there appears to be almost a dividing line southwest to northeast across the parish in terms of percentage of the labor force employed in the lumber industries. The Northwest half of the parish (Wards 1, 2, 3, and 5, while still having between 14 and 20 percent of the labor force working in lumber, is significantly lower than the southeast half of the parish (Wards 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9), which had between 26 and 52 percent of the labor force in the pine industries. This distribution reflects the ecological patterns of long-leaf pine growth within the parish and the accessibility of those stands by rail.

The lumber industry relied on the labor of men of African descent across the South. Before WWII, no other industry in the South employed more African Americans (Jones 2005, 1; Outland 2004). In St. Tammany Parish, these industries likewise employed a large percentage of Black and Mulatto men. Table 4.6 lists the percentages of Black and Mulatto employment in the pine industries by ward for three census years, 1880, 1900, and 1920. Parish-wide the percentage of men of African descent (counting both Blacks and Mulattoes) in these industries hovered around 50 percent, but had increased to nearly 60 percent by 1920. These percentages vary across the wards from roughly 27 percent in Ward 5 (which

always had one of the lowest percentages of people of African descent of its total population, see Chapter 3), to 85 percent in Ward 4.

TABLE 4.6. PERCENTAGE OF THE LUMBER EMPLOYEES LISTED AS BLACK OR MULATTO

	1880		1900	1920	
	Black	Mulatto	Black	Black	Mulatto
Ward 1	0%	100%	33%	57.1%	0%
Ward 2	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.3	10.6
Ward 3	41.0	11.0	19.0	45.0	1.0
Ward 4	66.0	0.0	47.0	85.0	0.0
Ward 5	--	--	43.4	22.9	4.2
Ward 6	--	--	44.4	31.7	0.0
Ward 7	14.0	0.0	50.0	29.7	56.8
Ward 8	14.0	14.0	18.2	44.5	11.7
Ward 9	0.0	0.0	66.7	50.0	17.8
Ward 10	0.0	0.0	--	38.2	0.0
Parish	50.0%	0.1%	51.6%	49.6%	10.1%

Source: Federal Census Schedules, 1880, 1900, 1920

These numbers may not seem extremely high considering the large numbers of people of African descent in some wards within the parish—specifically Wards 7, 8, and 9. Just what impact did the pine industries have on the population of African descent within the parish? One way of seeing this is by looking at the percentage of Black and Mulatto men employed in these industries as a percentage of the total number of Black and Mulatto men employed in the parish. Table 4.7 lists these percentages.

TABLE 4.7. PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYED BLACK AND MULATTO MEN WORKING IN LUMBER INDUSTRY

	1880		1900	1920	
	Black	Mulatto	Black	Black	Mulatto
Ward 1	0.0%	2.0%	1%	22.8%	0.0%
Ward 2	0.0	0.0	0.0	32.8	30.4
Ward 3	6.0	3.0	1.0	16.8	11.1
Ward 4	18.0	1.0	6.7	67.8	0.0
Ward 5	--	--	16.9	26.8	33.3
Ward 6	--	--	4.9	74.7	0.0
Ward 7	1.0	0.0	5.7	35.5	39.4
Ward 8	1.0	1.4	1.0	38.9	27.6
Ward 9	0.0	0.0	26.0	37.6	27.7
Ward 10	0.0	0.0	--	40.3	0.0
Parish	6.9%	1.1%	7.9%	36.7%	30.9%

Source: Federal Census Schedules, 1880, 1900, 1920

Clearly a very large percentage of the Black and Mulatto populations worked in these industries, and it increased the most dramatically between 1900 and 1920. Over 1 in 3 employed Black men in the parish, and nearly 1 in 3 employed Mulatto men in the parish worked in the lumber and pine products industries. With such a large number of Black and Mulatto men in the parish working for these industries, work in the lumber industry—and particularly the naval stores industries—came to be associated with a different racial dynamic than other work in the parish. Figure 4.7 is a photo taken in 1905 showing Black turpentiners just outside of Covington. In the photo, a number of guards on horseback stand in a ring around the workers. This may be because the men in the photo are convict laborers, which will be discussed below.



FIGURE 4.7. GATHERING TURPENTINE IN THE PINE FOREST, COVINGTON, LA. THIS PHOTO APPEARS IN *THE WORLD FAMOUS OZONE BELT*, 1905.

This new racial dynamic encompassed both white and Black workers laboring together—and competing with each other—for wages in the South, an infrequent occurrence until industrial period of the late 1800s and early 1900s. This proximity and the large numbers of Black men employed in the pine industries caused the naval stores and

lumber industries to be heavily associated with Black labor (Outland 2004, Jones 2005). Robert Outland (2004) describes the proximity between whites and Blacks despite a social context of segregation and oppression: whites and Blacks certainly worked along side each other in turpentine orchards, even though their residences at turpentine camps were segregated (178). In addition, lumber and turpentine companies often situated their camps near the pines to be cut or tapped—often far away from towns and well into forested areas. Outland (2004) argues that this practice kept the workers away from the distractions of town life during the work week and isolated convict laborers.



FIGURE 4.8. TURPENTINE CAMPS NEAR MANDEVILLE OWNED BY THE GREAT SOUTHERN LUMBER COMPANY. DATE UNKNOWN. SOURCE: TULANE HERBARIUM LANTERN SLIDES.

Lumber and turpentine camps in many ways continued the antebellum housing patterns for enslaved Black laborers. Turpentine camps often provided laborers with nothing more than crude cabins because the work was temporary—both seasonally and longitudinally—and eventually the camps would have to be moved (Outland 2004, 178-179). Figure 4.8 shows how such cabins near Mandeville appeared in the early 1900s. The date of the photograph is unknown, but plans of the Great Southern Lumber Company to expand

to Mandeville place the construction of these cabins around 1914 (13 December 1913 *Farmer*, 1).

Lumber companies often provided housing for workers near sawmills as well, and this housing tended to be much better than those cabins built to accommodate turpentine workers. Sawmill owners in St. Tammany Parish typically placed their sawmills and workers cabins—also segregated—just on the outskirts of town. This occurred at both the Poitevant and Favre sawmill, just to the west of the town limits of Mandeville, and the Jay sawmill (later Houlton sawmill) across the Tchefuncte River from Madisonville proper. Poitevant and Favre employees lived in either “three-room,” “four-room,” or “five-room” quarters, based on the size of the family living there (Rev. Leo Edgeron, *personal interview*, 8 February 2007; Nicholls 1990, 91). As a result, concentrations of Black residents occurred in the gray area between the towns and rural areas (see Chapter 3).

The distant turpentine and lumber camps, often their own towns far removed in the rural areas, and lumber company housing came to be seen largely as Black domains. This racialized association cannot be looked at only as a negative phenomenon or as an image of Black labor held by whites, recognizing the temporariness and mobility of the Black labor force. Jones (2005) argues that Black laborers saw the lumber industry as an excellent resource for earning income, particularly for farmers in off-seasons. This allowed a larger number of Black farmers to own their land in St. Tammany’s neighbor to the north, Washington Parish, and presumably in St. Tammany as well, contributing to the lower rates of tenant farming in the parish (*ibid.*, 31-33). But Black lumber workers in some cases also saw their wage work as an escape from agricultural life that offered them few possibilities; it offered them a chance to set out on their own, perhaps start families, and earn greater income than staying in agriculture.

The image of the Black landowner and family man in St. Tammany supplementing his income contrasts with images of lumber workers as transient, unmarried men; however, as both Outland (2004) and Jones (2005) ably demonstrate, marriage rates for both Blacks and whites in the lumber industry were over fifty percent, and this percentage climbed higher to an average over 70 percent by 1940 (see Jones 2005, 48 and 52). Married men, Black and white, often brought their families with them, and wives cooked and cared for the children during the day while husbands worked in the forests. Lumber companies also encouraged single men to get married and arranged for “commissary weddings” because it “facilitated good camp government and economical use of housing” (Outland 2004, 182).

Saloons, Strikes, and Violence

A characterization of turpentine and lumber workers, especially Black workers, as single and transitory perhaps came from the early period in the development of these industries. Before the 1910s and 20s, lumber companies allowed and even provided segregated barrelhouses (saloons) to attract single men of both racial groups (McMahon 2004, Jones 2005); however, after the 1920s, policies of the lumber companies changed, reflecting a reorientation to a more stable, family-oriented environment for workers (Jones 2005). During the early days of the Great Southern Lumber Company in Bogalusa from 1907 until roughly 1912, a number of saloons, gambling halls, and prostitution houses opened to serve the workers in the sawmill. Eager to transform its reputation from a rowdy and dangerous sawmill town to a place men “would be glad to live in,” the Great Southern Lumber Company began construction of the town surrounding its sawmill in the 1910s and brought in a landscape architect to design the plans (Myrick 1970, 20). Included in the design were a hospital, golf course, segregated housing, schools, and churches. The company intended for Bogalusa to be a stable, permanent town and wanted to feature community elements in its design. For instance, the Great Southern Lumber Company

constructed a YMCA and a YWCA in 1910 and 1916 to provide moral family activities for the white workers residing in the town (Myrick 1970, 19-21).

The Poitevaut and Favre Lumber Company sawmill to the west of Mandeville similarly provided three churches and a separate boarding house for bachelors. The “village” where the workers resided had a raised wooden walkway between the cabins so workers would not have to trudge through the mud. The village also featured a “storm pit” for the workers to shelter in during tornadoes (Nicholls 1990, 92). Additionally Poitevaut and Favre paid for doctors and nurses to treat the Black workers at the mill at times of outbreaks of contagious diseases (2 November 1918 *Farmer*, 1) and paid for a schoolhouse for the children of their black employees (26 July *Farmer* 1919, 1). These changes on the part of lumber companies reflect the beliefs of the owners concerning the essential qualities of a stable and efficient workforce: church-going, community-minded, and segregated, all anchored by the sawmill and labor itself.

Despite the fact that the pine industries became more family-oriented over time, and lumber companies made some attempt to pacify workers, lumber and turpentine camps and sawmill villages were not infrequently places of violence, social conflict, and labor strikes. Additionally, local politicians focused on saloons—particularly “negro” saloons on the outskirts of town and associated with transient labor and vagrancy—as the sources of community problems (see for instance McMahon 2004 on the conflict between municipal leaders and powerful lumber company owners in Lake Charles, Louisiana). Parish leaders not only saw saloons as troublesome places because of violence—they also saw them as places where individuals would cross color lines in their sexual relationships.

In the development of the lumber industry—and structured wage labor—in St. Tammany Parish, workers occasionally went on strike to contest what they saw as unfair payment or excessive work hours. These strikes also occurred in the social context of

quickly growing white and Black populations within the southern part of the parish associated with the lumber industry (Chapter 3). In 1885, men at Jay's sawmill went on strike for a 12-hour workday, claiming that the owner, William Jay, forced them to work 14 hour days. In less than two weeks, the strike was settled when the 12-hour day was agreed upon, but Jay claimed that he had never worked them for 14 hours. In a statement most telling about labor conditions in the late nineteenth century, he defended his labor policies by pointing out that he had also given them a 15 minute break for dinner (11 April 1885 *Farmer*, 4; 25 April 1885 *Farmer*, 5).

A year later in 1886, workers at a turpentine orchard outside of Slidell began to strike. The strike started quietly "with no damage to person or property;" nevertheless, a few days later, some of the strikers became violent in their efforts to stop production in the other orchards under the ownership of Simpson and Vizzard. They whipped two "old negroes" who had refused to join in the strike (24 April 1886 *Farmer*, 4). In this article, the editor does not remark upon the race of the strikers. The following week, however, after a group of Black men armed themselves with weapons and marched through the streets of Slidell beating drums made out of tin cans, constables arrested four "negroes" for "causing a general reign of terror." The editor of the paper remarked, "From what we can learn, they are the ring-leaders of the strikers in the turpentine orchards." The four, charged with assault and battery and carrying concealed weapons were taken to the parish jail (1 May 1886 *Farmer*, 4). Striking at St. Tammany lumber sites died down after the 1880s.

Despite the association of labor in the lumber industries with Black men, strikes against owners of these companies in St. Tammany cannot clearly be associated with either whites or Blacks and may have involved men of both races. Unions and strikes in Louisiana often were divided by race (Woodward 1951, Fairclough 1995, de Jong 2002), but on some occasions, cooperation between racial groups did occur. Strikes in neighboring Orleans

Parish and Washington Parish illustrate this point. In 1892, a general strike in New Orleans successfully combined mobilized unions associated with both race groups and ended peacefully (Woodward 1951, 231-232). This interracial cooperation died quickly, and by 1894 a strike along racial lines broke out amongst the screwmen (who loaded cotton bales on ships) in New Orleans, resulting in the deaths of several Black and white screwmen and considerably damage to property (Woodward 1951, 267).

In the post-WWI labor market, wages often did not keep up with inflation, setting off strikes across the country. One place where this occurred was at the Great Southern Lumber Company in Bogalusa. Historians Jerry Myrick (1970) and Bill Wyche (1999) reconstruct the account using local newspapers and Great Southern Lumber Company documents. In 1919, a white man named Lum Williams organized white workers into unions along occupational lines, while a Black associate of his, Sol Dacus, organized Black employees of the mill. Despite company attempts to squelch the union activity with racial partisanship and drive Williams and Dacus out of town, in September of 1919, the Black and white unions together held a labor parade in downtown Bogalusa. After months of tensions between management and the unions, many firings along racial lines, blacklisting, and a mill shut-down by officials “for repairs,” both the Black and white unionized workers went on strike. Eventually Great Southern organized its own “union” called the Loyalty League that operated clandestinely, harassed the strikers, and offered protection to Black workers that wanted to return. The Loyalty League then actively sought Sol Dacus, who had returned to the town under the guard of Williams and two other white union organizers. The Loyalty League, with a legally obtained arrest warrant for Dacus, confronted the party at Williams’ home; the result was the deaths of Williams and the two white organizers, the shooting of a member of the Loyalty League (who later died at the hospital), and the “disappearance” of Sol Dacus (some claimed to have seen him fleeing town). After several weeks of occupation

by federal troops, the interracial cooperation of union men—actually, unionism in any form—itself “disappeared” in Bogalusa (Myrick 1970, Wyche 1999).

In addition to areas of contention between management and workers, the connections between race and labor in the pine industries grew stronger through the notoriety of acts of violence committed at the lumber company housing, particularly in the early period before the transition to more stable, family-oriented housing. Lumber company housing and turpentine camps often witnessed extreme acts of violence, consistently attributed to the moral character of those Black residents living in the camp. Shootings and knife fights broke out occasionally at these camps, often after nights of drinking and often at the hands of jealous paramours, according to the newspapers.

Acts of violence frequently occurred between Black men, but they also occurred between Black and white laborers, and between workers and managers. Typically the newspaper mentioned the race of the individuals involved, which is a strong indication that the race of the individuals involved *mattered*. For example, in 1898, the white store keeper at Jones and Pickett’s turpentine still and a Black worker exchanged shots after the store keeper told the worker to leave (4 June 1898, *Farmer*, 4). No one was killed in that incident, but it easily could have had a different outcome with two angry people firing at each other at close range. In 1900, William Johnson, a Black employee who had been fired returned to the office of William Jay, owner of the sawmill across the river from Madisonville, and after a struggle, slashed him with a knife. The Sheriff’s deputies immediately arrested Johnson and brought him to the parish jail. This event occurred just a year after an article in the *Farmer* lauded Jay’s sawmill for its lack of violence despite its employment of “mostly colored” men and its proximity to “bloody” Tangipahoa (30 September 1899 *Farmer*, 4; 1 December 1900 *Farmer*, 5; 8 December 1900 *Farmer*, 4). In 1902, a white turpentine worker was murdered

during a dance near Alma (in the northwest corner of the parish). Authorities arrested a Black worker, but he claimed he was innocent (9 August 1902 *Farmer*, 5).

The scale of the violence often varied, and the causes for the escalation are not always apparent in the newspaper accounts. For instance, in 1903, a particularly violent affair took place at the logging store owned by the Poitevant and Favre Lumber Company near Florenville (in the eastern part of the parish). Some of the Black employees had “made themselves more or less obnoxious for some time” and had gotten “fresh” with a white male store clerk from Mississippi. These Black workers violated the rules of racial etiquette in the store by not addressing the clerk correctly or demonstrating the required deference to a white figure of authority (the white representative of the lumber company). One of the Black employees addressed the white clerk disrespectfully by his last name multiple times, and the clerk decided to punish the infraction of civility by knocking the insolent worker down with an axe handle. The interaction in the store continued beyond the walls of the actual building, and someone under cover took a shot at one of the offending Black workers, hitting him with a non-lethal spray of buckshot. After being fired upon, the group of workers armed themselves, and several whites witnessed them practicing at a firing range and making comments about what would happen to whites if they “said anything.” *The Farmer* describes the next series of events.

Saturday evening, it appears, the suspected trouble broke out in all its fury. Tiring of the insulting manner of the blacks, the leading white men of the settlement took the matter in their own hands and the immediate result was...that a fusillade of shots followed the real encounter Saturday night. Three [of the Black workers] were killed outright and the fourth died before the officers reached the scene. Deputy Sheriffs Hiram Cook and S.J. Talley were promptly on the scene, and found that quiet had been restored. They made one arrest, Jules Laurant [one of the Black workers], charged with assault and battery. (16 May 1903, 4)

The word “quiet” in the newspaper account of the events represents not only a cessation of gunfire but a temporary cessation of white fear of Black violence at the hands of those

particular white individuals. “Quiet” refers to a restoration of the social “peace” by the reestablishment of the racial hierarchy near that lumber camp. In this case a group of white men employed by Poitevant and Favre killed the group of Black employees, although why a white posse decided to murder the men outright rather than seeking the help of the Sheriff is not clear. The sheriff could have arrested this entire group of Black employees for carrying concealed weapons, assault and battery, or inciting a riot and removed them from the settlement; there were many legal means for whites to have police protection, and the sheriff arrested no white men in this incident. Ultimately, this event represents a purposeful act of violence and terror aimed at reinforcing the color line through punishment for violation of the rules of racial etiquette. And because no legal action befell the whites who murdered the Black lumber employees, local government and law enforcement silently condoned this form of control (Chapter 6).

Acts of violence specifically associated with the housing provided by lumber companies declined greatly after the 1910s, although fights did occasionally break out. For instance, in 1932 two Black workers got into a fight in the “negro quarters” of the turpentine camp near Folsom. When the white manager approached them, one of the workers took a shot at him but missed. The shooter fled, and deputies arrested the other worker for carrying a concealed weapon (2 January 1932 *Farmer*, 1). The number of violent incidents occurring in the turpentine and lumber camps followed a general decline in acts of violence committed throughout the parish as well as the curtailment of lumber company activities after the 1920s.

Another aspect of lumber company life that received increasing attention from the 1880s to the 1950s were the saloons that sprang up to serve the working men (and women!) of the lumber and turpentine camps. Politicians found saloons very dangerous places—not just because violence often broke out there but because Blacks and whites often interacted

there, crossing racial boundaries. Often times these crossings culminated in violence between individuals of different racial groups, and sometimes they resulted in social and sexual relationships between individuals of racial groups. Typically, these “transgressions” occurred at “negro” saloons, rather than saloons reserved for whites.

Just because politicians and other municipal leaders had a problem with Black saloons does not indicate that these leaders opposed all saloons—quite the opposite. In the late 1800s, St. Tammany supported a state lottery to bring in tax revenues for the state. While the anti-lotteryites opposed it on grounds that gambling was immoral and should not be the enterprise of the state, St. Tammany consistently supported the measure. Fighting over this measure became embittered, and in August of 1891, an anti-lotteryite wrote a scathing letter to the editor of the *Farmer* with this analysis of St. Tammany’s position: “drinking and gambling go hand in hand, and every other business in [Covington] is a saloon” (8 August 1891 *Farmer*, 4). In 1907, St. Tammany (with the exception of Ward 5) opposed prohibition because “you cannot stop a man from drinking in private” and the sale of alcohol was good for the economy (30 November 1907 *Farmer*, 4). Despite this support for drinking, municipal leaders and other saw saloons and barrooms as dangerous places, particularly for women. In 1908, the Covington Town Council voted to make it a misdemeanor for any woman to enter a barroom “within the limits of the Town of Covington” (8 August 1908 *Farmer*, 4; *Proceedings of the Covington Town Council* 4 August 1908).

Saloons and barrooms obtained licenses based on the color of their patronage, with the legal intention of complete segregation of these facilities. When owners applied for licenses to open drinking establishments, they specified whether it would be a colored or white saloon and submitted the petition to the St. Tammany Police Jury, who could accept or reject the petition (see 1 January 1910 *Farmer*, 5). Members of the public could similarly petition the Police Jury or Town Councils to reject the petition, and they did so when they

considered the proposed saloon to be a nuisance to their neighborhoods. A “colored” saloon on Jefferson Avenue between Diamond and Columbia Streets in Covington received adequate support from the *property owners* within 300 feet of the building and from the Covington Town Council to be issued a license (2 December 1911 *Farmer*, 4, emphasis added). A Mandeville Town Council ordinance similarly required that individuals who wanted to open a saloon or barroom obtain a majority of signatures of *property owners* within 500 feet of the proposed site (1 December 1902 *Mandeville Town Council Minutes*, Book 2, 376, emphasis added). The Police Jury, however, did not accept all petitions for opening saloons. In 1914, Mr. O’Reilly Cousin submitted a petition to open a colored saloon near sawmills in Bonfouca (an old community of French and African descent near Slidell). The residents of the community petitioned against the granting of the license pleading,

The proposed barroom is near to the Baptist Church, the public school, and two saw mills. Ours is a quiet community. We have no jail, no magistrate, no police protection, and we do not need them. But with the introduction of the grog shop, all are upon the war path, and the nights are made hideous by the oaths of the drunken fiends. We ask you with all earnestness to save us from the danger and disgrace to be brought upon Bonfouca. (21 February 1914 *Farmer*, 4)

The Police Jury denied Cousin’s petition to open the saloon (21 February 1914 *Farmer*, 4; 16 February 1914 *Proceedings of the St. Tammany Police Jury*). The requirement for signatures of property owners within town limits ensured that colored saloons, seen as a “resort for the congregation of questionable characters, a factor for making of negro criminals, [that] habituates a menace and disgrace to any community,” (24 July 1915 *Farmer*, 4) did not move into white neighborhoods or too near schools or churches, but the petition by the community at Bonfouca demonstrates that persons of African descent—particularly if they owned property—could use their voices to prevent saloons from locating in their neighborhoods as well. Additionally, it made establishing a saloon on the outskirts of town

or far away from the town (near turpentine or lumber camps) much easier than within the town limits.

City and parish officials reacted when individuals crossed color lines at saloons. For instance in 1918, the District Court heard cases against two saloon owners who operated under white licenses, but sold liquor also to both Black men and women. The saloons were closed by the court and one of the owners fined \$100. The editor of the *Farmer*, D.H. Mason, commented, “The action is due largely to the effect of these places on labor, which is scarce and badly needed. The moral effect is bad and where negro men and women congregate together they cannot be induced to work steadily when employed, and in many cases to work at all” (27 July 1918 *Farmer*, 1). Despite the editor’s claims that this case was primarily about work, the local Council of Defense—a World War I creation nationwide designed to patrol local communities for “subversive” and “treasonous” behavior—brought these particular cases to the attention of the judge based on the sale of liquor to white and Black patrons. Just a month later, the Council of Defense similarly asked District Judge Carter to shut down two other saloons near Abita for selling to whites and Blacks under the same roof (24 August 1918 *Farmer*, 1).

The fact that work productivity and color lines entered into the same argument demonstrates how in many cases, labor (or class) and race were inextricable. In other words, local officials could justify the maintenance of color lines on the basis of labor and productivity, but labor also reflected a social and economic division based on race. Underlying this economic argument, the bottom line for municipal and parish officials in these cases was that by definition, a “white” saloon did not serve Black patrons; Black people could be present as workers or employees, but they could not associate with whites as equals—particularly participating in an activity which lowered inhibitions—in the same

establishment. Saloons offer a clear example of the nexus of the geography, economics, and cultural structures of race.

Louisiana voted to adopt Prohibition in 1918, which to some extent reduced the amount of drinking going on at saloons in the parish; however, the parish must have had a difficult time with enforcement of the laws (or deciding to enforce the laws) because in 1921, the Covington Town Council issued a statement making clear its intention to enforce the prohibition laws (5 March 1921 *Farmer*, 1). By November of 1932, the state repealed its prohibition laws in the middle of the Great Depression (12 November 1932 *Farmer*, 1), but the lumber companies had already begun to close or reduce production during this time. The Poitevant and Favre sawmill in Mandeville closed in 1925 (Nicholls 1990, 91), and the Great Southern Lumber Company ended its lumber operation in 1938 (Myrick 1970). With the decline of the lumber companies came the closure of many of the saloons and honky-tonks that had served the workers in different parts of the parish, bringing to an end this industry's employment and leisure (Jones 2005) that made maintaining color lines in the parish quite problematic.

WATER AND CLAY: THE SHIPBUILDING AND BRICKWORKS INDUSTRIES IN ST. TAMMANY

In addition to farming and lumber, two other industries shaped labor in St. Tammany Parish: shipbuilding and brick manufacturing. Shipbuilding in St. Tammany occurred in both Madisonville at the Jahncke Shipyard and in Slidell at the Canulette Shipyard. As this research focuses primarily on western St. Tammany Parish, the shipyards in Madisonville will be more thoroughly discussed. Both the shipbuilding and brick-making industries also relied heavily on the labor of people of African descent. Shipbuilding in particular relied on men classified as "Black" and "Mulatto" who worked as skilled carpenters, blurring direct associations made between color and class. Brickworks also

employed a great number of men of African descent. Because brick-making was dirty, dangerous work and employed Black men, this industry—in contrast with shipbuilding—served to strengthen associations between this type of labor and race in the mind of whites.

Shipping and Shipbuilding

Taking advantage of the supply of lumber in the parish and easy transport of materials up and down the Tchefuncte River, the shipbuilding and lake trade centered solely at Madisonville until Slidell became a town after the arrival of the railroads (Ellis 1981). Shipbuilding was a very old industry in St. Tammany and had been done in Madisonville since well before the Civil War. In the post-bellum period, shipbuilding continued as schooners and steamboats made daily passages to and from New Orleans. Madisonville provided an important service as a shipping port for lumber and bricks produced in western St. Tammany until the arrival of the railroads in the 1880s (Boagni 1980, Ellis 1981).

Several shipyards existed on the river in Madisonville and changed ownership several times. In the 1880s the Oullibers and Bahams had partnered to operate a shipyard, and the Cardone family also owned a shipyard on the river. In 1900 a member of the Baham family partnered with Fritz Jahncke, a German immigrant who began his economic life in St. Tammany by dredging shells and sand. Together they created the Jahncke shipyard to build tugs and barges to haul the sand and shells to market. After the federal government awarded the Jahncke Shipyards a contract for building wooden and steel ships in 1917, the Jahncke Shipyards expanded to incorporate the Oulliber shipyard (7 July 1917 Farmer, 1; Boagni 1980, 77). Over the course of the next five years, the Jahncke Shipyards produced twelve 3500-ton wooden ships and twelve 5000-ton steel vessels. Additionally, it was reported Jahncke and later his son employed over 2000 men (Boagni 1980, 76-77).

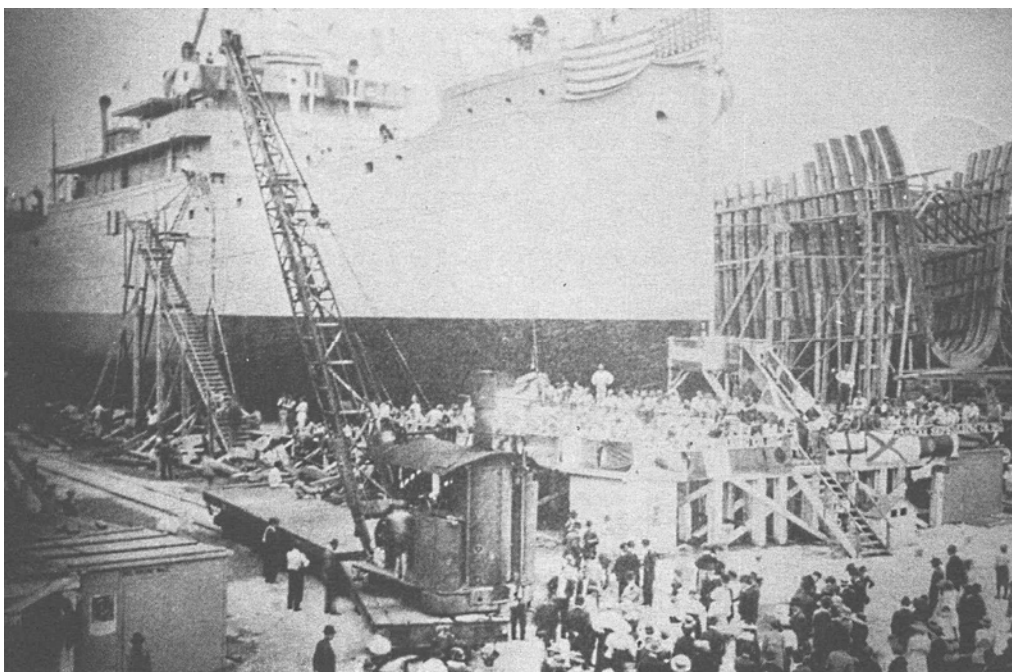


FIGURE 4.9. THE JAHNCKE SHIPYARDS IN MADISONVILLE, WORLD WAR I. SOURCE: BOAGANI 1980, 78.

The shipyards in Madisonville, both before and after WWI, employed white and black men as well as skilled and unskilled labor. In fact established families of both African and European descent owned some of the prominent early shipyards in Madisonville. The carpenters that were members of these families in particular developed a reputation for excellence in carpentry during these years.

The shipbuilding industry in Madisonville in some ways blurred racial lines more than other industries because it employed large numbers white, Black, and “mulatto” workers in close proximity and stayed somewhat isolated from the other towns in the parish that had been connected to the railroad. Some residents of the parish viewed Madisonville as a community that never totally adopted the bi-polar racial beliefs that characterized much of the rest of the South and parish. This “sliding color scale” apparent in Madisonville in the shipbuilding industries reflects the prominence of mixed-race families and the importance of the shipbuilding industry there (Judge Steve Ellis, personal interview 8 February 2007).

TABLE 4.8. TOTAL NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF WORKERS EMPLOYED IN THE SHIP/SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY BY RACE 1880-1920

	1880			1900		1920		
	White	Black	Mulatto	White	Black	White	Black	Mulatto
Ward 1	34 (67%)	7 (14%)	10 (20%)	45 (63%)	26 (37%)	99 (54%)	85 (46%)	0
Ward 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ward 3	9 (43%)	5 (24%)	7 (33%)	7 (54%)	6 (46%)	24 (63%)	13 (34%)	1 (3%)
Ward 4	10 (77%)	1 (8%)	2 (15%)	2 (20%)	8 (80%)	3 (13%)	20 (87%)	0
Ward 5	0	0	0	0	0	1 (100%)	0	0
Ward 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ward 7	3 (27%)	2 (18%)	6 (55%)	6 (25%)	18 (75%)	0	3 (20%)	12 (80%)
Ward 8	6 (46%)	1 (8%)	6 (46%)	0	1 (100%)	8 (50%)	5 (31%)	3 (19%)
Ward 9	21 (64%)	2 (6%)	10 (30%)	24 (53%)	21 (88%)	69 (58%)	11 (9%)	40 (33%)
Ward 10	3 (100%)	0	0	--	--	6 (86%)	1 (14%)	0
Parish	86 (59%)	18 (12%)	41 (28%)	84 (51%)	80 (49%)	210 (52%)	138 (34%)	56 (14%)

Source: Federal Census Schedules 1880, 1900, 1920

Table 4.8 demonstrates the total number of individuals per ward employed in the shipbuilding and ship industries and presents white, Black, and mulatto employees as a percentage of that total number. This table illustrates the reliance of the shipbuilding and ship industries on a labor force of multiple racial groups. Ward 1 (Madisonville) ranges from 34 percent individuals of African descent to 46 percent in 1920, a date that would have been just past the peak of production at Jahncke Shipyards. Frustratingly, the census enumerator did not count anyone in Madisonville in 1920 as “Mulatto,” so the extent of the influence of these men is not apparent. Ward 4 (Mandeville) began with a higher percentage of white employees working in the shipbuilding industry, but by 1900 and 1920 the majority had shifted to Black men. Ward 7 (Lacombe) interestingly also had very high percentages of

“Mulatto” employees, corresponding perhaps to the large number of individuals of both European and African ancestry living in those areas. The frequency of very high percentages of “Mulatto” employees in both 1880 and 1920 demonstrates the continuing importance of people in this racial category to the shipbuilding industry since before the Civil War.

TABLE 4.9. EMPLOYEES IN THE SHIP/SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL WORKFORCE, BY WARD, 1880-1920

	1880	1900	1920
Ward 1	20.73%	17.35%	32.68%
Ward 2	0	0	0
Ward 3	5.06	1.16	2.74
Ward 4	2.77	1.63	4.40
Ward 5	0	0	0.34
Ward 6	0	0	0
Ward 7	5.53	16.0	4.45
Ward 8	8.72	0.18	3.78
Ward 9	24.44	6.93	7.78
Ward 10	7.5	--	2.02
Parish	7.1%	3.5%	6.0%

Source: Federal Census Schedules 1880, 1900, 1920

Table 4.9 shows the relative importance of employment in the ship and shipbuilding industry for all racial groups compared to other types of employment. Shipbuilding grew in importance in the parish between 1880 and 1920, and much of this increase in the numbers of men employed in the industry can be correlated to the growth of the Jahncke shipyards with its federal contract to produce warships and the opening of the Canulette Shipyard in Slidell. In Ward 1 (Madisonville), shipbuilding employed over 20 percent of the employed population living there, and this number increased to over 30 percent in 1920. Other than Ward 1, shipbuilding had significant numbers of employees in the Wards bordering Lake Pontchartrain: Wards 4, 7, and 9. In 1919, the federal government withdrew its contract with the Jahncke Shipyard, and the owners began to dismiss many of those hundreds of men they had hired after receiving the contract (27 September 1919 *Farmer*, 1). The Jahncke Shipyard continued to produce yachts and other craft after this date but never to the scale of

production during WWI. With the decline of the shipyards, an industry that paid relatively little attention to color lines and in which individuals of African descent advanced readily left the parish as well.

Brick Manufacturing

With the abundance of clay soils in the area, individuals in St. Tammany had produced bricks since before the Civil War (Ellis 1981). Individuals could make bricks with very small scale enterprises, and for this reason, in the late 1800s, a number of brick mills existed in the parish, owned and operated by men and women of different racial groups (Ellis 1981, Newton 1986). From the beginning of this industry in the early 1800s, the production of bricks had an association with both white and Black (and mulatto) owners, but this changed in the late 1800s with large-scale brick manufacturing when brick companies employed large numbers of Black employees as laborers.

Brick mills were usually situated near rivers to allow transport of the weighty product, but with the arrival of the railroads, owners of brick mills located their mills along the rail lines for shipment. After 1900, brick manufacturing became dominated by large companies, changing the scale of production and utilizing large amounts of wage labor, particularly of Black men. Two of the biggest companies were located in the eastern half of the parish: the Salmen Brick and Lumber Company and St. Joe Brickyard. Both of these companies employed hundreds of men, but Black men in particular provided the vast majority of the labor.

Table 4.10 demonstrates how many men brick industries employed and the composition of the employment by racial group. In 1880, few people were employed solely in brick manufacturing, but individuals of all three racial groups produced bricks. By 1920, the influence of the St. Joe Brickyard near Pearl River (Ward 8) and the Salmen Brick and Lumber Company (Ward 9) are apparent, both employing hundreds of men (only those men

and women whose job description was related to brick production at the Salmen Brick and Lumber Company were included in this count). In both of these Wards, only 17 percent and 30 percent of workers employed by the brick industry were counted as white, demonstrating heavy reliance on the work of Black and mulatto men and women.

TABLE 4.10. TOTAL NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF WORKERS EMPLOYED IN BRICK MANUFACTURING BY RACE AND WARD, 1880-1920

	1880			1900		1920		
	White	Black	Mulatto	White	Black	White	Black	Mulatto
Ward 1	0 (0%)	10 (77%)	3 (23%)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Ward 2	0	0	0	1 (100%)	0	0	0	0
Ward 3	3 (23%)	8 (62%)	2 (15%)	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	5 (29%)	10 (59%)	2 (12%)
Ward 4	1 (33%)	2 (66%)	0	1 (100%)	0	0	0	0
Ward 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ward 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ward 7	0	0	1 (100%)	0	1 (100%)	0	0	0
Ward 8	0	0	0	2 (100%)	0	17 (17%)	58 (59%)	23 (23%)
Ward 9	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	43 (80%)	11 (20%)	60 (30%)	98 (49%)	43 (21%)
Ward 10	0	0	0	--	--	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0
Parish	6 (17%)	22 (63%)	7 (20%)	51 (78%)	14 (22%)	83 (26%)	167 (53%)	68 (21%)

Source: Federal Census Schedules 1880, 1900, 1920

Table 4.11 examines the overall importance of the brick industry in terms of overall employment as a percentage of total employment, by ward for all racial groups. The table shows that after 1900, the eastern half of the parish, particularly Wards 8 and 9, cornered the brick industry in terms of labor. At its peak, brick production in St. Tammany only employed 4.8 percent of the total employed workforce of the parish. After the 1920s, the Salmen Brick and Lumber Company broke apart, and the lumber company stopped its large

scale processing of timber. The brick industry remained opened for a number of years, and the brick mill at St. Joe was the only one still in production by 1981 (Ellis 1981).

TABLE 4.11. EMPLOYMENT IN BRICK MANUFACTURING AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL WORKFORCE

	1880	1900	1920
Ward 1	5.28%	0.48%	0.0%
Ward 2	0.0	0.2	0.0
Ward 3	3.13	0.45	1.33
Ward 4	0.64	0.16	0.0
Ward 5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ward 6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ward 7	0.5	0.67	0.0
Ward 8	0	0.37	23.17
Ward 9	3.7	24.04	13.00
Ward 10	0.0	--	0.0
Parish	1.7%	1.4%	4.8%

Source: Federal Census Schedules 1880, 1900, 1920

VAGRANCY, DEBT PEONAGE, AND THE CONVICT LEASE SYSTEM

After the Civil War, the South establishment struggled to come to terms with the new spatial mobility of Black labor, and one way that white business owners and political leaders dealt with the ostensible freedom that Black workers now had was to establish and enforce vagrancy laws. This white control of Black labor occurred in St. Tammany Parish as well. Black men who appeared to whites or law enforcement to be unemployed, in the wrong place (or out of place—see Chapter 2), or a patron of saloons (or a host of other reasons) could be arrested for vagrancy and fined. Often the arrested men could not afford to pay the fines and then went to jail. While in jail, they often worked off their fines/served their time by working on public roads or being hired out to farmers or lumber companies. This system can be classified as either convict-lease (although usually associated with state penitentiaries) or debt peonage (Tindall 1967, Daniel 1972, Ayers 1984, Wilson 2001).

These systems of forced labor for convicts and debtors existed throughout the South in the late nineteenth century and were infamous for the conditions under which men and

women worked. State government typically required the leasing company to provide housing and food for the convicts and debtors, a cost of labor that most leasing companies sought to minimize. Meals were often very meager, working hours long and grueling, and housing no more than unsanitary shacks. These conditions caused one author (himself the former captain of a convict labor camp) to describe the convict-labor system as the “American Siberia” (Cable 1969[1889], Powell 1976[1891]). Ayers (1984) argues that by 1920, all Southern states with the exception of Alabama had made illegal control of lease labor by anyone other than the state (222), nevertheless in St. Tammany, parish use of the labor of men arrested for vagrancy continued into the 1950s.

The line drawn between the convict-lease system and debt peonage in St. Tammany is fuzzy because Police Jury and municipal ordinances often worded the punishments for infractions of the law as “a \$25 fine or 30 days in jail.” It is unclear whether or not the arrested man or woman still owed the fine once incarcerated. Furthermore, St. Tammany Parish indictment records do not indicate the race of the individual arrested for vagrancy. What is clear, however, is that it was not uncommon for authorities to arrest Black men in the Parish for vagrancy. In January of 1903, the town of Covington passed an ordinance against vagrancy, although no specific mention of race was given (31 January 1903 *Farmer*, 5). In August of 1913, the Mandeville Town Council drafted an ordinance (the draft included in the council minutes was not signed by the Mayor, so whether or not it was passed will never be known) describing and punishing vagrants. Although the list is quite long, it is worth printing the long definition of vagrants in its entirety to demonstrate the plethora of reasons for which officials could arrest an individual for vagrancy.

Be it ordained by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Mandeville, La., that all persons who have no visible means of maintaining themselves and live without employment; all persons wandering abroad and lodging in groceries, taverns, beer houses, bar rooms, market places, sheds, barns, out houses, pumping stations and uninhabited buildings, railroad cars,

boats or other craft, public buildings or the open air; all persons of either sex leading an idle or openly profligate life, who have no property to support them, and who are able to work and do not work; all persons receiving, hiding, trading or bartering stolen property or who unlawfully sell or barter any vinous, alcoholic, malt intoxicating or spirituous liquors or any narcotic or intoxicating habit forming drugs, or any powder advertised as an abortifacient or so-called love powder; every person who conducts games of chance under awnings, in booths, in enclosures, on the streets, levees, public roads or in any public place, whether the prize be in money or in kind; every common prostitute who shall walk the streets or public highways soliciting men; any person of either sex of the white race who shall habitually loiter around or frequent or reside in public or private places owned by or operated by negroes or frequented by negroes; wandering about and begging or who go about from door to door, or place themselves on the streets, highways, public roads, on door steps, on church entrances, passages, alleys, or other place to beg or receive alms; who can work and do not work; all habitual drunkards all persons able to work and do not work, but live upon the wages of personal earnings of their wives or minor children are hereby declared to be vagrants. (*Mandeville Town Council Minutes*, 4 August 1913).

The punishment for vagrancy was a fine of not less than ten dollars and imprisonment of “not less than ten (10) days or more than thirty (30) days in the Town Jail, or both, at the discretion of the Mayor” (4 August 1913 *Mandeville Town Council Minutes*, Book 3). It is also interesting to point out that the descriptor “white” is only used in connection with individuals crossing racial boundaries lines, perhaps implying that the drafters of this ordinance had an image of Black individuals in mind for the remainder of the list.

White men and municipal and parish authorities targeted Black men and women for violating these ordinances; in reality they were punishing Blacks for not laboring, again demonstrating the strong and overlapping connection between labor and race in St. Tammany. In August of 1910 in Lacombe, for instance, whites at the railroad depot beat some drunken Black men with axe-handles, threw chunks of coal at them, and fired shots in the air to prod them out of their “loafing” and correct them for acting like Indians drinking fire water (20 August 1910 *Farmer*, 7). On July 12 of 1913, the Mayor of Covington promised that Black men and women that idlers on the streets would be arrested and put to work repairing those very same streets. He remarked, “It is claimed that when labor is

needed it is difficult to find anyone to do it, yet the negroes can be found loafing on the streets and seem to have full stomachs and no worry. So hereafter the marshal will keep an eye on those who seem to be enjoying life of the free and easy without working” (12 July 1913 *Farmer*, 1).

During World War I, when the Progressive Movement in the United States was in full force, and the encouragement of community effort at home imbued local politics, white political leaders saw vagrancy as particularly harmful—an act of sabotage. In 1918, the local Council of Defense raided a Black saloon and arrested a crowd of men for vagrancy, determined that “there shall be no idlers” (20 July 1918 *Farmer*, 1). Three months later both the Covington Town Council and parish Police Jury passed ordinances with stricter punishments for vagrancy during times of war (12 October 1918 *Farmer*, 1). In 1922, the Ku Klux Klan got involved in the issue, declaring to the Covington Town Council that if its marshal did not enforce vagrancy and segregation laws more efficiently, they would take care of the problem themselves (11 March 1922 *Farmer*, 1). Two weeks later the Covington Town Council approved a resolution to more strictly enforce the vagrancy laws (15 March 1922 *Farmer*, 1).

By the 1930s, lumber companies, exhausting the supply of pine trees, no longer required as many convict crews to supply labor, for during the Depression men willing to work for wages were ubiquitous. News of vagrancy enforcement declined dramatically as the WPA and other New Deal agencies had thousands of men—white and Black—in St. Tammany registering for work. This was a short-lived lull in vagrancy arrests. By 1940, white and Black men in the parish began registering for the draft. With the push for local communities to support the war effort, the vagrancy of Black and *white* men became a political issue. In December of 1942, the St. Tammany Parish Police Jury passed a “Work or

Fight” law, designed to keep white and Black men who refuse work or “give flimsy excuses for not doing so” (18 December 1942 *Farmer*, 1).

Control of Black labor in the form of debt peonage and the convict-lease system continued into the 1950s in Louisiana, and it became particularly acute during times such as WWI and WWII when there was an effort in the community for everyone to “do their part.” The requirement of Black men and women to not only work but to take jobs offered to them did in fact recognize the significant role that they played both in the community and local economy. Arrest records from this period in St. Tammany are unavailable in any digest form; however, unequal enforcement of vagrancy laws, and a significantly higher number of Black convicts demonstrate the social and economic inequality that persisted in St. Tammany and the South and reified racial lines based on labor.

CONCLUSION: SKILLED AND UNSKILLED LABOR BY RACE IN ST. TAMMANY 1880-1920

Labor and race were very closely tied in St. Tammany between the years 1878 and 1956. Whites, Blacks, and Mulattos farmed and raised cattle; however, farming became primarily associated with whites because of the larger number of white farmers and because it required capital, something that many Black farmers did not have access to. Parish and municipal leaders saw cattle ranching, orchard production, and truck farming as essential elements to the future prosperity of the parish, thus in many ways excluding the input of Black and mixed-race individuals from the equation.

The pine industries in the parish existed only with the availability of Black wage labor. Many throughout the south saw the lumber and naval stores industries as Black occupations, which was not inaccurate (although it overlooked the essential contribution of white workers). Housing for lumber companies was segregated and often far from other settled areas, creating pockets of residential and work areas that solidified racial categories. Often businesses associated with the lumber industry—saloons, gambling houses, and

brothels—were places of violence between people of the same race and of different races, between management and labor and between laborers themselves. Because of the association between the lumber industry and men of African descent, these acts of violence became associated with Black people themselves, often attributed to moral degeneracy or inferiority. Many aspects of the pine industry shaped racial conceptions.

The shipbuilding and brick industries likewise relied heavily on the labor of people of color, although in the shipbuilding industry, skill level reflected racial nuances. In Madisonville in particular, individuals of Creole descent, prominent mixed-race families in the area (considered their own race in earlier times), had a reputation for excellence in carpentry and success in the shipbuilding industry. Brick manufacturing relied heavily on Black laborers, and these industries after 1900s were located primarily in the eastern half of the parish. Residents of St. Tammany also saw these brickyards as Black spaces, which again is not entirely inaccurate given the high percentage of employment of Black men in brick manufacturing.

TABLE 4.12. PERCENTAGE OF WORKFORCE CLASSIFIED AS LABORER BY WARD, 1880-1920

	1880	1900	1920
Ward 1	27.7%	53.0%	33.6%
Ward 2	18.5	58.8	37.0
Ward 3	22.9	35.9	25.2
Ward 4	24.1	32.5	62.3
Ward 5	43.0	65.7	28.5
Ward 6	49.1	64.3	49.9
Ward 7	69.9	40.7	30.0
Ward 8	41.6	78.0	44.4
Ward 9	37.0	49.3	34.0
Ward 10	32.5	--	19.9
TOTAL	32.2%	45.3%	31.8%

Source: Federal Census Schedules 1880, 1900, 1920

The main historical industries in St. Tammany relied—*existed*—because of the availability of Black wage labor, the skill and effort of Black workers as well as whites, something often overlooked in locally produced histories. The type of job a person could

get, however, did reflect the societal inequalities between racial groups in the South. This can be seen in two last tables, Table 4.12 and 4.13.

Table 4.12 demonstrates that throughout the parish, between 30 and 50 percent of the total workforce was classified as a “laborer” of some kind. This meant that the census taker did not consider these people to do “skilled” work; they did not make a living doing any particular craft. The vast majority of these laborers were not even tied to any one particular industry, which may reflect the piney woods tradition of working when necessary or having multiple jobs as a way to secure livelihood. These numbers indicate that this applies to both *whites and Blacks*, which historians of the piney woods have tended to neglect because of the lower numbers of Black people living in the piney woods across the South. It is clear, however, is that the rules of this type of day or sporadic labor differed for white and Black people. White people expected Black people to work and considered Black “laziness” or desire not to work as dangerous and immoral. On the other hand, the seasonal or sporadic labor of whites—particularly in the northern end of the parish—constituted a source of freedom and pride and the continuation of a piney woods culture for many whites.

Table 4.13 represents a breakdown by race of individuals counted as laborers. In wards with very large white populations, such as Wards 2, 5 and 6, whites indicate a larger percentage of the “laborers,” while in those Wards with higher Black and Mulatto populations (Wards 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9) have higher percentages of those racial groups counted as laborers. This seems quite logical based on population alone, but the number of people classified as “Black” have a disproportionately large number of people workers as laborers rather than in a skilled profession. This last point reflects general inequality in St. Tammany between racial groups.

TABLE 4.13. TOTAL NUMBER OF MEN EMPLOYED AS LABOR, BY PERCENTAGE RACE AND WARD, 1880-1920

	1880			1900		1920		
	White	Black	Mulatto	White	Black	White	Black	Mulatto
Ward 1	23 (33%)	36 (52%)	10 (14%)	126 (49%)	129 (51%)	63 (33%)	126 (67%)	0
Ward 2	18 (67%)	7 (26%)	2 (7%)	189 (64%)	106 (36%)	91 (77%)	21 (18%)	6 (5%)
Ward 3	52 (55%)	26 (27%)	17 (18%)	176 (44%)	226 (56%)	106 (31%)	227 (67%)	7 (2%)
Ward 4	50 (49%)	45 (44%)	17 (17%)	77 (39%)	118 (61%)	43 (14%)	274 (86%)	0
Ward 5	46 (79%)	12 (21%)	0	144 (77%)	44 (23%)	64 (75%)	18 (21%)	3 (4%)
Ward 6	40 (77%)	6 (12%)	6 (12%)	132 (78%)	38 (22%)	109 (62%)	66 (38%)	0
Ward 7	30 (22%)	56 (40%)	53 (38%)	14 (23%)	47 (77%)	15 (15%)	44 (44%)	42 (42%)
Ward 8	35 (56%)	13 (21%)	14 (23%)	23 (11%)	185 (89%)	66 (35%)	96 (51%)	26 (14%)
Ward 9	2 (4%)	28 (56%)	20 (40%)	86 (27%)	234 (73%)	95 (18%)	322 (61%)	107 (20%)
Ward 10	12 (92%)	1 (8%)	0	--	--	30 (43%)	39 (57%)	0
Parish	308 (45%)	230 (34%)	139 (21%)	967 (46%)	1127 (54%)	682 (32%)	1233 (59%)	191 (9%)

Source: Federal Census Schedules 1880, 1900, 1920

Labor in St. Tammany Parish, both in terms of occupation and skill level, frequently reified racial boundaries. This was particularly true for farmers, who were predominantly white, and employees of brickworks, who were predominantly Black. Other important industries in St. Tammany allowed for interactions between racial groups that blurred racial boundaries (such as shipbuilding in Madisonville) or resulted in violent confrontation (such as lumber camps or associated businesses). A mobile population of color who did not work as share croppers or tenant farmers and commonly had familial ties with white residents of the parish (in places like Madisonville, for instance—Judge Steve Ellis, personal interview, 8 February 2007) created an atmosphere in which many whites in the parish actively and violently sought to re-establish those racial boundaries.

The association between labor and race in St. Tammany demonstrates the power of a person's work in the shaping and recognition of social identity. Control over labor in terms of wages, housing, skill level, assignment, negotiation, and the *place* of employment then reflects control over elements of social identity. Keeping the color line distinct is clearly something that the lumber companies intended, for instance. In fact, the *ability* to control labor, including a person's own labor, overlaps with the ability to avoid or defy the restrictions associated with racial classification as *Black*. We see this ability reflected in the agriculture in the northern wards of the parish and in the skill of ship carpenters in the southern wards of the parish. In the 1930s, as the lumber companies reduced their operations and workforce, Black labor became less desirable within the parish. The growth of the Black population slowed with reduced opportunities, and Black control of their own terms of employment and occupation concomitantly decreased.

**CHAPTER 5: “A NATURAL SUBURB”: HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, AND RACE IN
ST. TAMMANY PARISH**

INTRODUCTION

Between 1878 and 1956, residents of St. Tammany believed they lived in one of the most—if not *the* most—beautiful and healthful places in the country. Beginning in the 1800s, an abundance of pine trees, numerous natural springs, and picturesque bayous attracted visitors to this area (Baughman 1962). Visitors came for a variety of reasons. Some came to breathe in the “ozone” emitted from the pine trees, which assisted patients in their recovery from respiratory ailments such as tuberculosis. Some came to bathe in or drink water from the springs and rivers, both of which had reputations for being pure and restorative. These waters helped sufferers of digestive malfunction or liver trouble recover from their ailments. Other visitors came for a vacation in the country; relaxing away from the pollution and stresses of urban life protected both physical and mental well-being. Some of these visitors stayed for the summer or a weekend, and others stayed for years.

St. Tammany Parish’s reputation for healthfulness developed within the context of changing ideas about race, economic growth, and environmental protection. This chapter will investigate how these ideas changed between 1878 and 1956. During this time period, the concept of “healthfulness” signified not only the physical health of St. Tammany residents but a healthy community, economy, and *future* of the parish. Residents of St. Tammany (and elsewhere) viewed these facets of health as characteristics that would make the parish indispensable to the economic development of both New Orleans and the South as a whole. These beliefs in the healthfulness of the parish were also predicated on the continued growth and dominance of the white population in the parish. Emerging from nineteenth and early twentieth century medical theory which inextricably lumped together

morality, race, and health, by 1956 St. Tammany parish became a place *for* whites, despite the important presence and contribution of a shrinking population of color within the parish.

HEALTH, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND PERCEPTIONS OF DIFFERENCE

Identity has strong roots in both environment and health. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many people throughout Europe and North America—including the U.S. South—believed that the environment in which a person lived fundamentally affected that person’s identity. Environment could shape a person’s identity by hindering or strengthening morality, industriousness, intelligence, civility, and health. Nineteenth and early twentieth-century societies drew two-way causal connections between these elements of identity and race; therefore, environment could affect a person’s race as well (Valencius 2002, W. Anderson 2003).

Conevery Bolton Valencius (2002) argues that anxieties over identity can be observed in the correspondence of pioneers in the American mid-west and west. In “wild” places without social rules governing behavior or status, racial boundaries became increasingly permeable and fluid. White American settlers often had more in common with their Native or African American neighbors—in terms of livelihood, education, and brown skin color—than with urbanite acquaintances on the East Coast. In other words, according to belief about health during this time period, living and working in uncontrolled or uncontrollable environments made one susceptible to the corrupting and identity-altering features of those environments. Poor soils, strange waters, and miasmas could affect not only a person’s health but could jeopardize a white identity or reify a “colored” one. Poor health led to moral and mental weakness (and vice versa) which were attributes of “inferior” races.

These beliefs about the connections between moral well-being, physical health, and identity applied not only to the environments of the unsettled west but also to the settled urban and rural environments of North America and Europe as well. David Sibley (1992)

shows how many Europeans viewed Gypsies as an unclean race prone to criminality because of their itinerant lifestyle and locations of their camps on the outskirts of town or in empty lots. Their identity as a distinct and separate “race” came in part from perceptions of the type of environments they lived in, their access to clean water and sewerage lines, and cultural differences that other Europeans felt were suspicious and harmful. Anderson (1987, 1988) shows how white Canadians in Vancouver defined Chinese immigrants as nasty, criminal, and unhealthy because of their residence in poorly drained, crowded neighborhoods. Beliefs about the connections between health, morality, and environment at the time caused the Canadian and local governments to deal with those Chinese immigrants as a separate “race” that had distinct sanitation and policing needs, thus reifying racial boundaries. Similarly, Stuart Galishoff (1985) contends that environmental conditions in which Blacks lived in early twentieth century Atlanta—often poorly drained, close- and shoddily- quartered, rampant with disease—became equated with the racial qualities of Black people. Galishoff explains:

The deleterious living conditions of blacks elicited a variety of responses from whites though nearly all agreed that blacks were disease-ridden because they were biologically and morally inferior to whites. This was a sensitive issue for whites, because the subordination of blacks was based, in part, on the belief in their inferiority and inability to take care of themselves. (26)

The environments in which Black people resided became associated with their biological and moral fiber; the diseases they battled were symptomatic of racial weakness and inferiority.

Medical theory and popular wisdom that equated unhealthy living conditions, vulnerability to disease and immorality with race was ubiquitous across North America and Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. By the mid-twentieth century, medical theory had changed significantly to include factors such as segregation and education in determining environmental and medical outcomes; however, in St. Tammany Parish and elsewhere in the South, this had little affect on the racial hierarchy.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT: PINES, OZONE, AND RACE

The Pines and Natural Springs

If history can be described as a meandering path, pine trees have lined the way of much of St. Tammany Parish's history *and* historical geography. The extensive acreage of pine forest shaped economic development, making it a place where people wanted to settle even though farming was difficult. This in part came from the growth of the lumber industry after 1880; the trees themselves provided opportunities to make money, expand business opportunities, and diffuse St. Tammany's reputation for excellent natural resources. The trees also symbolized and promoted health, representing a place with good drainage, a climate that was "green" and healthful all year round, and a rural escape from the gray, polluted landscapes of industrial cities. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, scientific and urban planning theory of the day articulated that the presence of the trees, particularly in urban areas, deterred crime and moral degeneracy by helping to circulate and cleanse the air. These theories thus created a metaphor comparing the health of the population to civil and social health through the medium of the environment (Gandy 2002). Although typically associated with large cities in the North in the late 1800s and early 1900s, promotion of "green" spaces as essential components of a healthy society appealed to boosters in St. Tammany who did not hesitate to entice newcomers with promises of improved health and clean living (20 November 1880 *Farmer*, 4).

St. Tammany's residents frequently submitted pieces to the *Farmer* expressing their reverence for the environment and its connection with the healthful lifestyles of the parish. Lauding the parish's immersion in the idyllic past, one poet dedicated her poetry "to the pines." She wrote, "A Reverie: Oh! Ye grave and stately pines...gone are the heartaches, the crimes, the remorse, the unavailing tears of the later time..." (10 July 1880 *Farmer*, 5). A column promoting the parish listed the environment first in a long list of attractive qualities:

Throughout all the country there cannot be found a more charming place than this, which has been rapidly growing in popularity...as a desirable and healthy locality. The fact is rapidly forcing itself upon the attention of the people of New Orleans and elsewhere....Nature has favored this parish with a rare combination of causes which affect favorable results with unvarying certainty...For several years past many persons who had been under treatment in New Orleans for their diseases, and whose recovery had been despaired of, have, after spending a few short weeks in Covington, in haling our pure piney woods air and drinking the waters of our life-giving springs, returned to the city entirely recovered—imbued, as it were, with a new existence. (20 November 1880 *Farmer*, 4)

These authors clearly drew a line between the rural, healthful environment of St. Tammany and the stressful, urban life of their neighbor across the lake in New Orleans, a place “unsafe for an honest man from the piney woods” (21 August 1880 *Farmer*, 4). One reason for this difference was the pine trees. The pine trees emitted a gas—“ozone”—which cleansed the lungs of the polluted air of the city and helped cure tuberculosis and other diseases by destroying “miasmatic and malarious gases and emanations disengaged from putrefying animal and vegetable substances” (Pickford 1858, 68). Although other places in the South had reputations for health based in part on their location in the “ozone belt” (Dunbar 1966), scientific tests conducted in the late nineteenth century confirmed that St. Tammany—and specifically Mandeville—had the highest concentrations of ozone in Louisiana and perhaps the entire country (4 September 1886 *Farmer*, 4; 26 August 1893 *Farmer*, 4).

The importance of the pine trees and ozone did not stop with the human body. It actually extended beyond an individual body into the larger community. According to medical theory of the late 1800s, ozone not only cleansed the lungs of particulates and infection; it cleansed *society* of criminality and immorality. For instance, Dr. C. Hamilton Tebault of New Orleans developed and promoted a theory that ozone was “not only a germ destroyer, but an acknowledged elixir of exhilaration and hopefulness.” According to the theory,

The community that lives in an area free from disease germs, that feels that life is hopeful, has a physical and mental optimistic strength that is impregnable to disease, immorality or despondent thoughts. (16 October 1897 *Farmer*, 4)

Interestingly, this theory of association between morality, health, and crime in part was based on the positive effect that electric lights (an improvement of modern society) had in London. Because of the tenuous understanding of how specific diseases were spread, some doctors believed that electric lights emitted the same type of pure oxygen—ozone—as the pine trees. According to W.G. Kentzel, editor of the *St. Tammany Farmer*, “It is easy to understand that electric plants, electric lights and pine trees that exhale or create ozone, the purest atmospherical conditions possible, should mitigate or kill the power of germ life” (16 October 1897 *Farmer*, 4). The germ- and hopelessness-killing ozone also was reputed to kill the germ that caused yellow fever. This association explained in part the reason for St. Tammany’s health (compared to New Orleans) during the 1878 and 1897 outbreaks in a time before public health officials in the U.S. understood that mosquitoes transmitted the disease (Grob 2002).

The peak period of lumber company investment and the Louisiana Board of Health’s mosquito control resolutions in the early 1900s (19 March 1904 *Farmer*, 4; 29 July 1905 *Farmer*, 4) although seemingly unrelated, together had very significant effects on the environment of St. Tammany Parish: they justified the cutting of the pine trees. In light of the revenue the lumber companies provided to a very rural parish, combined with advancing expertise on disease control, cutting the pines—perhaps the most significant aspect of St. Tammany’s healthful environment—became acceptable. The health giving aspects of the pines became less valuable than the revenue provided by their felling. In any case, the lumber companies and their supporters wielded more power than those who opposed them. By the 1920s, many residents were so inured to seeing denuded landscapes and so

enthusiastic about Satsuma and strawberry crops, they fought the Great Southern Lumber Company's efforts at reforestation (29 November 1924 *Farmer*, 1). Not until the height of the Great Depression in 1936 when St. Tammany desperately needed any tax revenue it could get from the Great Southern Lumber Company, did the parish sign a reforestation contract allowing for seedlings to be planted on deforested land (Myrick 1960).

ST. TAMMANY'S MOST PROMISING INDUSTRY
Mackie Pine Products Company
 COVINGTON, LA.
 Producers of
Turpentine, Pine Oils, Rosin Oils, Rosin, Navy Pitch

Buyers of Pine Tar

A Pure Vegetable Oil
 from
 St. Tammany Pine Trees

Cattle Spray
 and
 Stock Remedy

Mackie's Medicinal Pine Oil Soothes, Heals and
 Strengthens. A perfect Antiseptic. A Natural
 Germicide and Disinfectant. Best remedy
 for home, factory, barn, for every emergency.

FIGURE 5.1. MACKIE PINE PRODUCTS COMPANY AD, 1916; SOURCE: *ST. TAMMANY FARMER* 14 OCTOBER 1916, 2

St. Tammany's embrace of lumber companies did not mean that residents or medical professionals jettisoned the idea of the pines imparting health benefits. Instead, they focused on the *sale* of the health properties of those pines in the form of pine oil and other "sanitary" products. For instance, one of the biggest producers of pine products in the parish the Mackie Pine Products Company sold not only naval stores but Medicinal Pine Oil and Pinexo Disinfectant. Medicinal Pine Oil could be used as a salve or balm, was especially good to mix with white pine tar and use as an analgesic, or could be mixed with syrup to take

as a cough medicine. The Mackie Pine Products Company marketed Pinexo Disinfectant to use as a household cleaner as well as a spray for cattle to repel ticks and mosquitoes and control skin infections (Figure 5.1). After the infamous worldwide influenza outbreak in 1918, fears about the spread of flu were understandably heightened. The Mackie Pine Products Company took advantage of public health awareness by claiming that their products prevented the flu (Figure 5.2) (14 October 1914 *Farmer*, 2; 7 February 1920 *Farmer*, 5).

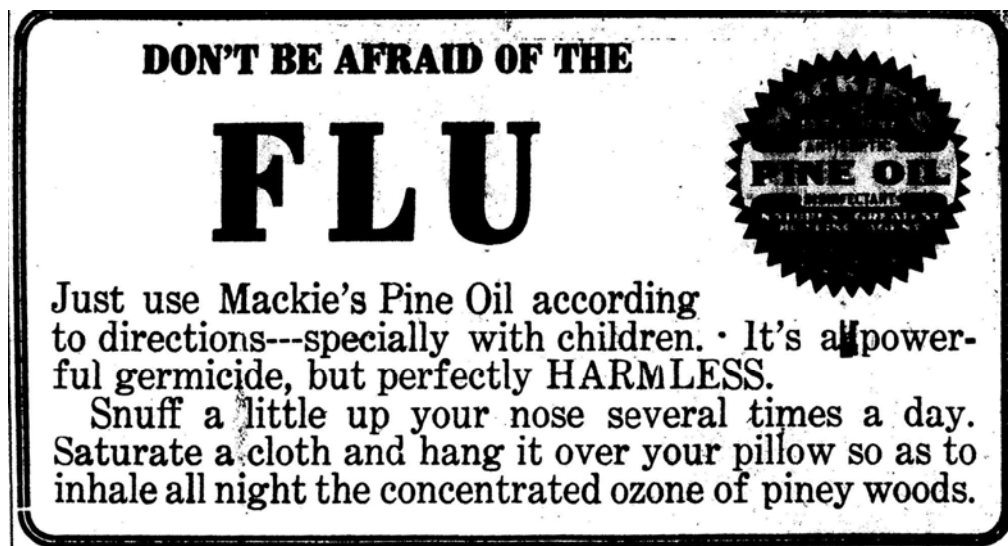


FIGURE 5.2. MACKIE PINE PRODUCTS AD, 1920; SOURCE: *ST. TAMMANY FARMER* 7 FEBRUARY 1920, 5

The sale of the healthful essence of the pines also continued in the establishment of sanatoria and hotels within the parish. Business owners could buy tracts of land with numerous pine trees and build sanatoria, hospitals designed for the treatment of tuberculosis, and hotels; these lands would then be protected from deforestation unless the owner wished to sell the lumber. In this way, the type of immersion in ozone recommended by doctors could be achieved by white tuberculosis patients and tourists. For example, in 1912, Doctor F.F. Young purchased the Southern Hotel in the heart of Covington to be converted into a tuberculosis sanatorium—"The Fenwick." A year later, the doctor sold the hotel and

purchased a tract of land called “The Oaks” on the outskirts of Covington (which may have been a hotel or large home) to expand his sanatorium business (15 June 1912 *Farmer*, 1; 13 September 1913 *Farmer*, 1). The reputation of places like the Fenwick Sanatorium as successful treatment facilities and the popularity of hotels in St. Tammany demonstrate how white doctors and businessmen sold the health-giving properties of the pines to white patrons.

After the 1930s, with the increasing likelihood of war, and into the 1940s during World War II, protection of the pines became a priority for residents within the parish. In part, residents viewed protection of a natural resource as patriotism. St. Tammany contributed naval stores and lumber to the war effort, and since so much land in St. Tammany was covered in young, second-growth trees, many residents were very concerned with protecting both those areas and areas of old-growth forest for future use. This environmental policy had more to do with the sale of an important commodity than protection of the pines for the sake of their beauty or healthful qualities, as it did throughout much of the South. Federal conservation programs of the 1930s—such as the Civilian Conservation Corps (which in St. Tammany worked primarily putting out forest fires)—followed closely behind lumber company strategies of “efficient use,” which focused on scientific management principals and reducing waste to help secure future lumber supplies (Cowdrey 1983; Clark 1984; Williams 1989; Walker 1991).

In the 1940s and 1950s, as a part of the “efficient use” doctrine and reforestation goals, parish and state officials battled woods fires more intensely than in the previous 60 years. And in opposition to the “efficient use” doctrine of lumber companies and increased control of common grazing lands, arsonists set more fires than ever (Kuhlken 1999). Forestry Commission reports indicate that the arsonists justifiably scrutinized lumber company control of land: three of the top four forest landowners in St. Tammany were

lumber companies, together controlling 25 percent of the total forest land in the parish (Louisiana Forestry Commission 1947, 72-73). The Louisiana Division of Forestry began a regular advertising campaign against woods burning and aggressively prosecuted cases in which they could find witnesses. They focused their efforts on the “record-setting seven,” parishes, which included St. Tammany and her neighbor to the west, Tangipahoa (Burns 1968, 94). Prior to 1945, district court judges typically assigned convicted arsonists to 30 days in jail and a \$25.00 fine or an additional 30 days in jail. To help assist in the prosecution of these cases, the Division of Forestry purchased blood hound pups and hired a legal team. In 1942, the District Attorney in St. Tammany Parish warned that since the federal government had declared woods burning an “act of sabotage” during a time of war, he would request a sentence of no less than three months in prison for those who set fire to the woods. By 1947, the Police Jury, adopting State Forestry Commission recommendations, had increased the fine to \$300 (11 July 1941 *Farmer*, 1; 27 November 1942 *Farmer*, 1; 25 March 1945 *Farmer*, 6; Burns 1968, 53).

After World War II, the number of fires set in St. Tammany increased dramatically, and the State Forestry Commission appointed a parish forester to organize fire crews in response to the blazes (31 March 1950 *Farmer*, 1). A rash of fires set between 1947 and 1950 kept fire crews scrambling to put them out, particularly during the spring and winter seasons. State Forestry Commission officials estimated that in the 1949-1950 winter season 467 fires burned over 20,000 acres in St. Tammany Parish alone—the largest number for any parish in the state and a 100 percent increase over the previous year (14 April 1950 *Farmer*, 1). The following year, the State Forestry Commission began an educational campaign in St. Tammany called “Operation Fire-Flee,” which distributed information and films to schools and churches in St. Tammany to encourage residents to work to prevent forest fires (Burns 1968, 71). Figure 5.3 depicts a “devilish” character starting fires in St. Tammany, as printed

in a Louisiana Forestry Commission Bulletin of 1946. The “fire-bug” warns Assistant State Forester Mixon that he will set fires in the upcoming spring fire season.



FIGURE 5.3. A “FIRE-BUG” IN ST. TAMMANY PARISH; SOURCE: *LOUISIANA FORESTRY COMMISSION BULLETIN*, FEBRUARY 1946, NO. 2

Much of the responsibility for setting fires lay with *white* farmers determined to continue their agricultural practices of burning the woods regardless of ownership or government control, which may have reflected older traditions of independence, violence, and agricultural practices of the upland South (Chapter 4). Increased fire regulations and punishment forced a number of sheep farmers in the parish to leave the business (Louisiana Forestry Commission, September 1946), while other sheep and dairymen continued to set fire to the woods for their herds or as an act of protest (Hansbrough 1963, Kuhlken 1999). *Farmer* comments that “the most successful dairymen have learned that woods fires destroy the range and have quit the practice of firing the woodlands” suggest that the public perceived *white dairy farmers* as the culprits (17 February 1950 *Farmer*, 1), but the sheriff nevertheless arrested for incendiarism numerous individuals of varying occupations and races. For example, the sheriff arrested a white bricklayer from New Orleans for setting one of the largest blazes in the parish, and the *Farmer* reported that he could be fined up to

\$10,000 and 20 years in the state penitentiary. The sheriff also arrested a “colored” man for fire trespass, and he was given two months in jail and a \$100 fine (28 April 1950, 1).

Thomas Hansbrough (1963) explains the gap between public perception and actual arrests by arguing that the goal of incendiarism was different for white and Black rural residents. Rural white residents of the piney woods believed they had rights to use the woods for agriculture, regardless of ownership. Woods fires set by whites were largely purposeful and often symbolic gestures of their determination not to acquiesce to lumber company control—in other words, a claim of proprietorship. Rural Black residents, on the other hand, set fires much less frequently but largely out of neglect because they felt no sense of responsibility for ownership of the woods (ibid., 25-26). In St. Tammany, a parish known for its battle against forest fires, woods fires therefore had a racialized origin and outcome; since far fewer residents of African descent owned their land or raised herds, the battle over incendiarism (and forest conservation at the hands of white government officials and business owners) ultimately had ties with white identity.

The struggle over forest conservation after the decline of the lumber companies included another viewpoint between conserving the trees for future sale and burning them for agricultural uses. Beginning with the New Deal policies in the 1930s, ideas about forest conservation in St. Tammany began to include the protection of the trees for their beauty and use by visitors and residents. Much of this renewed interest in conservation coincided with the availability of federal funds to create public parks. This was true throughout the South (Cowdrey 1983, Williams 1989) and in St. Tammany as well. Just five short years after the Great Southern Lumber Company withdrew its initial petition to reforest denuded lands following strong opposition in the parish (22 February 1930 *Farmer*, 1; 15 March 1930 *Farmer*, 1), the federal government began the preliminary legwork to develop a national park

rimming Lake Pontchartrain. This area was to be a “means toward preserving pine forest” and a “New Orleans urban park” (22 February 1935 *Farmer*, 1).

While the excitement over this park seems to disagree with parish intentions to prevent reforestation, the land surrounding Lake Pontchartrain never had as much value for agriculture as the land (much of it owned by the Great Southern Lumber Company) in the north end of the parish. Additionally, government estimates at the time tempted local residents with the possibility of a \$83,000 monthly payroll for upkeep and protection of the Knott (or Nott) tract, just east of Mandeville. This tract of land held special mystique and beauty for St. Tammany residents because it was covered with old pine growth and was the home of “famous French noblemen who maintained palatial homes” and even hosted James Audubon during his studies. Likely correct rumors abounded that the Great Southern Lumber Company, who owned the land (and who had quite a demonized reputation), would ruin the trees by “boxing” them for turpentine (22 February 1935 *Farmer*, 1).

Plans for this massive park around Lake Pontchartrain fell through very quickly after initial interest, and St. Tammany Parish instead offered the federal government a 500 acre tract south of Madisonville on the Lake to develop a park (26 July 1935 *Farmer*, 1). This plan never materialized. After disappointingly slow action by the federal government, in February of 1938, the Louisiana Department of Conservation purchased 6000 acres of Great Southern Lumber Company land including the revered Knott tract. Details later emerged that Governor Richard Leche himself had issued an order for Great Southern to cease “slaughtering this magnificent forest” until arrangements with the state government could be made (4 February 1938 *Farmer*, 1). St. Tammany residents and Governor Leche believed that this park, originally named the Tchefuncte State Park (later Fontainebleau State Park), would attract many visitors every year from New Orleans and Bogalusa (15 July 1938 *Farmer*, 1) and showcase the beauty and healthfulness of St. Tammany’s environment.

Debate about the use, conservation, and healthful qualities of the pine trees changed between 1878 and 1956, but St. Tammany's water was also a very important part of the picture of health. St. Tammany had abundant rivers, bayous, streams, lakes, and natural springs, all of which had reputed health-restoring qualities. A promotional column in the *Farmer* in 1880 described the mineral waters of the parish as "exceedingly beneficial in cases of consumption, catarrh, bronchitis, and all other diseases of the lungs and throat" (20 November 1880 *Farmer*, 5). Visitors to the Abita Springs sought relief of dyspepsia, liver diseases, and problems with the urinary system. They found relief by drinking and bathing in the waters (8 July 1882 *Farmer*, 4).

St. Tammany residents considered their water so healthful compared to the municipal water supply in New Orleans, in 1882 the General Assembly considered a bill that would allow St. Tammany to supply New Orleans with drinking water from the Bogue Falaya (1 July 1882 *Farmer*, 5). New Orleans drinking water came from the Mississippi River, which appeared to St. Tammany residents (and probably many New Orleanians as well) as a "mud soup." An engineer visited the Bogue Falaya and remarkably ascertained that the river—even in its dry stage—had enough flow to provide "pure, soft drinking water" for one million people in New Orleans (29 July 1882 *Farmer*, 4; New Orleans Waterworks Company 1883, 6). The New Orleans Waterworks Company sued the St. Tammany Waterworks Company, and the U.S. Supreme Court eventually decided in favor of the New Orleans Waterworks with the justification that the Louisiana bill favoring St. Tammany water violated national law against impairing the obligations of existing contracts (in this case with the New Orleans Waterworks Company) (New Orleans Waterworks Company 1886, 1). Editor Kentzel of the *Farmer* discommended, "Thus another great monopoly has been perpetuated in New Orleans" (15 January 1887, 4).

St. Tammany's pure water supply enticed many white visitors from New Orleans around the country to visit and bathe in or drink the waters in the 1800s and early 1900s. This reflected a national fascination with natural springs that lasted until about the 1920s (Lawrence 1983, Geores 1998, Valenza 2000). Physicians of the late nineteenth century commonly recommended bathing in or drinking mineral water to patients with stomach troubles, inflammation, liver disease, intestinal disorders, and sinus and lung afflictions (Moorman 1873). Typical prescriptions included lengthy stays at spas where patients could take moderate amounts of water daily while following a regimen of moderate exercise, rest, and healthful food (Moorman 1873).

Part of the fascination in the springs in St. Tammany (and elsewhere in the country) hinged on increasing public interest in American Indians. In the early 1900s, increasingly glamorized ideas of the simplicity, mysticism, and purity of Native American's existence imbued promotional materials advertising the springs (Geores 1998, Valenza 2000). Postcards and local historical materials featuring the "Famous Abita Springs" made parallels between current tourism and the Choctaw's use of the spring for healing and spiritual practices (Austin 2005). Ironically, by 1920 the census counted only 10 people in the whole parish as "Indian," and it is likely that the majority of individuals with Choctaw ancestry in 1920 and thereafter would have been classified as "Black" or "mulatto." These individuals would not have been allowed to use the "Famous Abita Springs."

Under Jim Crow laws and practices, people of African descent had no access to the mineral springs in St. Tammany because white individuals owned and operated them in conjunction with hotels designated for whites. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps produced between 1921 and 1930 of Mandeville, Covington, Abita Springs, and Slidell designate no boarding houses or hotels as "colored," but the Map Company clearly indicated churches, dance halls, and schools for the population of color (Sanborn Map Company 1921, 1922,

1926, 1930). For this reason it is highly unlikely that wealthy individuals of African descent in New Orleans or elsewhere (unless passing for white or staying with relatives or friends) came to St. Tammany for health reasons or for vacations. Many probably took advantage of segregated bathing and boating facilities that existed on the lakefront in New Orleans (Baughman 1962, 15). Other wealthy families of color in New Orleans traveled north to resorts such as Sarasota Springs, Newport, or Coney Island where they could more easily find lodging and a number of Black resorts flourished (Sterngass 2001, 106). Even in the north, resort destinations and facilities were typically segregated (Hart 1960, Sterngass 2001).

By the 1930s, and particularly during the Great Depression, much of the country's fascination with natural springs began to wither. And by the 1940s, improvements in medicine such as the discovery of antibiotics and methods of sanitation (Grob 2002) had made natural springs somewhat obsolete as medical therapy (Valenza 2000). Tourism to the Abita Springs had dropped off dramatically by the 1940s after questions about the sanitary condition of the springs. In an attempt to reinvigorate tourism to the area, in 1949 the Louisiana Parks Commission declared its intention to buy the springs, reactivate the flow, and build a "shrine" around it for public visitation (4 March 1949 *Farmer*, 1).

Despite the declining importance of the natural springs as a tourist attract, tourism continued and even strengthened in the parish in the 1940s and early 1950s. Tourists now arrived from New Orleans in cars, and instead of staying for a summer or weeks at a time, they stayed for the day (6 July 1956 *Farmer*, 1). This caused the hotel business in St. Tammany to drop off significantly, and the majority of the more famous hotels in western St. Tammany had gone out of business or limped along (Judge Steve Ellis, personal interview 8 February 2007).

Black New Orleanians likely began making day-long outings to the North Shore more frequently as well, although newspaper accounts indicate that white and Black

swimming areas, picnic facilities, and fishing piers were completely segregated (see 7 October 1955 *Farmer*, 1, for instance). Demand for a “Negro” park was so strong, that in 1956 Black leaders asked the Police Jury to petition the State Parks Commission for the creation of a park and swimming area on the lakefront near Bayou Lacombe. This increase in interest in state parks for Black families occurred throughout the South, and parks commissions began to address the inequality in access to these resources by developing a limited number of segregated park facilities for people of African descent. Across the South in 1952, only twelve state parks (out of 192 total) allowed Black visitors, none of which was located in Louisiana (O’Brien 2007, 167-169).

These Black leaders in St. Tammany shrewdly asked for a piece of land that State already owned as a game and wildlife refuge. The Police Jury decided that a better location would be closer to the existing Fontainebleu State Park so the two parks could share maintenance and supervisory resources. The Police Jury soon reverted to the original plan after white residents of Big Branch along highway 190 complained that a “Negro” park would devalue their property (16 March 1956 *Farmer*, 1; 20 April 1956 *Farmer*, 1; 4 May 1956 *Farmer*, 1).

Hotels and Hospitals: The Color of Health

The natural springs, clean waters, and ozone-emitting pine trees all created an atmosphere of health in St. Tammany that appealed to both residents and visitors. As alluded to in the previous section, an “industry” of treatment facilities, hotels, and eventually hospitals sprang up in the parish to take advantage of beliefs in the healthfulness of this sector (Ellis 1981, Austin 2005). The idea that St. Tammany was unique in both the South and the entire country because of its health and climate made its way into the many promotional materials and newspaper accounts printed between 1878 and 1956 (i.e. Sanford 1905). Covington in particular, in part because of the fact that the *Farmer* was based here,

received significant acclaim and brandished the title of being the “Healthiest Place in America” (Figure 5.4) based on U.S. Vital Statistics (19 February 1910 *Farmer*, 1). While lower population densities and better drainage in the rural parish probably reduced the outbreak of epidemics, residents of the parish and elsewhere tied the healthfulness of their parish to the environment. The *St. Tammany Farmer* declared that Covington, facing the yellow fever epidemics with courage and humanity, had never refused entry to anyone from New Orleans (2 October 1897, 4). The newspaper even claimed that after the influx of New Orleanians during the yellow fever outbreaks, Covington never saw an increase in doctors because they did not need them (19 June 1880 *Farmer*, 5).



FIGURE 5.4. CAPTION: COVINGTON, LA. THE HEALTHIEST PLACE IN THE WORLD; SOURCE: *ST. TAMMANY FARMER* 19 FEBRUARY 1910, 1

While the claims of healthfulness of the residents in the parish largely applied to individuals from all racial groups, the extension of hospitality and the willingness to accommodate medical “refugees” applied primarily to whites. Events between 1878 and 1956 show that St. Tammany residents (probably primarily white) consistently fought treatment facilities for those racial groups they considered to be dangerous or unwanted in the parish. And in fact St. Tammany did face some significant health problems in all racial groups during this time period; however, racial beliefs about the Black population in particular affected how white St. Tammany residents reacted to the health issues of those people.

This time period covered by this research begins in 1878 for two reasons. In 1878 white Southerners voted out of office the majority of Republican politicians (both white and Black) that the federal government had put in place as a part of Reconstruction politics. And second, New Orleans faced a terrible yellow fever epidemic that year, and many New Orleanians fled the city for the North Shore. The coverage of the yellow fever epidemic (in which approximately 4000 people died from the fever) in the *St. Tammany Farmer* was remarkably spotty (or even absent) for such a significant event. In March of 1879 Editor Kentzel wrote of the epidemic:

It would scarcely be possible to find a more healthy locality, in any country, than St. Tammany. The cholera has never been here, that we are aware of; but we believe there were a few cases of yellow fever in Covington, years ago, although it was imported and never spread. While the fever was raging in New Orleans last year, Covington proved an harbor of safety for many refugees, and not a single case of fever occurred here; we established no quarantine against New Orleans, and persons were passing back and forth all the time. (15 March 1879, 4)

Over 40,000 people fled New Orleans in 1878 (Trask 2005, 81), with thousands traveling to St. Tammany. The influx in 1878 was so large that business owners began construction of housing to better accommodate large numbers of refugees in the future (22 March 1879 *Farmer*, 5). In July of 1879, with the emergence of a number of cases of yellow fever in New Orleans, the *Farmer* announced that Covington's health was "still good" and that plenty of rooms were available for New Orleanians (2 August 1879 *Farmer*, 4).

The hotel business expanded significantly during this time period, particularly with the increased interest in the visitation of natural springs. Hotels such as the Long Branch and the "Famous Abita Springs" Hotel (owned by the Bossier family—in fact, some called this part of Abita "Bossier City") sprang up in Abita, which was not yet an incorporated town. Claiborne Cottage and Mulberry Grove hotels near Covington also took advantage of nearby natural springs and healthful environments to attract visitors (Ellis 1981, Austin 2005,

19 June 1880 *Farmer*, 4). As the lumber and railroad companies constructed railroads across the parish in the late 1880s, they too participated in the hotel boom in St. Tammany; the Poitevant and Favre Lumber Company built a facility in Abita Springs at the terminus of its new line, and the New Orleans and North Eastern Railroad built a hotel and summer houses just off its line at Bayou Bonfouca in Slidell (22 March 1884 *Farmer*, 5; 22 December 1888 *Farmer*, 4). Mandeville, despite its lack of railroad connections during this early period, also had new hotels and a stage line that connected it with both Abita Springs and Covington (9 April 1887 *Farmer*, 4).

In 1897, New Orleans experienced another outbreak of yellow fever, and this time parts of St. Tammany enforced a partial quarantine against New Orleans. Mandeville adopted a “modified quarantine” against New Orleans citizens; this required a person entering Mandeville to “be provided with a certificate to the effect that he is in good health; that he has not been in contact with any one affected with yellow fever; [and] that he has not been within any quarantined locality in the city of New Orleans...” (9 October 1897 *Farmer*, 4). Mandeville officials placed armed guards at the main roads entering the town to enforce the modified quarantine. The modified quarantine allowed the town to accept visitors (and dollars!) from New Orleans that appeared healthy and had the resources to obtain such certificates. Of course, the effectiveness of this quarantine is questionable considering Covington continued its “no quarantine” policy toward New Orleans; however, there were no recorded cases of yellow fever in St. Tammany that year. Despite Mandeville’s modified quarantine, between 3000 and 4000 fled from New Orleans to the North Shore (Mandeville included) in the summer and early Fall of 1897, nearly a 33 percent temporary increase of the total parish population (16 October 1897 *Farmer*, 4). These visitors, very likely white New Orleanians of some means, would have filled the hotels and boarding houses, rented rooms with farmers, or stayed with relatives and friends.

New Orleans witnessed its last big yellow fever outbreak in 1905, but by this time, the State Board of Health developed a program of containment based on mosquito control (19 March 1904 *Farmer*, 4; 29 July 1905 *Farmer*, 4). During this outbreak, St. Tammany nominally kept its famous “open door” policy with New Orleans, but parish officials nevertheless turned away a “rush of Sicilians, *presumably* from the infected district” and forced them to return to New Orleans on the train (29 July 1905 *Farmer*, 5, emphasis added). The *Farmer* made no mention of other groups of people being turned away, but St. Tammany’s blocking of the Sicilians reflects the findings of the State Board of Health which considered the poor living conditions and immoral propensities of the Sicilians—as a race—to be the cause of the outbreak of yellow fever in New Orleans (Edwards-Simpson 1996). The ultimate outcome of this was that St. Tammany provided a health refuge—in fact *functioned* as a health refuge—for white people exclusively.

This event demonstrates two significant elements in perceptions of health in St. Tammany by 1905. The first is that advances in public health knowledge began to erode St. Tammany’s claim to health based solely its natural resources; maintenance of health now required action and control on the part of town and parish administrations. And second, perceptions (constructions) of race informed the public health policies of both town and parish administrations.

If business owners intended the hotels to attract visitors looking for a healthful place to reside during the summer months and perhaps avoid diseases like yellow fever, sanitarium attracted patients with chronic illnesses—tuberculosis in particular. However, the term sanitarium (or sanatorium) applied not only to places designed for convalescence but for the maintenance of general health as well, places where residents could enjoy fresh air, clean water, and safe living conditions. Between 1878 and 1956, business owners in St. Tammany opened these treatment facilities and living areas primarily for whites and almost exclusively

in the southern part of the parish. This area had the most amenities and economic development in the towns; however, white developers and business owners had to plan for the fact that this area of the parish was also where their white patients would cross paths and interact with residents of color (Chapter 3). Despite the association with whiteness and health, the most desirable locations for these treatment centers existed very near many of the Black communities of the parish. The health resort industry therefore functioned behind color lines but existed in areas of the parish with a significant number of Black residents and likely hired Black employees.

During the late 1800s and well into the 1900s, sanitarium popped up in many places in St. Tammany parish. One of the first “sanitarium” in 1888 was not a treatment facility but a subdivision outside of the town limits referred to as “New Covington.” This was a development west of Jefferson Street and south of the railroad tracks (Chapter 3), and in contrast to the “old” Covington, New Covington was completely segregated based on race (U.S. Census Bureau 1920). The St. Tammany Land and Improvement Company advertised the lots as healthy and desirable with views of romantic and beautiful scenery: “Everything that health demands and pleasure desires is to be found at this place” (21 January 1888 *Farmer*, 4). In addition, the company explained that New Covington was located “right at the door of New Orleans” (21 January 1888 *Farmer*, 4).

Other sanitarium and health resorts opened in the parish as well. Frequently the idea of vacationing and improving one’s health were equally powerful, inseparable ideas in the function of these destinations; thus, there existed no clear line between visiting these resorts for health reasons or visiting for relaxation and fun. For example, Pineland Park and Fairview Resort opened near Madisonville on the Tchefuncte River, and individuals or families who needed a healthful respite from city life could rent rooms at these locations, eat

sanitary food, and play outdoors in the ozone-laden air (27 March 1897 *Farmer*, 4; 12 June 1897 *Farmer*, 5).

Another residential venture that began in May of 1900 southeast of Covington included the purchase of 11,000 acres on the railroad line, plans to erect a large hotel, a sanitary dairy, and bathing houses. The developer, Colonel J.W. Stickle of Huntsville, Alabama, intended to build a “modern suburban town there, forty-five miles from New Orleans.” Considered both a health resort and a sanitarium, the new town, “St. Tammany,” would provide “a summer home of New Orleans people and the winter retreat of Northern people.” (5 May 1900 *Farmer*, 5; 24 November 1900 *Farmer*, 4). A year later, this massive development, now owned by a company headquartered in New Orleans, had been divided into plots for sale. According to the plan, residents of the proposed town would have access to healthful streams and artesian springs, “perfect sanitation,” a natatorium, parks, schools, a sanitary dairy, and gardens of fresh vegetables in addition to retaining many of the pine trees on the property. A 500 acre sanitarium with hotels and cottages for tuberculars would lie adjacent to the town (28 December 1901 *Farmer*, 4). Despite promises that the “Adirondack-style” homes would be financially accessible to everyone (1 March 1902 *Farmer*, 4), it is likely that the St. Tammany Health Homes Company first marketed the lots to wealthy New Orleans doctors and residents. The company paid for excursions for New Orleans physicians and their wives to tour the development, and they ensured potential buyers that the hotel on the property would be a first-class hotel operated by A.R. Blakely of the St. Charles Hotel in New Orleans. St. Tammany Health Homes Company also promised to open an attractive office on Canal Street for business transactions, where fresh buttermilk and St. Tammany water would be available as well as a maid to attend to the ladies (3 May 1902 *Farmer*, 5). The company sold a few houses, built a large pavilion, and even opened a post office, but—despite promises of thousands of residents within two years—by 1905 St.

Tammany Health Homes filed for bankruptcy and sold the land back to the Poitevaut and Favre Lumber Company (Ellis 1981, 193).

The growth and development of the health industry in St. Tammany Parish also included more intensive treatment facilities—not just places to vacation and improve one’s health, but hospitals (also called “sanitaria”) designed for the treatment and long-term care of tuberculars, particularly after 1905. This coincided with the formation of the National Tuberculosis Association in 1904, which worked to disseminate knowledge of the bacterial origin and treatment of the disease (Pattison 1943, 3). Before the discovery of antibiotics, early medical treatment for tuberculosis usually consisted of isolation from the uninfected, submersion in healthy environments, long periods of rest broken up by mild exercise, and consumption of large amounts of eggs and milk (Pattison 1943, 8). The irony of the milk prescription is that other types of tuberculosis—primarily intestinal and meningeal—often occurred with the drinking of milk infected with bovine tuberculosis; but these types of tuberculosis never received the same type of attention as tuberculosis of the lungs, whose treatment was often far more romantic and appealing (Dormandy 2000). Nevertheless, medical professionals viewed St. Tammany as an ideal place for the location of sanitarium with its clean air and water, mild climate, and plentiful yields of fresh dairy products.

Several of these intensive treatment centers opened in St. Tammany in the early 1900s, and at the same time, public concern grew over the treatment of indigent people affected with the disease. In 1907, the Louisiana chapter of the National Anti-Tuberculosis League purchased a tract of land very near the abandoned town of St. Tammany to be used for the establishment of a sanitarium. This sanitarium may have been the first in St. Tammany with the desire to help indigent cases and did so with the help of several doctors from New Orleans who volunteered their services (23 February 1907 *Farmer*, 5).

Perhaps the most famous sanitarium in St. Tammany, Dr. F. Fenwick Young opened the Fenwick Sanitarium in Covington in 1912 (15 June 1912 *Farmer*, 1). Although locally renowned and boosted by the *Farmer*, Oscar Dowling, president of the Louisiana State Board of Health had reservations about the effectiveness of Dr. Young's treatment regimens. In 1918, Dr. Young sued Dr. Dowling for slander after Dowling publicly announced that Young's ineptitude had killed his wife's first husband and that the Fenwick Sanitarium should be "closed up and not allowed to run." Dowling's attorneys filed a motion to dismiss the charges as "vague and indefinite." While no record exists concerning the outcome of the case, Dowling continued to serve as head of the State Board of Health and the Fenwick Sanitarium continued to treat patients (*Twenty-sixth Judicial District Court*, 1918, No. 1242).

Although these intensive treatment facilities arrived in the parish after 1905, the potential treatment of the indigent population and increased awareness of how the tuberculosis bacterium spread caused a shift in public opinion. No longer did the townspeople of the parish encourage business owners to open "sanitaria" within town limits to promote economic development; rather, they now demanded that measures be taken to isolate the sanitaria outside of the town limits and follow strict sanitary guidelines (26 February 1910 *Farmer*, 4; 24 September 1910 *Farmer*, 4). Some debated whether new strict measures would discourage those who needed help from coming to the parish, but others felt that some type of legal precautions were needed to enforce the segregation of these tuberculars "of moderate means" from the rest of the population (26 February 1910 *Farmer*, 4; 24 September 1910 *Farmer*, 4). In 1911 Editor Mason of the *Farmer*, referring to Covington's reputation for health, remarked, "With the growth of our town and the crowding together of houses and people we cannot expect this immunity to continue without the greatest sanitary precautions" (6 May 1911, 2). He rebuked businessmen in Covington for encouraging "invalids" to come into the town to spend money and ignoring

public health concerns about the spread of tuberculosis (6 May 1911 *Farmer*, 2). Telling of the push to move sanitarium outside the town limits, the Fenwick Sanitarium, once located in the Southern Hotel in downtown Covington, moved its location to the outskirts of town in order to expand its operation (13 September 1913 *Farmer*, 1).

Despite public interest in protecting themselves by legally segregating tuberculars from the general population, the Covington Town Council did not take any measures for six years after this initial outcry. The multiple boarding houses and hotels within the town limits greatly concerned many town residents because tuberculosis patients had been known to stay in these places rather than endure the strict regimes of the sanitarium. Local doctor J.W. Durel, in 1917, urged the Covington Town Council and the Covington Association of Commerce to pass protective laws. He argued that if consumptives entered boarding houses and hotels indiscriminately, soon no physician would be able to recommend Covington as healthful retreat (20 January 1917 *Farmer*, 1). Within a month, the Town Council passed an ordinance requiring boarding houses and hotels to properly “dispose of sputum or saliva or other bodily secretions or excretions of persons having tuberculosis” and prohibiting hotels and boarding houses from “admitting or hiring anyone with tuberculosis of the lungs or larynx” (17 February 1917 *Farmer*, 1). By 1920, perhaps seeing some loopholes in the original ordinance, the Covington Board of Health issued an ordinance making it unlawful for any “person, firm, or corporation to house for pay any consumptive within 1500 feet of the parish court building” (23 October 1920 *Farmer*, 1).

Although the public and local officials required that sanitarium now be located at a distance from congested town areas, public opinion did favor the establishment of a treatment facility for poor individuals suffering from tuberculosis. This facility, called Camp Hygeia and founded by the King’s Daughters organization, took in and provided care for white, indigent individuals suffering with tuberculosis. Despite the public’s increased

interest in reaching out across class lines to treat tuberculosis and other ailments, this interest did not cross racial lines.

Between the 1880s and 1950s, St. Tammany Parish had and promoted a reputation for healthfulness and generosity when it came to helping others—particularly New Orleanians—in times of medical crises. This reputation, however, can clearly only be applied to those individuals considered “white.” On multiple occasions, parish officials rejected attempts to establish medical or treatment facilities for “colored” or “Negro” individuals. The first of these incidents occurred in 1894 with the selection of a location for a leper (sufferers of Hansen’s Disease) hospital in Louisiana. The hospital committee originally selected Fort Pike (an abandoned military fort near New Orleans and the Rigolets) as the site for the hospital, a choice which Editor Kentzel of the *Farmer*, probably representing a number of voices in St. Tammany, vehemently opposed: “It is to their interest, as well as that of all classes of our citizens, to protest against the establishment of the leper hospital in our parish or on its borders, and say in an unmistakable tone, IT MUST NOT BE!” (26 May 1894 *Farmer*, 4, emphasis original). *The Farmer*, following a *New Orleans Daily States* article, quoted a man named Colonel Richardson as similarly contesting the placement of the leper hospital at Fort Pike. He gave several justifications for its location elsewhere in the state.

These schooners [which pass the Rigolets]...are manned by negroes, and many of the lepers here, I judge, are negroes. In case of a storm these schooners are most likely to put in shore, and the lepers seeing the vessels and feeling that a chance of escape may be near will take any measure to communicate with the crews of the schooners, and to escape if there is any chance to do so. We all know how negroes are. They do not seem to be afraid of such diseases, and would be very likely to take aboard any one they would take a fancy to and land him ashore where he could spread his disease....If the outside public ever come to believe that this section of St. Tammany is next door neighbor to a hospital for the unclean, the entire surrounding country will be affected and shunned. The swarms of flies and mosquitoes which gather in the marshes and hang about the old Fort Pike are not infrequently driven far into the heart of St. Tammany by the strong

East winds, and with lepers for their prey much of the time the chances of a communication of the disease would be very materially increased....(26 May 1894 *Farmer*, 4.)

Not only does this quote highlight fears about the spread of leprosy and the location of the hospital near principal waterways, but it demonstrates that some (at the very least) white residents in southeast Louisiana feared the mobility and conspiracy of the Black population. The “Negro’s” supposed shortsightedness, inability to understand disease, and desire to undermine white public health constraints caused whites to view these individuals of color (note—particularly the individuals they did not know) as threats to their bodily health and the healthfulness of the community. Additionally it underscores how little most people knew about the spread of leprosy (it is not spread by mosquitoes).

Members of the Louisiana legislature nonetheless visited Fort Pike to evaluate its appropriateness for the leper hospital. Again, the *Farmer* spoke out against the “establishment of a pest-house in this parish or on its borders” as a “menace to the health and welfare of our people” (9 June 1894, 5). The following week, a group of St. Tammany residents authored a petition to the state legislature against establishing the hospital at Fort Pike.

St. Tammany Parish has improved wonderfully during the past ten years. Our waste places are rapidly filling up with a most desirable class of people...With the establishment of a Leper Hospital at Fort Pike, our reputation as a haven of health and recreation will at once be destroyed, and hundreds will be deterred from coming here. (16 June 1894 *Farmer*, 4)

A reader, responding to the controversy, described his fears that escaped lepers would enter St. Tammany and “be scattered among the many colored people unsuspected and safe” (ibid.). Interestingly, this last statement has two implications. First, harking back to white fears of runaway slaves, “colored” lepers could escape and blend in with the population of color in St. Tammany. And second, the population of color had the *most* to fear because they would be first to be exposed to the disease. The selection of a site at Carville, Louisiana

later that year ended the controversy for St. Tammany Parish (see National Hansen's Disease Museum 2008).

St. Tammany Parish revisited the placement of a hospital for patients of color again in 1918 with the interest of the Louisiana Tuberculosis Commission in extending the operations of Camp Hygeia—the sanitarium for impoverished whites—to treat “negroes” (presumably of all income levels). White residents of St. Tammany, despite the health risk associated with untreated tuberculars, rejected this application of the sanitarium. The Farmer commented:

St. Tammany parish people are as cordial and hospitable as can be found anywhere, and they welcomed the sick who have come here for the benefit of its wonderful climate, but it draws the line at being made the dumping ground for negroes afflicted with tuberculosis. It has even gone to the extreme in admitting white people afflicted with tuberculosis, the only limitations being made in Covington in an attempt to segregate them in boarding houses and hotels specially licensed for that purpose. (9 March 1918, 1)

The editor of the newspaper, D.H. Mason, and his staff promised to write a letter to Dr. Oscar Dowling, president of the State Board of Health, protesting the location of a “colored” sanitarium in St. Tammany because “St. Tammany parish has been seriously injured and its growth retarded on account of it being advertised as a resort for tubercular people” (ibid, 5). The following month, the Covington and Mandeville town councils resolved that while they did agree it was just to provide a tuberculosis hospital for “negroes,” this type of facility should be located somewhere else in the state; St. Tammany Parish had already done its share to help tuberculars (13 April 1918 *Farmer*, 4; Mandeville Town Council 2 April 1918; Covington Town Council 2 April 1918).

The argument that the presence of sanitarium in St. Tammany hurt the parish's development is probably faulty—in fact, Covington business owners argued against segregating consumptives because they lost revenue. But this tactic represents the shift in

public opinion in the first two decades of the 1900s away from sole belief in the healthfulness of the environment towards a belief in municipal and parish control based on germ theory (Melosi 2000). It also represents the continued perception of residents of African descent (particularly persons unknown in the parish) as risky and prone to disease. By the 1930s, residents of St. Tammany continued to protest the construction of a “negro” sanitarium in the parish (18 April 1931 *Farmer*, 1).

This raises the question, were residents of African descent in St. Tammany more prone to illness and disease? The answer is a complicated one and largely dependent on a particular disease or illness in question. White perceptions generally bought into this notion. And interestingly, despite seventeenth- and eighteenth-century beliefs (and justifications for slavery) that Africans were far more resistant to disease than Europeans, by the late 1800s, the medical community of Louisiana and elsewhere believed that Black people were more prone to disease as well.

In the New South, whites viewed residents not only as more prone to disease, but causes of disease. For example, in an 1891 report published in Baton Rouge, Health Officer J.W. Dupree blamed the South’s sewage problems on the fact that a significant portion of refuse contained animal and vegetable matter, which was more likely to putrefy. The cause of this comparatively large amount of organic material was the large quantity of vegetables consumed by the “colored” population (Dupree 1891, 22). Two decades later, the Louisiana State Board of Health expressed a more scientific version of the same sentiment in its 1918-1919 report to the state legislature.

In health work in this State the problem of the negro is an important factor. Even though we lay aside the humanitarian and economic interests associated with the negro race, we still have to face the obvious biologic fact that this race of people is both potentially and actually more capable of disseminating disease among the white people than are the white people among themselves. Never having had the opportunity to develop natural immunity and resistance to bacterial invasion that is normally acquired through the

evolution of ages, and having had artificially thrust upon them a civilization to which they are not biologically adapted, it is only natural that tuberculosis and syphilis should invade the race until they become exterminated....The white race cannot hope to materially decrease their communicable disease incidence until the health standard of the negro is raised. (Louisiana State Board of Health 1919, 19)

By the 1920s, the State Board of Health began to acknowledge that environment played a large role in determining health; however, racial characteristics supposedly still accounted for *desire* and *intelligence* to keep a home sanitary. For example, a 1925 Bulletin by the State Board of Health attributed the “negro’s” proclivity to disease to an antagonistic environment: “He is not able to keep pace with the commercialistic activity of his surroundings, so naturally he drifts to parts of the city which are cheapest and which are consequently overcrowded and insanitary [sic]” (Louisiana State Board of Health 1925, 37). A 1933 report found that two diseases in particular added “to the depletion of numbers and racial vitality of the negro”: tuberculosis and venereal disease (Louisiana State Board of Health 1933, 6).

Two conflicting ideas emerge between public consideration of Black people as prone to disease and unsanitary conditions and St. Tammany residents’ belief in their environment as healthful and restorative. If St. Tammany’s environment allowed for recovery from diseases such as tuberculosis, should we expect that the population of color in St. Tammany was less prone to the disease than elsewhere in the state? If white public opinion at the time fostered the idea that the Black population typically lived in unsanitary conditions, should we expect the Black population to be more prone to tuberculosis than the white population?

While it is impossible to find records detailing the number of persons living with tuberculosis in St. Tammany, the State of Louisiana kept records about the numbers of deaths from tuberculosis by parish and racial group. A survey of Louisiana State Board of Health bulletins paints a complicated picture of the tuberculosis mortality rate in St.

Tammany. For example, in 1938, the Louisiana State Board of Health determined that the “colored” population of the state as a whole had more than *twice* as many deaths from tuberculosis as the white population per 100,000 people, particularly in New Orleans. Perhaps attesting to the relatively low population density, effective treatment, or the healthful effects of the environment in St. Tammany, the parish did have one of the lowest death rates from tuberculosis in the state in 1940, despite the fact that a number of people came from outside the parish to receive treatment. This number increased the following year, as it did elsewhere in the state (Louisiana State Board of Health 1941). A sample of the State Board of Health’s Quarterly Bulletins, however, demonstrates that in St. Tammany *whites* died from tuberculosis more frequently in terms of total numbers and per capita than Blacks. For instance, in the fourth quarter of 1922, a total number of 14 whites and five “coloreds” died from tuberculosis (Louisiana State Board of Health 1923). In the first three months of 1923, ten individuals died from tuberculosis: eight whites and two “coloreds” (Louisiana State Board of Health 1923). By the end of 1938, only one white and one “colored” died from tuberculosis (Louisiana State Board of Health 1939).

These data are not completely reliable for a number of reasons. First, doctors in the 1920s and 1930s frequently misdiagnosed tuberculosis or wrongly attributed death to pneumonia (Pattison 1943). Second, considering the lopsided availability of medical care in St. Tammany based on race, it is possible that physicians received incorrect or uncorroborated information about the death of a person of color within the parish. And third, many whites with tuberculosis came to St. Tammany for treatment on long term bases, so the number of white deaths from tuberculosis may be artificially large. However, even accounting for discrepancies, it seems certain that the population of color in St. Tammany had fewer deaths from tuberculosis than elsewhere in the state, and likely equal to the white population of St. Tammany. This estimation underscores the likelihood that parish protests

against “colored” treatment facilities for tuberculosis and leprosy (Hansen’s Disease) had roots more in the fear of unknown individuals of color entering the parish than in the denial of treatment options for the population of color within the parish, although it had the same effect.

If any diseases stigmatized the population of color in St. Tammany, it was syphilis and other venereal diseases. Because of the close connections between sexual behavior and ideas about morality, the higher rates of venereal disease in the population of color reinforced white beliefs in the intellectual, moral, and biological inferiority of Black people, especially before 1950. Throughout the 1920s, gonorrhea and syphilis were among the leading causes of death in the state, often ranked above influenza, smallpox, malaria, and tuberculosis, depending on the time of year (8 November 1919 *Farmer*, 2; 11 December 1920 *Farmer*, 2; 30 April 1921 *Farmer*, 2; 7 January 1922 *Farmer*, 2). The Louisiana State Board of Health reported in 1938 that the “colored” population was six times as likely as the white population to contract syphilis (Louisiana State Board of Health 1938, 15). In St. Tammany, the population of color more frequently contracted and died from syphilis than the white population as well (see Louisiana State Board of Health *Quarterly Bulletins* 1925-1951).

Although the State Board of Health began a public awareness campaign against venereal diseases that included people of color during this time period, this sensitive issue in St. Tammany came to the surface during World War II. In 1941, as the Parish Health Unit conducted blood tests on potential draftees, they discovered that over 30 percent of Black males tested positive for syphilis. This disease was problematic for white men as well, but just over five percent of white males tested positive. The controversy over this huge difference in rates of infection centered on the fact that the draft board deferred syphilitic men. This made the draft board more likely to accept white men than Black men into armed service (27 June 1941 *Farmer*, 1); many whites viewed this as another example of “negro”

men avoiding hard work and indulging their sexual appetites, despite the fact that many men of both colors passed the blood test.

The outrage that many whites in St. Tammany felt over this injustice perhaps influenced a decision in 1942 to protest the establishment of a venereal disease treatment center for women just outside Mandeville. Federal and State health authorities proposed to establish an isolation hospital for treatment on the vacant Civilian Conservation Corps encampment, which lay adjacent to the Baptist encampment grounds on the outskirts of Mandeville. Representative Fred J. Heintz and the Louisiana State Parks Commission petitioned the government to stop the plans for the hospital which would have treated “prostitutes suffering with venereal diseases.” They requested that the hospital be located at some other place in the state and not so near a settlement or town. Considering public perceptions and recently discovered reports that the Black population was more likely to contract venereal diseases, the opposition to this hospital may have been based once again on white fears of unknown, unhealthy Black individuals coming to the parish for treatment (14 August 1942 *Farmer*, 1).

In 1943 the Police Jury sought resolution of the issue of venereal disease amongst Black draftees. The Police Jury did not disguise their animosity toward infected Black men in a resolution passed on May 20, 1943.

Whereas, statistics show that a large percentage of negroes examined by the local Board for induction into the armed forces of our country are infected with syphilis, and Whereas, the infection with the above disease is presently a ground for deferment or a low classification, and Whereas, as a result of the above classification, young men in good health and of a higher type of citizenship are being inducted into the armed forces, while those infected as above set forth remain at home, content to be diseased and thus escape their military service to their country, now therefore Be it resolved by the Police Jury of St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, . . . that the above facts be brought to the attention of our Congressman and Senators, and that they be requested to sponsor legislation necessary to remedy the above evil, or to prevail upon the proper officers of the Selective Service System to make it mandatory upon persons infected with syphilis to undergo medical treatment until

completely cured, in order that they may enter the armed service of the United States...(28 May 1943 *Farmer*, 1; St. Tammany Parish Police July 20 May 1943)

By the 1950s, the State Health Board had begun conducting a substantial public health campaign against venereal diseases with the help of federal funds. These programs initially focused on blood testing Black citizens (Figure 5.5) in a number of parishes including St. Tammany, and they eventually utilized public education and investigation. Though antibiotics did help control syphilis infection, the State Board of Health cautioned that it still needed special measures to control syphilis in the large “Negro” population of the state (Louisiana State Board of Health 1951).



FIGURE 5.5. LOUISIANA BOARD OF HEALTH TESTS CHILDREN FOR SYPHILIS; SOURCE: LOUISIANA BOARD OF HEALTH, 1951

During the nearly eighty years between 1878 and 1956, hospitals and health initiatives treated white and Black populations separately and differently (Beardsley 1987), thus reinforcing constructions of race. For instance, health clinics set up in the parish or visiting nurses had “white clinic days” and “black clinic days” (26 February 1927 *Farmer*, 1). And of course, on several occasions, St. Tammany residents protested the establishment of facilities that would treat people of color at all. By the late 1910s and early 1920s, state and

parish officials understood that helping to solve health problems in the Black population of the parish would affect the health of the white population as well; nevertheless, these initiatives received continuous opposition based on racial fears and expectations. In the early 50s, two new, state-of-the art hospitals opened in St. Tammany Parish—Southeastern Louisiana Mental Hospital near Mandeville and St. Tammany Parish Hospital on the Madisonville-Covington Highway (26 May 1950 *Farmer*, 1; 3 December 1954 *Farmer*, 1). These hospitals began to extend “modern” medical treatment more frequently to Black residents of St. Tammany, but access to medical services remained completely segregated and largely unequal, even when accounting for differences in income between the two racial groups. This was true across much of the South (Beardsley 1987). In December of 1954, when the St. Tammany Parish Hospital first opened, it had 30 private and semi-private rooms, only three of which were “reserved for Negroes” (3 December 1954 *Farmer*, 1).

Employment in Health and Resorts

Accounts of summer seasons on the North Shore tell of thousands of people spending their summers amid the pine trees, natural springs, and mild climate of St. Tammany Parish (Inez Thomas, personal interview 15 November 2005; 2 February 1884 *Farmer*, 4; 21 June 1935 *Farmer*, 1; Ellis 1981; Nicholls 1990). And of course many came to St. Tammany to seek therapy for tuberculosis and other maladies. Local histories as well (with the exception of such authors as Ellis 1981) tend to focus on this romantic history of relaxation and healthfulness. For example, the City of Mandeville’s official website briefly says of Mandeville’s history after the Civil War, “By the late 19th century, Mandeville’s lakeshore resort town image began to increase in popularity once again” (www.cityofmandeville.org). These memories—of the tourist-packed summers and the wealthy residents of New Orleans residing in the parish for several weeks or months for treatment—raise the question, how many people in St. Tammany worked in the hotel and

resort industry? Did these types of seasonal and health tourism affect many residents in St. Tammany?

Fortunately, manuscript census data is available for the peak years of the resort industry in St. Tammany, 1880-1920. Census takers listed the occupation and frequently the type of business for which the individual worked. For the purposes of this count, I included proprietors and managers of hotels, restaurants, and sanitariums. I did not include boarding house keepers or managers because these buildings also served lumber company employees and other men and women temporarily residing in St. Tammany for employment reasons.

According to the census enumerators, never more than roughly two percent of each ward population worked in the resort industry, and this number only applies to Wards 3 (Covington), 4 (Mandeville), 9 (Slidell) and 10 (Abita Springs); the remaining wards had no employment in this industry in any of the census years. The largest numbers in the parish occurred in 1920 with 22 individuals employed in Covington and 23 individuals employed in Slidell, and in both cases, this amounted to less than 2 percent of the ward population. In 1920, close to 3 percent of the population in Ward 10 (Abita Springs) worked in the resort industry, but this amounted to only three individuals.

Considering the close connections between health and vacationing in the early 1900s, a count of medical personnel also sheds light on the destinations and importance of the resort and health industry in St. Tammany Parish. During the time period 1880-1920, the largest number of physicians worked in Ward 3; 18 physicians alone worked in Covington in 1920. Two dentists, one oculist, one nurse, and one midwife also worked in Ward 3 in 1920, making it the medical center of the parish (and perhaps making it a shoe-in for the location of a parish hospital in 1954). These individuals all together comprised just over two percent of the workforce of Ward 3. In 1920, ten nurses and one midwife worked in Ward 9 (Slidell) but there were no doctors (U.S. Census Bureau 1880, 1900, 1920).

These numbers raise some significant doubts on the extent to which the tourism and health industry in St. Tammany really affected the lives of most residents of the parish. Certainly, a geography of tourism exists within the parish, which indicates that some wards received more financial benefit than others from St. Tammany's healthful reputation. On one hand, the census numbers most likely under-represent employment in this sector of the economy; census enumerators did not count the seasonal employment which probably typified the type of work individuals—particularly cooks, maids, waiters, and bellboys—did during the summer months. Additionally, it is also probable that census enumerators counted some of the resort employees as “general labor” if they performed a variety of low-level tasks. On the other hand, the revenues generated by wealthy patrons of hotels, restaurants, and sanitariums must have been welcome sources of income for local shop owners and grocers. For much of the parish, particularly Wards 1 (Madisonville), 2 (Folsom), 5, 6, 7 (Lacombe), and 8 (Pearl River), residents received little income from visitors.

There is also a “geography of race” in the extent to which tourism affected individuals within the parish. A few individuals of African descent did find long-term (or at least reportable) employment as hotel maids, cooks, and chauffeurs, but permanent staff typically were white (U.S. Census Bureau 1880, 1900, 1920). And two of the wards with the largest concentrations of people of color, Ward 1 and Ward 7, had no employment in the resort industry. However, Wards 3 (Covington), 4 (Mandeville), and 9 (Slidell) all had sizable populations of color who may have earned revenue providing goods and services for tourists. By the 1940s, with wartime labor shortages within the parish, some treatment facilities and hotels began hiring more individuals of color. For example, in 1943 the Fenwick Sanitarium began to advertise for “colored porters and colored maids” to serve the white tuberculosis patients, although white nurses attended them (5 November 1943 *Farmer*, 2).

Sanitation: Cleaning Up Perceptions of Health

The years from 1880 to 1945 marked what Martin Melosi refers to as the “Era of Bacteriology.” Advances in the science of public health, knowledge of bacteria and the spread of disease, and concern with the effects that sanitation had on the community influenced civic leaders to pursue underground sewerage systems and waterworks in cities across the country (Melosi 2000). This reflection of Progressivism swept much of the U.S. including the rural South (Link 1988), and towns in St. Tammany also began to investigate the expense and logistics of building sewerage and waterworks, despite continued claims that water in St. Tammany was “pure” and “healthy.”

In 1897, Covington town officials began to address some of the sanitation problems faced with surface drainage ditches and a growing population. In this year, the Covington Town Council passed an ordinance making it illegal to dam storm pipes or drainage ditches, or allow them to become clogged with “offal, filth, etc.,” thus causing spillover onto sidewalks and streets (25 September 1897 *Farmer*, 5). One can only imagine what it must have been like to walk down the streets of Covington after a July thunderstorm! The Town Council, taking preventative health measures, issued this ordinance at the height of the yellow fever outbreak in New Orleans in 1897 when thousands of New Orleanians fled to the North Shore. The Town Council also issued a warning that they reserved the right to inspect any home, and if the closets (privies) were unsanitary, the owner would serve time in the parish jail. The Council required that all closets be fumigated and cleaned (25 September 1897 *Farmer*, 5).

The Covington Town Council made one of the first attempts in the parish to investigate the cost of a waterworks system, and this inquiry concerned delivery of water to buildings within Covington for daily use and fire prevention. The Town Council received an estimate from John O. Seeligman, a civil engineer at the World’s Fair in St. Louis, on a well-

driven waterworks system that would cost approximately \$25,000 (24 September 1904 *Farmer*, 4). The Council took no action on this estimate.

By 1912, Covington's progress toward the construction of either waterworks or sewerage system had barely inched along; however, the town had to attend to a new public health threat: hookworms. Hookworm infection, caused by bare feet or hands contacting soil contaminated with infected human waste, began to affect many children and adults of all racial groups in the early 1900s. Clearly attributed to poor sanitation, hookworm infection caused anemia, lethargy, and possible death; this disease spread like wildfire across the rural South in the early twentieth century and became a major public health concern (Louisiana State Board of Health 1925; Link 1988; Grob 2002, 196).

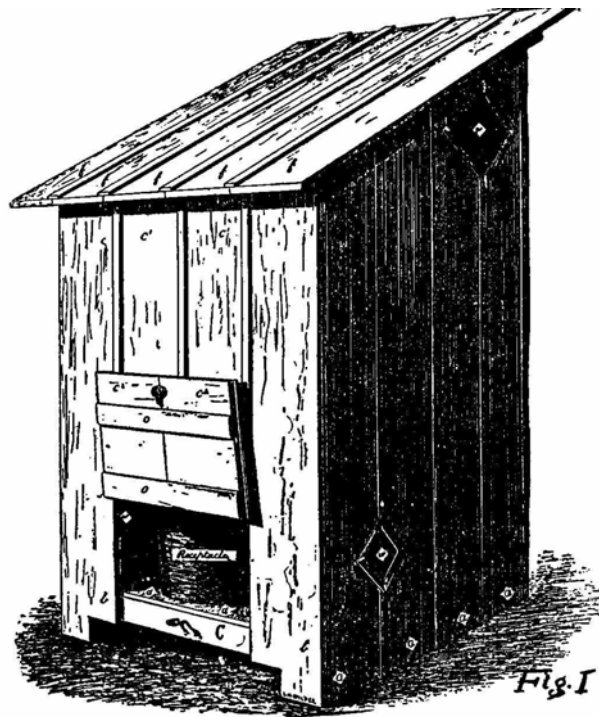


FIGURE 5.6: SANITARY PRIVY; SOURCE: LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH, 1916

To prevent the further spread of the disease, the Covington Town Council investigated the costs of constructing both a waterworks and sewerage system. The Hookworm Commission for St. Tammany likewise investigated privies throughout Covington and found a distinct racial division in terms of sanitation. Whites more

frequently utilized septic tanks and “10 percent surface closet, closed in back,” while “negroes” more frequently used “no closets” at all (9 March 1912 *Farmer*, 3). Despite this discrepancy, hookworm infection appeared to be more prevalent among whites per capita (9 March 1912 *Farmer*, 3). The Louisiana State Board of Health recommended that rural populations utilize sanitary privies (Louisiana State Board of Health 1918), but residents often improperly disposed of the waste, or the receptacles overflowed into surface drains (Melosi 2000, 91; Figure 5.6).

The Covington Town Council and other town leaders, despite facing an uphill battle in convincing residents to approve a sale of bonds to pay for a sewerage and waterworks system, pushed to begin the process by buying an existing private sewerage system built by the owners of the Southern Hotel (Fenwick Sanitarium). The Town Council, at the request of several town residents, offered that anyone living along New Hampshire Street could connect their sewerage pipes and lines to the Southern Hotel system, which flowed directly into the Bogue Falaya (10 January 1914 *Farmer*, 5; Covington Town Council 6 January 1914; 7 March 1914 *Farmer*, 4). Gaining momentum in the improvement of town sanitation, the Council issued an ordinance later the same year standardizing and requiring sanitary closets (25 July 1914 *Farmer*, 2).

After dealing with the issue of the “Restricted District” in 1915, the Covington Town Council and several “reputable citizens” issued in the new year 1916 with petition for the town to purchase and develop a town-wide sewerage and waterworks system (1 January 1916 *Farmer*, 1). On January 4, the Covington Town Council decided to split up the two systems so that voters would be voting for only the waterworks at first. Some residents of Covington decried the split, and one resident even authored a poem about the sewer system “gone ‘a gloaming.”

Sewers need we not, the people say
And if for them we have to pay
We'd rather do it grandpa's way,
Not cheat the buzzards of their prey.

No sanitary scheme appeals to us.
In fact, we feel inclined to cuss
Enlightened ways of doin' things
This world's just getting' wuss and wuss.
(8 January 1916 *Farmer*, 2; Covington Town Council 4 January 1916)

An election to decide the issue of public bonds for the waterworks occurred in May of 1916, and the waterworks lost. Apparently not using a secret-ballot system, the newspaper printed a list of all the men who had voted for and against the proposition, singling out small property owners for their votes against the waterworks. Seemingly small-property holders did object to the high cost of the system, but the *Farmer* also denounced the fact that 21 out of 22 “Negro” voters had opposed the system, underlining both their ignorance in civic matters but contentedness to live in unsanitary conditions (20 May 1916 *Farmer*, 1). After six more years of promotion, health issues (such as the influenza pandemic), and growth of the town, Covington finally voted in favor of the waterworks and sewerage system and began the sale of bonds to finance its construction in August of 1922 (19 August 1922 *Farmer*, 1).

Both Mandeville and Abita Springs voted for and received help from the federal government during the Great Depression of the 1930s to construct their waterworks and sewerage systems. A part of the Works Progress Administration program, both towns received 70 percent of the costs of the systems and paid for the remaining 30 percent with the sale of bonds (9 February 1934 *Farmer*, 1). Work began on November 9, 1935 in Mandeville and in Abita in 1937 (29 November 1935 *Farmer*, 1; 28 August 1936 *Farmer*, 1).

Local residents believed that the development of the waterworks and sewerage systems would enhance and protect the health and the reputation of St. Tammany Parish;

however, several embarrassing and harmful sanitation issues in the 1930s and 1940s significantly damaged St. Tammany's renown. The first occurred in the "Famous Abita Springs," one of the most visited natural springs in the state. In 1936, the State Board of Health closed down the main spring because it had been contaminated with bacteria. Investigations revealed that "grossly insanitary [sic] lack of provisions for proper sewage disposal for the schools and town" and intermittent rainfall had been the sources of the problem. The State Board of Health conducted tests again in 1940 which came back with healthful levels of bacteria; however, since the town had not yet completed its sewerage system, the State Board of Health advised that the (In)Famous Abita Springs remain closed (Louisiana State Department of Health 1941, 43). In 1949, the State Parks Commission announced that it would purchase the land and re-open the springs (4 March 1949 *Farmer*, 1).

Another serious sanitation issue for the parish, improper sewage disposal in Covington contaminated the Bogue Falaya River. The Bogue Falaya and the adjacent park attracted hundreds of visitors every summer, and bathing in these "pure" waters continued to be a draw for tourists even after the allure of the natural springs in Abita had faded. Nevertheless, in 1940 the State Board of Health found that dangerously high levels of bacteria present in the river posed a huge health risk for bathers and forced the Park and Town to ban swimming. The Board of Health discovered the causes of the contamination were "sewage and septic tank effluents discharged directly into the stream" (Louisiana State Board of Health 1941, 46). The *Farmer* reported that it did "seem a shame that it is necessary to resort to the courts to force residents to provide for the proper disposal of sewage" (29 August 1941, 1). Seven years later, the Parish Health Unit officer Dr. H. E. Cannon visited the river again and found bacterial levels still high, but "no epidemic can be expected from people swimming in the river, but at times various forms of gastro-intestinal

symptoms or boils in the hair may result.” He nevertheless warned would-be swimmers that infantile paralysis (polio) may be spread by water (9 July 1948 *Farmer*, 1).

In 1950 the City of Covington constructed a sewerage treatment facility to end the pollution of the Bogue Falaya and Tchefuncte Rivers (24 February 1950 *Farmer*, 1); however, a significant portion of the population had still not connected to the city sewer lines. To help combat the continued sewerage problem in Covington, in 1955 the Parish Health Unit issued a directive that the houses in the 27th Street area (largely populated by people of African descent) to install *indoor* toilet facilities and pay for hookups to the city sewer lines. This directive followed a discovery by the parish sanitarian that over 600 homes in the area had neither indoor toilets nor sewerage connections. The Parish Health Unit reported that about 75 percent of the homes in the area had complied by 1955 (1 July 1955 *Farmer*, 1).

St. Tammany’s reputation for health, particularly in relation to its water supply, came into question in the first half of the twentieth century with advances in public health and calls to develop a system for sewage disposal. The push to develop a sewerage and waterworks system in Covington took on a racial tone, as white leaders in the town accused Black voters of delaying the installation of the waterworks. Decades later, inconsistent enforcement of sanitation laws caused a number of public health concerns in the parish, including the contamination of the Abita Springs and the Bogue Falaya River, which had to be temporarily closed, essentially ending St. Tammany’s reign as the most healthful place in the country. Parish health officials discovered that one of the probable sources of the contamination of the Bogue Falaya came from the “Negro” section of town, north of the railroad tracks in Covington. The majority of these houses still relied on outdoor privies and had no sewer connections. These glaring blemishes on St. Tammany’s reputation as a healthful place, however, did not stop the subdivision boom in the parish; developers

accelerated their plans for healthful subdivisions to capture the attention of the crowds who would now travel across the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway to the North Shore.

“A NATURAL SUBURB”: GOLF, SUBDIVISIONS, AND THE LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN CAUSEWAY

The North Shore of Lake Pontchartrain and New Orleans had significant connections since the French and Spanish colonial periods in the eighteenth century; and tourism to St. Tammany for health reasons swelled before and after the Civil War. In the period between 1878 and 1956, connections with New Orleans intensified; and as civic leaders planned for the future, they saw that future intimately tied to New Orleans. The idea that St. Tammany served as New Orleans’ suburb can be traced back to the 1880s. For example, a contributor to the *St. Tammany Farmer*, supporting the extension of a railroad line to Covington, claimed that “Covington is the natural suburb of New Orleans.” He argued that with Covington’s natural beauty, the “wealthy citizens of New Orleans, and perchance others, would erect summer villas, and the entire route from here to Pontchatoula would be a succession of summer residences and truck farms” (16 April 1887 *Farmer*, 4).

After the turn of the century, developers, real estate men, and wealthy New Orleanians fervidly looked at land on the North Shore for development; ideas about a bridge connecting the north and south shores of Lake Pontchartrain began concomitantly. In April of 1901, the *Farmer* reprinted an article from the *New Orleans Daily Item* discussing initial interest in building a 28 miles bridge from New Orleans to the North Shore. No immediate action came from this venture; however, this may have been the first detailed plan with a hint of a possibility of being put into action. In New Orleans in the early 1900s, a growing population, continued immigration, and stricter adherence to racial boundaries pushed many whites north of the old boundaries of the city (Lewis 2003). With the expansion of rail service on both sides of the lake, this northward expansion began to include ideas of

development in St. Tammany. Exemplifying the interest in development on the North Shore, one *Farmer* contributor observed that New Orleans's "arms [were] reaching out for Covington" (26 November 1904 *Farmer*, 4).

There has been a large and constantly increasing demand on the part of New Orleans people of small means and of moderately good income for town lots. This class of purchasers has brought tracts varying from one lot, 60 x 140 feet, and at prices varying from \$60 to \$300 each to whole squares from \$350 upwards. These people have built comfortable homes, ranging in value from \$500 to \$5000. Many of these people have moved their families here and will make this their home, going to their work in New Orleans every day. They say that the difference in the cost of living will in a few years pay for the property. There has also been a steady demand for small tracts of land outside of town, and in the past year many beautiful and comfortable homes, with all the modern conveniences, have sprung up as if by magic...These tracts vary in size from two to fifteen or twenty acres, and are in the main intended for summer homes for well to do New Orleans people....(26 November 1904 *Farmer*, 4)

By 1904, locals in St. Tammany witnessed an influx of not just wealthy New Orleanians but middle-class professionals, and development occurred both in and outside the towns.

With the Progressive era in full swing, business leaders began to view their future as tied to New Orleans but also very much rooted in their own endeavors. With the revenues and potential income from the lumber and tourist industries, oil speculation, and truck farming, some in St. Tammany hoped that they would eventually compete with New Orleans. Business leaders encouraged consumers to spend their dollars in the St. Tammany market and thus help the parish develop on its own. Editor Mason of the *Farmer* wrote, "In a few years hence we will look back upon the Covington of today and smile at the commercial spirit of a time that considered nearness to New Orleans a stumbling block and cheap excursion rates ruinous to business..." (10 April 1909 *Farmer*, 4).

This desire for St. Tammany residents to spend their money at home did not detract from interest in inviting New Orleanians and other travelers to the North Shore via a bridge across the Lake. Just two years later in 1911, the *Farmer* ran a series of articles endeavoring

to make a train trestle and bridge across the lake a reality. Very much tying St. Tammany's future to economic growth in New Orleans and the South, Editor Mason wrote,

There has been much said as to the future growth of the South...Added to these conditions, the completion of the Panama Canal will not only bring trade relations of great value but will place New Orleans in communication with vast numbers of travelers from all countries—businessmen and pleasure seekers...[The bridge] would not only be a means of drawing visitors to New Orleans, but it would keep transient hotel guests in the hotels several days longer in order to make the trip across the lake over the longest bridge in the world. Automobiles and carriages would carry theatre and pleasure parties to New Orleans daily, and outing parties from New Orleans could enjoy a day in the piney woods at a moments notice at slight expense. (1 April 1911 *Farmer*, 4)

In July of 1911, business leaders on both sides of the lake held meetings to discuss the prospects of building the bridge. A meeting in Bogue Falaya Park at the end of July attracted hundreds of people from all over the parish, and speakers appealed to New Orleans political leadership and businessmen to help “build up our beautiful parish.” In exchange, St. Tammany would provide New Orleans with “the boon of restored or improved health,” an outlet for New Orleanians trapped in the city, and “truck and farm produce of all kinds, milk, eggs, butter, cattle, and pork” (29 July 1911 *Farmer*, 1). By the end of the year, significant opposition had arisen to the massive expense of such an undertaking, and the *Farmer* made no more mention of the Lake Pontchartrain Bridge again for several years.

In the 1920s, once again interest peaked in building a bridge across the Lake. This time promoters, probably trying to attract wealthy investors in New Orleans and state-wide legislative support, testified that St. Tammany would provide New Orleans with a “feasible outlet” from the factories and commercial growth in the city. St. Tammany would have golf-courses, country homes, and fresh country air for work-weary New Orleanians. The bridge itself would be a showcase for the work of Southern engineers (3 June 1922 *Farmer*, 1).

The St. Tammany Association of Commerce began a marketing campaign to draw attention to the benefits that the parish had to offer. These ads referred to St. Tammany as

the “End of the Rainbow” and “Where the South Is at Its Best” (6 June 1924 *Farmer*, 6; 10 April 1926 *Farmer*, 1). Editor Mason contended that the bridge would solve many of New Orleans’ problems including the need for additional railroad yards and increased competition from Memphis (21 June 1924 *Farmer*, 2). Ads even promoted the idea of connections between a route on the north side of Lake Pontchartrain and the Causeway, something that would keep travelers away from the swampy, mosquito-laden land along Louisiana’s coast (29 November 1924 *Farmer*, 6).



BRIDGE OR CAUSEWAY ACROSS LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN

FIGURE 5.7. DETERMINATION TO BUILD THE CAUSEWAY; SOURCE: *ST. TAMMANY FARMER* 29 NOVEMBER 1924, 6

In 1925, news that the Louisiana Highway Commission had awarded state funds to the Watson-Williams Company to construct a privately owned toll bridge near the eastern end of the Lake stunned residents of St. Tammany and New Orleans. St. Tammany residents felt very strongly that shady political dealings had influenced Governor Fuqua’s decision to abandon development of the Chef Menteur Bridge across the Rigolets and the

Causeway to Mandeville in favor of this expensive toll bridge (28 February 1925 *Farmer*, 2). The Highway Commission justified their award of the contract to Watson & Williams as doubt in the intentions, practicality, and cost of the plan devised by the Pontchartrain Causeway Association (21 March 1925 *Farmer*, 1). The Pontchartrain Causeway Association countered that the Highway Commission had falsified their proposals, wrongly represented them, and yielded to the strong political influence of J. Y. Sanders, Sr., former Governor of Louisiana, who represented the Watson-Williams group in its dealings with the State Highway Commission (21 March 1925 *Farmer*, 1). Clarifying and elaborating their plans for the Causeway, the Pontchartrain Causeway Association printed a map of engineered islands in the lake which would lower overall costs and provide land speculation alongside the proposed bridge (25 September 1925 *Farmer*, 1; Figure 5.8). The proposed bridge would be 500 feet wide in places, with 200 feet in the center for car traffic, and rail lines. Promoters also envisioned white globe lights lining the structure, “tennis courts, picture shows, museums, restaurants, garages, service stations, parking spaces, libraries, boarding places and whatnot—everything you would find in a first-class town” (25 October 1924 *Farmer*, 2).

Despite promises to fight the State Highway Department’s decision, the State government took no action towards the construction of the causeway. In his 1926 campaign for the governorship, Huey P. Long rallied audiences throughout St. Tammany Parish with guarantees that he would build the bridge and rid the state of the “darkest spot” in both Louisiana’s history and the “Sanders-Fuqua regime” (17 July 1926 *Farmer*, 1). Although Long did not win in that election, St. Tammany residents supported him because “he is honest and the poor man’s friend” (4 September 1926 *Farmer*, 1).

In 1927 the State Highway Commission announced that it would build the free bridge across the Rigolets connecting Slidell with the Chef Menteur Highway. The Watson-Williams Company sued the Highway Commission, but later abandoned the lawsuit and

would be too high for the “small home-builder” (5 September 1925 *Farmer*, 2). The *Farmer* reported that the subdivision had set a record for the development in St. Tammany (12 September 1925 *Farmer*, 1). Covington likewise promoted homeownership in the “New Covington” subdivision, despite the fact that it was actually twenty years old (9 October 1926 *Farmer*, 3). In the late 1920s, St. Tammany developers also attracted home buyers with the promise of a golf course (2 June 1928 *Farmer*, 1). By 1938 St. Tammany still waited for the completion of the golf course (25 February 1938 *Farmer*, 1).

While these new subdivisions were entirely segregated based on race, making St. Tammany’s growth and improvement very much about the influx of white residents, developers created “colored” subdivisions as well. For example, Baudot Place opened for sale on the west edge of Mandeville. An ad for the subdivision described Baudot Place as “a rapidly building section,” and home sites were 40 by 120 feet and cost \$50 and up (28 July 1944 *Farmer*, 2). Although explicitly a place for “negroes,” the neighborhood covenant made no mention of race. In fact, no neighborhood covenants filed with the Clerk of Court for white or Black subdivisions made any mention of race (see Land Records Office database, St. Tammany Clerk of Court).

In the 1940s, St. Tammany residents once again proposed the idea of the Causeway from Mandeville to West End. In 1944, State Representative Heintz introduced a bill that would authorize the State Highway Department to construct the bridge (2 June 1944 *Farmer*, 1). A year later, the New Orleans Association of Commerce met with business and political leaders from St. Tammany on the feasibility of such a bridge and estimated the cost at approximately \$13 million (26 October 1945 *Farmer*, 1). A hurricane that struck New Orleans in 1947, however, gave Causeway promoters another argument for its construction: New Orleans needed an escape route to the north. During hurricanes and other severe weather events, all three highways serving the New Orleans area became flooded, making

transportation out or into the city impossible. State officials introduced legislation which would allow for the sale of bonds to finance the Causeway as Amendment 20 in the General Election of 1948, and it passed easily (12 November 1948 *Farmer*, 7).

Continuing the frustration for St. Tammany residents, two years later State officials had done nothing to begin the project. They once again questioned the feasibility of the bridge construction, and State Senator “Speed” Richardson of Bogalusa explained that the State Highway Commission would “need more Federal aid than the entire state now receives” to begin the project. He suggested, however, that the State would petition the War Department for the funds because another evacuation route from New Orleans was of utmost military importance with the development of the atomic bomb (3 February 1950 *Farmer*, 1). In June of 1950, the State legislature once again voted on and rejected a bill which would have provided for the construction of the bridge; the legislature then approved a second bill which the public voted down in a general election (23 June 1950 *Farmer*, 1). Though State Representatives recognized the benefit of building the Causeway, the high price tag and financial maneuvering discouraged both the state legislature and public from voting to build it.

Shortly after all attempts failed for the state government to build the Causeway, the St. Tammany Police Jury and business leaders met with leaders in Jefferson Parish to discuss private financing of the Causeway. A private bond company, Shields and Company, met with parish officials to conduct a traffic survey and determine the feasibility of a project that would be entirely funded by tolls (22 December 1950 *Farmer*, 1; 30 March 1951 *Farmer*, 1). In September of 1951 voters in both parishes overwhelmingly voted in favor of this endeavor and its financing through sale of \$40 million in bonds which would be repaid through tolls (21 September 1951 *Farmer*, 1). Within two months of this vote, however, Mayor Chep Morrison of New Orleans petitioned for the route to be moved to a connection between

Tangipahoa and Orleans Parishes (21 December 1951 *Farmer*, 1). The State legislature approved a bill which would allow highway fund sharing associated with the St. Tammany to Jefferson Parish route, and engineering work began on the bridge (21 November 1952 *Farmer*, 1). In January of 1954, voters in St. Tammany and Jefferson Parish approved the increase in the total sale of bonds to \$50,000,000 (15 January 1954 *Farmer*, 1), and construction on the bridge began the following year.

With the completion of the long-awaited bridge to New Orleans finally in sight, residents of St. Tammany prepared themselves for a massive influx of New Orleanians. Tellingly, within a month of the final approval of the sale of bonds, the Police Jury passed an ordinance requiring developers and “subdividers” to have proper drainage and appropriately planned streets to maintain the attractiveness and safety of homes within the parish (19 February 1954 *Farmer*, 1). This population boom arrived quickly. The Police Jury in St. Tammany Parish recorded 65 registrations for subdivisions between 1954 and 1956, and these occurred in all wards except for Ward 2 (Folsom), 5 and 6, all in the northern end of the parish, which had no registrations. Perhaps surprisingly considering the location of the Causeway, Wards 8 (Pearl River) and 9 (Slidell), both in the eastern end of the parish that had already been connected with the South Shore by bridges, had the highest number of new subdivisions. Ward 3 (Covington) had the third highest number with eight new subdivisions, but the largest new development, with over 1700 acres, was Flower Estates in Ward 1 (Madisonville) on the Madisonville-Covington Highway. The Greater New Orleans Expressway (Lake Pontchartrain Causeway) opened for traffic on August 31, 1956, just in time for Labor Day revelers from New Orleans.

CONCLUSION

Between 1878 and 1956, St. Tammany’s healthful reputation attracted many visitors and homebuyers to towns in western St. Tammany such as Covington, Mandeville, and

Abita Springs. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, local residents believed that their ozone-laced air and pure mineral waters restored health and cured a number of illnesses such as tuberculosis. Sanitaria, hotels, and restaurants opened in these locations, and possibly thousands of visitors every summer came to the North Shore. The majority of these visitors and health-seekers were white, and all of these tourist and health facilities were segregated based on race, making the health/tourist business in St. Tammany largely a white enterprise. This reflected racist medical thinking of the day, which often ascribed disease to biological tendencies, complacency with filthy living conditions, or bad moral character, standards which never applied as vigorously to whites.

The healthful reputation of St. Tammany depended primarily on the pine trees and water supply in the parish, two resources which became used up or contaminated after 1900. St. Tammany reconciled these problems by developing better sanitation—including sewerage and waterworks systems—and creating parks to protect famous tracts of old pine, but only after 1920. Sanitary measures and parks, while generally improving the whole community, often had greater benefit for whites than for residents of color within the parish. State parks were completely segregated, and sewerage connections may have been cost prohibitive, particularly for concentrated neighborhoods of people of African descent. These factors again reinforced racial boundaries between whites and people of African descent.

The health and tourism industry in St. Tammany sparked an interest in developing further connections with New Orleans as a suburb, and developers took advantage of the influx of population in the parish after 1940. St. Tammany also developed two new-state-of-the-art hospitals—the Southeast Louisiana Hospital (mental) and the St. Tammany Parish Hospital. Both of these facilities provided “modern, sanitary medical treatment” for residents and no doubt attracted many New Orleanians to the area (St. Tammany Parish hospital is approximately one mile from Flower Estates). Although these hospitals did

provide medical services for patrons of color, the number of beds was disproportionately low compared to the population of color in the parish. A subdivision explicitly for “colored” residents, Baudot Place, opened in the mid 1940s, while the majority of other subdivisions which opened were exclusively for whites.

While the Causeway neared completion in the 1950s, developers increased the pace of subdivision development, and between 1954 and 1956, developers registered 65 subdivisions, primarily in Wards 3 (Covington), 8 (Pearl River), and 9 (Slidell). The Causeway finally reached the South Shore (Jefferson Parish) in 1956. This rapid preparation for a population boom set the stage for what would happen in the parish after 1956; an influx of middle- and upper-class white New Orleanians.

CHAPTER 6: SEGREGATION, DIFFERENTIATION, AND VIOLENCE: THE POLITICAL CULTURE OF RACE

INTRODUCTION

Between 1878 and 1956, the South as a region and the U.S. as a whole witnessed a vast amount of economic, environmental, and social change. In this roughly eighty-year period, industrialization reoriented the economies of the South, and lumber and mining companies transmogrified much of the landscape. National political movements such as Populism and Progressivism battered Democratic bulwarks and embroiled political factions in fierce debates. Racial segregation and disenfranchisement reached a pinnacle and began to face mobilized opposition. St. Tammany Parish struggled with these changes as well; and specific factors in the history and demography of the parish created geographic patterns of racial differentiation and segregation.

In St. Tammany Parish, a relatively poor, somewhat-isolated population with ties both to the upland South and colonial New Orleans provided the context in which major cultural and political changes regarding race occurred. During this time period, St. Tammany had a sizable population of African descent (Chapter 3), but this population never comprised a majority. Within this population, however, there was a great amount of diversity and differentiation based on historical ties, occupation, and geography. Many white residents of the parish had experience (and sometimes marriages and sexual relationships) with free people of color before the Civil War, and thus in many instances familial connections transcended color lines. Additionally, as a relatively poor parish, St. Tammany did not have a large number of slave owners (Ellis 1981, Hyde 1996), with some notable exceptions. People of African descent in St. Tammany had well established communities (Bonfouca, Madisonville, and outside Folsom) and renowned economic enterprises such as brickworks and shipyards. In the late 1800s, St. Tammany Parish also had an uncommonly mobile

population of African descent, as opposed to plantation parishes with large numbers of tenant farmers and share-croppers who were essentially fixed to the land (see Chapter 4). In some places within the parish, residents fell into the ambiguous racial category “not quite white,” but they did not consider themselves to be “Black” or “colored” (8 February 2007 Judge Steve Ellis, personal interview; *Sam Lee et al. v. N.O.G.N. R.ailroad Co. 1908*). The rather rare combination of colonial racial practices and small-scale upland South folk culture of the Florida Parishes (Newton 1967, Hyde 1996) made the approach to the reification of color lines difficult and complicated for whites.

Claims that the concept of race had a somewhat unique character in St. Tammany Parish do not by any means imply that individuals of African descent had social and political equality with whites. In some cases, Blacks and whites had economic equality, and in some contexts they had social equality; however, as this chapter will demonstrate, inequality typified the formal relationships between those individuals considered white and those considered “colored.” Between 1878 and 1956, white political leaders successfully stripped Black people in Louisiana of their political and civil rights—including those in St. Tammany. The doctrine of “separate” (leaving out the “equal” as with elsewhere in the South) governed legal and social management of racial boundaries, enforced by a number of means including violence, legal segregation, education.

This chapter will investigate how residents of St. Tammany approached, debated, and represented ideas of race between 1878 and 1956, particularly in terms of culture and politics. Undergirding this analysis is a “layered” concept of race. According to scholar Barbara Fields (1982), Americans often have nebulous beliefs and practices when it comes to race; this is necessarily so because real human behavior and interaction function more fluidly than racial theories or legal proscriptions. For instance, a white individual might have a respectful friendship with a Black neighbor but at the same time believe that individuals of

the Black “race” are lazy and untrustworthy. In St. Tammany historically, a white person might have voted for a segregationist politician but then attended a play given at a Black church, worked alongside other Black employees in the lumber industry, or had “colored” cousins. This analysis approaches the concepts of race and racism with the understanding that these concepts meant different things to different people; individuals internalized and acted upon them in differing ways despite overarching commonalities in treatment across the South.

Despite differences in experiences, all people experience the political and the legal in their everyday lives; politics and law shape how we interact and recognize each other in space (Delaney 1998). Through government policy and law, race became a legal, government-endorsed label—a category that defined the parameters for labor, health, residence, status, and mobility (see previous chapters). These political and legal definitions and proscriptions in the establishment of the color line shaped individual experiences. For those considered “white” this indicated relative protection from or recourse to violence, a political voice, and better schools. For those considered “Black” this meant vulnerability to violence from both white and Black people, disenfranchisement, and less opportunity for education. As this chapter will demonstrate, the political and legal play out in life experiences that have great power in the creation of both spatial and social boundaries (Inwood 2005).

VIOLENCE: MEDIUM OF RACIAL SEGREGATION

The construction of racial boundaries and identities in the U.S. (including the South) has relied consistently on violence to hold those boundaries in place and force real social complexity into distinct, measured categories of “white” or “Black” (Roediger 1991, Hale 1998, de Jong 2002, Gilmore 2002, Blum 2005). Segregation—the ultimate geographic identifier—became the predominant way to ensure white supremacy after the Civil War; and because legal segregation did not always work, illegal means of enforcing white supremacy

were necessary. These illegal means frequently consisted of lynching, assault, arson, and other forms of intimidation whites directed towards individuals they believed crossed racial barriers. The fact that legal systems throughout the South often ignored or lightly enforced laws pertaining to this violence in many ways made the violence legal or at the very least sanctioned by local and state governments (Berry 1978, 30).

According to historian Sam Hyde (1996), the Florida Parishes, including St. Tammany Parish, historically had a culture of violence that stands out not only in the South but in the United States as a whole. Family feuding, domination by business elites, severe distrust of local and state government, and weakness of local law enforcement emerged from the basic lawlessness which characterized West Florida under the French and Spanish colonial regimes. Hyde (1996) contends of the Florida Parishes in the second half of the nineteenth century:

With startling alacrity, violence progressed from a common element in the piney woods of Louisiana and southwestern Mississippi to an integral aspect of every resident's very existence. Long acceptable in affairs of honor, unrestrained brutality emerged as the principal means of societal regulation and governance. (172)

Family feuds and interpersonal arguments settled with weapons comprised much of the violence in the late 1800s; however, a sizable amount consisted of attacks on Black individuals and others at the hands of "Whitecaps"—white supremacist groups that rode through the countryside primarily at night, threatening, beating, and assassinating perceived enemies of their cause. While some of the Whitecap activity had political objectives, racism, defiance of authority, camaraderie, and entertainment motivated their violent behavior as well (Hyde 1996).

St. Tammany Parish did not witness the intensity of Whitecapping or night riding as other parts of the Florida Parishes, although parish boundaries were very porous. Attacks occurred frequently enough, however, to achieve the riders' goal of invoking terror in the

local population. Some of the most vicious attacks in terms of frequency and fatalities occurred in neighboring Tangipahoa Parish (Hyde 1996). Political leaders in St. Tammany, observing the spillover from “Bloody Tangipahoa” into their own parish plead to Whitecaps and Regulators in Tangipahoa Parish to stop their activities because it “drives labor away and unsettles government” (21 October 1893 *Farmer*, 4).

Although St. Tammany did not have the same reputation for political instability and violence as Tangipahoa, violence nevertheless frequently marked interracial interactions, and whites often targeted residents of color they felt were particularly “bad actors” (see 1 June 1929 *Farmer*, 1 and 16 February 1934 *Farmer*, 1 for examples of the expressions “bad actor” and “bad character”). The fact that violence imbued many interactions between individuals of different racial groups does not mean that interracial violence was the only type of violence in historical St. Tammany Parish. Intra-racial violence was also widespread. For example, some families of African descent had ongoing feuds marked by ‘bushwacking’ and dueling (30 July 1898 *Farmer*, 5; *Sixth Judicial District Court Indictments*, December 1898 Session), even though the more famous feuds in the Florida Parishes occurred between white families (Hyde 1996). Throughout much of the time period covered by this research, the *Farmer* carried stories of mishaps with weapons, jealous paramours seeking revenge, card and dice games gone awry, and drunken arguments settled with weapons—violence that largely occurred within racial boundaries (19 June 1886 *Farmer*, 5; 28 September 1895 *Farmer*, 4; 7 February 1914 *Farmer*, 1; 12 August 1916 *Farmer*, 1; 21 April 1928 *Farmer*, 1; 8 August 1931 *Farmer*, 1; 27 December 1940 *Farmer*, 1; 3 October 1947 *Farmer*, 1).

Across the South, lynching, perhaps more than any other type of violence, served the purpose of maintaining boundaries between racial groups; this is for two reasons. First, the groups of white individuals who committed murder by lynching intended the violence to be public. They often hung the bodies in public places and mutilated corpses for the purpose

of visibility. Posses wanted their work to be seen by both white and Black transgressors of color lines. Second, although carried out in reaction to other offenses as well, lynching punished those Black (and other racialized) individuals who defied or threatened to defy the established racial hierarchy in intimately physical ways, either through rape, sex, murder, or physical attack (Davis and Donaldson 1975, Hines 1992, Hale 1998, Brown and Webb 2007). White desperation to keep color lines rigid shows clearly in the acceleration of lynching that occurred after 1896, the same year the U.S. Supreme Court decided in favor of the “separate but equal” doctrine in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case.

Whites in St. Tammany Parish committed at least four reported murders by lynching between 1878 and 1956; law enforcement never charged anyone with those crimes. The first occurred in June of 1882, when sixty “citizens” of Bonfouca (near Slidell) intercepted a constable en route to the parish jail with a Black man accused of raping a white woman. The crowd hung the man from the bridge crossing Bayou Bonfouca, and the *Farmer* speculated that the “negro fiend” was the same man who had raped a little girl of color near Bonfouca (24 June 1882 *Farmer*, 4). While the *Farmer* reported that the lynching had “general approval,” the residents of African descent in the area denounced the murder and threatened to mobilize against the attackers (no record exists of this actually taking place) (24 June 1882 *Farmer*, 4).

The second occurred in Covington in October of 1891. According to the *St. Tammany Farmer*,

Last Thursday morning early risers were greeted with the unusual spectacle of a negro hanging by the neck from a limb of the willow tree in front of the jail, in the Courthouse yard. It seems at some time during Wednesday night a large crowd of unknown men entered the yard and overpowered the guard, compelling him to give up the keys of the jail, and they then entered and took out a negro prisoner by the name of Jack Parker, who was accused of killing another negro, named Joe Hardy....Parker, the victim [of the lynching], bore a very bad character, and is said to have committed other murders than the one for which he was hung...The general verdict, among

both whites and blacks, is that Parker only got his just deserts, and the universal opinion is that he should have been hung before he was. It is to be hoped that his ignominious fate will serve as a warning to all evil disposed persons, not to follow in his footsteps (31 October 1891 *Farmer*, 4).

Strangely, perhaps to conceal their own identities, the lynchers removed two other prisoners from the jail (their race does not appear in the account), flogged them, and told them to leave the parish (31 October 1891 *Farmer*, 4).

The newspaper coverage of this event seems to just touch the surface of preceding events and leaves many unanswered questions. For instance, why did this group of “unknown men” retaliate for the murder of another man of color? Jack Parker allegedly murdered Joe Hardy by clubbing him to death and then burning his body because he wanted Hardy’s job as section foreman for the railroad (31 October 1891 *Farmer*, 4). Was it the brutality of the murder that incited the lynching? Did the lynch mob target a “suspicious” person of color to cover up the identity of Hardy’s real murderer? Can we assume, as the *Farmer* informs us, both Blacks and whites approved of the actions of “Court of Judge Lynch” against this “bad character?”

While the answers to these questions may never be known, other evidence suggests that the lynching occurred in a context of escalating violence and hostility against different racial and ethnic groups in Louisiana. Although the Ku Klux Klan had declined by the 1890s, other white supremacist “civilian” organizations emerged in St. Tammany and across the South. One such group in St. Tammany was the Knights of Honor, an organization designed to “unite fraternally all acceptable white men to every profession, business, and occupation,” to provide moral aid, deliver informative lectures (the topic of which we can only guess), secure employment, and financially assist widows and orphans (8 June 1889 *Farmer*, 4). The Knights of Honor differed from the Ku Klux Klan in that it was not a secret society; by charter, it functioned as a benevolent society in a time of unsettling economic

change within the Florida Parishes (Ellis 1981, Hyde 1996). This organization publicly listed its members, and included some of St. Tammany's business and political elite. Newspaper editor W.G. Kentzel, of the *St. Tammany Farmer*, was the "Dictator" of the organization (18 January 1890 *Farmer*, 5). While no record exists to describe Knights of Honor activities (other than meeting at the courthouse in Covington), the popularity of this type of organization demonstrates the fear and feelings of racial vulnerability some whites in St. Tammany exhibited. Whitecap crimes throughout Louisiana and the Florida Parishes concomitantly surged in the 1890s (Hyde 1996; 14 September 1889 *Farmer*, 4; 23 September 1893 *Farmer*, 5).

Indicative of this escalating violence, in 1891, a significant event across Lake Pontchartrain generated national reverberations and preceded the Jack Parker murder by seven months: the lynching of eleven Sicilians in New Orleans for the murder of Police Chief Hennessy. In that case, a mob of thousands of white New Orleanians dragged the men from their jail cell where they were being held after a "not-guilty" verdict, gunned down nine of them, and strung two up for the public to see. Although largely decried by national audiences, public distrust of the New Orleans judicial system, suspected juror-fixing by the Mafia, and racial animosity against Sicilians guided the murderous hands of the lynch mob (Edwards-Simpson 1996). The *Farmer* ran a column that forebodingly supported the action of the lynch mob:

It was not an uprising against Italians, Sicilians, or any other race of people. In fact the crowd, on its way to the prison, passed a number of fruit stands kept by Italians, and they were not molested, which proves that the race question had nothing to do with it. They were after a gang of murderers, regardless of nationality, and they put to death eight American citizens and three subjects of Italy. They dealt out the "judgment of the people" with an impartial hand, and the people applaud them for it (21 March 1891 *Farmer*, 4).

This event in New Orleans precipitated a number of lynchings across the South, but from this point in time forward, the targets of this type of violence were predominantly Black³. If Sicilians—although not considered as “white” as other European groups—could be punished outside the law without any repercussions, individuals of African descent became easier targets because of their eroding social, political, and economic position at the hands of whites. The logic that the lynching of the Sicilians did not have racial roots because whites left some Sicilians unharmed also demonstrates that Editor Kentzel of the *Farmer*, and probably others as well, viewed the lynching of Black individuals in a very different light. The denial of the “racial” cause of lynching Black men would have seemed contradictory; Black men *were* the racial cause. Furthermore, whitecaps and other lynch mobs frequently associated their activities with white supremacy and spoke (and wrote) openly about those goals (Hyde 1996, Hale 1998).

Whites committed at least two other murders by lynching between 1878 and 1956. Outside Covington in August of 1894, “30 masked men” lynched a Black man named George Green, for reasons the *Farmer* does not mention (25 August 1894 *Farmer*, 5). The next publicly viewed, sensational lynching occurred exactly twenty years later in Slidell in August of 1914. According to witnesses, “Romeo,” a Black man, began an argument with another Black man about a woman. When the argument between the two men intensified, a neighbor sent for the marshal. As Marshal Coleman approached Romeo to arrest him, Romeo shot and killed the Slidell marshal. After a lengthy exchange of gunfire, Sheriff Brewster and his deputies then wounded Romeo and arrested him. As the sheriff attempted to place Romeo in a car, a mob of “unknown parties” restrained the sheriff and took Romeo into their own hands, tying him by his neck to the car and driving him through the streets of

³ Not all victims of lynching were Black. The lynching of Leo Frank, a Jewish man living in Atlanta, is one example. His murder gave the Ku Klux Klan an event around which to reconsolidate their membership and renew activities in 1915 (Flanagan 2007, 264).

Slidell until he was dead. They then took his body and strung it across the gallery of the house where Romeo had killed Marshal Coleman. The editor of the *Farmer* justified the killing: “Slidell has had an unsavory experience with the criminal negro element, and its officials are in constant risk of life and bodily harm in the performance of police duty” (8 August 1914 *Farmer*, 1).

These acts of violence at the hands of whites and their fear of Black “transgressions” did not, however, detract from St. Tammany’s reputation as a healthful place. This reinforces the association between whiteness and healthfulness because whites did not have to fear for their safety in the same way. The widespread belief in St. Tammany as a place for whites to restore their health does not fit easily with the supposed widespread fear of attack by Black men. This may provide further support for the argument that lynching and other acts of violence by whites against Black men were intended to terrorize and force Black compliance with the racial hierarchy. Additionally, the whites committing the murders either did not care or did not consider that their actions were detracting from the healthful qualities of the parish. White safety and the buttressing of white supremacy preserved the healthfulness and safety of the parish for *whites*.

The St. Tammany *Farmer* kept residents abreast of lynchings all across the South, and perhaps surprisingly, did not endorse all of them. Despite clear support for some of the events (such as Parker murder, the Sicilian lynching, and the murder of Romeo in Slidell), the newspaper denounced others and applauded when the “quick work of local law enforcement” prevented a lynching (23 February 1884 *Farmer*, 5; 13 September 1884 *Farmer*, 4; 13 July 1907 *Farmer*, 5). One of the main issues with lynching, according to white political and business leaders, was that it undermined both local government and laws, giving St. Tammany (and other places across the South) a reputation for brutality and lawlessness that in turn would retard economic growth. Acknowledging the usefulness of lynching in

punishing “bad characters,” however, progressive and conservative whites alike within the parish focused instead on whether or not the victim of the lynching *deserved* to be killed. In those cases where Black men allegedly killed white deputies, raped white women, or committed premeditated murder against white people, most whites could agree that lynching provided an outlet for the “moral indignation” and “clamoring for justice” that aroused the white population to murderous furor. It also sent a message to residents of color that the white population would not leave such a pressing “moral” and racial issue to the court system, which meted out “justice” too slowly or meagerly. While many whites no doubt disapproved of lynch mobs, their guilt and concern could be assuaged by the fact that at least the individual *deserved* to be killed (1 July 1882 *Farmer*, 4; 30 January 1897 *Farmer*, 4; 15 February 1913 *Farmer*, 1; 8 August 1914 *Farmer*, 1). The “colored” citizens of St. Tammany, however, publicly denounced lynching because of the tendencies of lynch mobs to disregard actual evidence (1 July 1882 *Farmer*, 4).

Local law enforcement prosecuted whites for violence against Blacks when they considered violence *undeserved* or when the violence, too wide in its scope, affected the white population. A sensational example of this occurred in 1898 in Covington. In the middle of the night, a Black man named Owen Swinson ran to the house of white Town Marshal Paul Dulion for protection from a crowd of “unknown parties” who pursued him. Marshal Dulion came out on his front porch and attempted to disband the pursuing party, but the crowd began firing at both Swinson and the town marshal, striking Dulion through the back and left arm. When Sheriff Stroble arrived, he took both Dulion and Swinson to New Orleans for treatment and protective custody, respectively (3 December 1898 *Farmer*, 5). Swinson told reporters and deputies in New Orleans that Charles Hosmer, Charles Bradley, Emile Beaucoudray, Henry McKee, James Bradley, Charles Stroble, and Charles Heintz—all adult children or relatives of political and business leaders in St. Tammany—were the men

that had shot Paul Dulong and chased him (7 January 1899 *Farmer*, 4). When the case went to trial in March of 1899, three men, Hosmer, Beaucoudray, and Bradley stood trial for lying in wait to commit murder and shooting with intent to commit murder. Dulong testified that Hosmer had threatened to “get him” after Dulong arrested him for swimming nude within the town limits of Covington, and that he had recognized Hosmer by his demeanor of the night of the shooting. Dulong also testified that Hosmer had been angered by his refusal to join a band of Regulators “to keep the niggers down.” Others testified that Hosmer kept a supply of “Mardi Gras masks” in the storeroom behind his bar for the use by a “secret society.” Witnesses for the defense stated that the three accused men had been in the saloon all night and were found in their beds the following morning. After all the testimony had been heard, the jury deliberated for less than two hours and returned a verdict of “not guilty” (25 March 1899 *Farmer*, 4).

After 1905, Southern government and law enforcement began to curtail—but by no means eliminated—murder by lynching. Increasing national and international scrutiny saw the practice as barbarism and evidence of Southern backwardness, and Southern politicians wanted to avoid federal intervention in race relations (Fairclough 1995; Hale 1998). Law enforcement officers in St. Tammany also more consistently prosecuted whites for “unwarranted” violence against Black residents. For instance in 1909, the sheriff arrested a white man John Schell for stabbing to death a “colored” man Ernest Harvey “for fun.” Although Schell’s behavior could have been explained away in part by the fact that he was intoxicated, the sheriff brought the case to trial (4 September 1909 *Farmer*, 4). In some cases, Black residents were reluctant to identify their attackers, even when the sheriff sought an indictment in the case. In 1916, three white thugs near Ramsay beat into unconsciousness two Black men, one elderly, neither of whom could (or would) identify who had bludgeoned them (4 March 1916 *Farmer*, 1).

Crimes against Black residents, while not always prosecuted, began to influence legal action in other cases as well. In 1922 a group of white citizens in Mandeville convinced Judge Carter of the District Court to indict Emile Vial and his son for the murder of Lew Reynolds Young, a white man. While the coroner could find no evidence of manslaughter in the Young case, Vial had a reputation as “bad man” of Mandeville and had “killed a negro” in an unprosecuted incident some years prior to the death of Young. Some Mandeville residents also stated that he had nearly killed another Black man by shooting him and cutting off his ear. Mandeville residents, perhaps trying to remedy past laxity on the part of law enforcement, convinced the Court to try the case based on Vial’s history of violence against Black residents of Mandeville (9 September 1922 *Farmer*, 1; 16 September 1922 *Farmer*, 1).

An increased willingness to prosecute white-on-Black crimes in St. Tammany interestingly coincided with the revival of the Ku Klux Klan in the early 1920s throughout the South (Brown and Webb 2007, 240), St. Tammany included. In 1921, the Klan, despite its secrecy, suddenly became very visible to residents of the Parish (Harrell 1966), and many white individuals joined the Klan for business connections or prestige in addition to the belief in white supremacy (Judge Steve Ellis, personal interview 7 February 2007).

Membership in the Ku Klux Klan was predominately Protestant, and the Klan in Louisiana focused on violation of bootlegging and racial segregation laws (Harrell 1966, 133). Often packaging their white supremacy rhetoric in Progressive language of the day, the Klan grew strong in lumber, oil, and gas towns where “harlots, card sharks, procurers, and hangers-on [were] ready to pluck from unwary farm boys...their week’s wages” (Harrell 1966, 133).

Editor Mason of the *Farmer*, no doubt representing the feeling of quite a few whites within the parish, at first defended the Klan’s activities as “100 percent Americanism” (17 September 1921 *Farmer*, 2), and welcomed their efforts to end vagrancy, gambling, integrated saloons, and drinking—things which harmed the community as a whole (11 March 1922

Farmer, 2). The Klan in St. Tammany also drove to churches and private residences distributing cash donations, digging wells, and promising help against the sins of vagrancy, drinking, and interracial problems (1 April 1922 *Farmer*, 1; 9 September 1922 *Farmer*, 1). Telling of the places within the parish with the strongest support, the Ku Klux Klan in 1923 initiated 277 members at Talisheek (the northern part of Ward 10) in the midst of a fierce downpour. Despite the rain, “all cars available from most towns” followed the procession, with curious onlookers jamming roads and highways (30 June 1923 *Farmer*, 1).

This revival of the Klan in the 1920s reflected a rise in nationalism and anti-immigration sentiment after World War I across the entire country. In some parts of the U.S. this resulted in extreme anti-German sentiment, but as white and Black soldiers returned from war to find or reclaim jobs, white violence against Blacks escalated. Competition for jobs and fears of socialism caused many whites to view Blacks and Southern and Eastern European immigrant groups with hatred and suspicion imbued with racial ideology (Flanagan 2007, 239-240). The nativist movement within the U.S. overlapped with these fears, promoting exclusion or restriction of immigration and targeting non-Protestant, non-white, non-“American” groups within the country. The Klan emerged in the late 1910s and early 1920s in the context of and playing to these fears and concerns (Knobel 1996).

In St. Tammany Parish, however, the Ku Klux Klan had few immigrants to target, and the majority of immigrants who did reside in the parish came from Northern or Western Europe (Chapter 3). Additionally, the areas of the strongest Klan support were the rural northern wards of the Parish, areas which were predominantly white and had few immigrants. The animosity for Catholic groups the Klan demonstrated elsewhere in the country also did not play a large role in parish Klan activity because the towns, southern wards, and local officials and businessmen were predominantly Catholic. Instead the Klan in

St. Tammany focused on interracial interaction and drinking and gambling establishments, functioning much the same as a fraternal order (Knobel 1996).

By the end of 1923, the majority of residents of St. Tammany and political leaders had had enough of Klan activities within the parish and sought to control their power and influence by unmasking the members. In October of that year, the Covington Town Council passed an ordinance prohibiting the wearing of any mask or disguise in any context other than Mardi Gras, carrying a penalty of \$25 or 30 days in jail. They also forbade parading outside of the carnival season without a permit, subject to a fine of \$100 or 30 days in jail (2 October 1923 *Covington Town Council Minutes*, Ordinance B-1). Public disillusionment with the KKK in St. Tammany mirrored national sentiment. It coincided with several scandals involving Klan leadership and decreasing viability of anti-immigration sentiment as a centripetal political force. By the mid 1920s, the U.S. Congress, based on the work of the Dillingham Commission, curtailed immigration of Southern and Eastern Europeans and Asians with literacy tests and quotas, temporarily removing the question of immigration from the political forefront (Zeidel 2004).

Taking advantage of public dissatisfaction with the KKK, the political campaigns of Hewitt Bouanchaud and Huey P. Long for the gubernatorial election also relied heavily on an anti-Klan messages, which the majority of residents of St. Tammany greeted with applause and cheers (17 November 1923 *Farmer*, 1). Henry Fuqua, the candidate with the largest number of Klan backers, only had a majority of votes in Ward 9 (Slidell) in St. Tammany the following year; the remaining wards voted primarily for Long (Harrell 1966; 19 January 1924 *Farmer*, 4). Louisianians elected Fuqua governor of the state in 1924, and despite a large amount of political support from the Klan, Governor Fuqua pushed state legislation requiring Klansmen to unmask and turn over membership lists to the state. This legislation dissolved Klan membership and efficacy in Louisiana (Harrell 1966).

By the 1920s, lynching and other forms of white-on-black violence used to reinforce color lines began to diminish somewhat after the disenfranchisement of Black voters and the establishment of legal foundations for segregation. The quick peak and decline of the popularity of the Klan in St. Tammany reflected a strong distaste by people within the parish for anyone who “stirred up racial trouble.” At first, many whites supported the Klan and considered enforcement of segregation and liquor laws a partial solution to interracial violence (and interaction). The logic behind this was that if local whites and residents of color did not interact—or especially drink—with each other, they probably would not kill (or have sex) with each other, thus maintaining racial boundaries and the peace. Within a year of Klan activity in the parish, however, white (and Black) residents quickly saw that the Klan promoted racial violence and antagonism, something all racial groups in St. Tammany had witnessed quite enough of in the late 1800s. The increased willingness of officials within the parish to prosecute white-on-Black crime in all likelihood reflected an interest in keeping the “racial peace” more than a protection of Black residents. For instance the Mayor Badon of Covington in 1919 announced that he would strictly enforce racial segregation to quell “any situation in which bitterness between the races may be engendered” (26 July 1919 *Farmer*, 2). In 1921, a group of 200 members of the Dorothy African Methodist Episcopal church in Covington petitioned for the removal of Reverend I. Gilchrist for telling members that “the colored people were being robbed and deprived of their rights by whites” and generally stirring up feelings of racial hatred (29 October 1921 *Farmer*, 1).

The beginning of the decline of lynching and other forms of violence against Black people within the parish in the 1920s additionally resulted from the diminishing “threat” of Black political and economic equality. By the 1920s, white politicians and voters had forced Black people out of the political system (discussed below), color lines had been shored up by important legal cases and legislation, and Black people began to lose economic power as the

lumber and shipbuilding industries withered within the parish (Chapter 4). The slow-down and eventual loss of many of these avenues for employment affected white workers as well, but the narrower economic avenues and opportunities allotted to Black people in general caused them to feel this loss more acutely. It is no coincidence that after the 1920s, Black migration and population growth within the parish slowed down considerably while the white population continued to grow (Chapter 3). Across the South, Black people left rural areas for large Southern cities like Atlanta or northern industrial centers, and the decline in the Black population relative to the white population in these areas of the South generated a more “liberal” and less contentious attitude among whites toward Black residents (Davis and Donaldson 1975, 37).

By the 1930s, lynching (although the meaning of this word is contested—see Waldrep 2000) and other forms of violence declined significantly in the U.S. and the South (Davis and Donaldson 1975; Hale 1998), but interracial violence nevertheless continued. In St. Tammany Parish between 1930 and 1956, reported violence of this type usually took the form of individual white men attacking or killing one or more Black men. For example, in 1934, a grand jury heard the case of the murder of Hezekiah Kinchlow, a Black man murdered at the home of Edward Gunther on Lee Road outside Covington. Witnesses testified that Gunther shot Kinchlow after Kinchlow refused to come into the house and have a drink with him. The jury returned a true bill against Gunther for manslaughter (7 September 1934 *Farmer*, 1; 12 October 1934 *Farmer*, 1). In October of 1940, the district court heard a case where a white man, Andrew Mizell, set fire to the residence of a Black family and fired shots into the building in an attempt to “drive negro employees off the dredging of the canal from Pearl River to Bogalusa”; the jury returned a guilty verdict (25 October 1940 *Farmer*, 1). In December of 1940, a white man at a “negro” dance hall shot

and killed a Black man for being abusive and intoxicated. The sheriff arrested the shooter and charged him with manslaughter (27 December 1940 *Farmer*, 1).

Individuals of color also committed violent acts against white individuals. Another incident occurred on the Pearl River-Bogalusa canal project in which two Black workers, retaliating for insulting comments, attacked the foreman and another white employee with a club and mule shears; the white foreman fired a shotgun at the two Black employees, wounding both. The sheriff arrested the foreman who posted the \$1000 bond before entering the jail (22 November 1940 *Farmer*, 1). In 1945, a group of Black men (two of whom were Army soldiers), attacked a white soldier by pulling him from his car and tackling him. When the white soldier ran into a bakery and grabbed a large knife, the attackers fled (3 August 1945 *Farmer*, 1).

Despite the decline of lynching after the 1920s, the *threat* of lynching persisted as a way to punish Black violence against whites. In 1947 a young Black man, Junior Fair, grabbed and beat two small white children in downtown Covington. Another Black man, John Elliot, who lived in the vicinity, helped police locate Fair, who they quickly arrested. The quick apprehension of Fair by the police settled an “enraged crowd of [white] men who had assembled at and near the jail” (6 June 1947 *Farmer*, 1). Black attacks on white individuals, however, did not occur frequently—and surely the *Farmer* would have reported such outrageous stories. Most often violence at the hands of individuals of color stayed within racial lines.

Violence was very much a cultural medium through which whites attempted to reinforce racial boundaries and keep different racial groups separate within St. Tammany. The peak era of violence in St. Tammany and across the South occurred in the 1890s and early 1900s, after the end of Reconstruction and during the lengthy legal process of disenfranchising Black voters and enforcing segregation. This reputation of violence,

however, did not affect St. Tammany's reputation as a healthful place, which attests to the fact that the *white* population taking advantage of the healthful resources in the parish were not at risk. It also attests to a scope and geography of violence against individuals of color within the parish. In other words, whites (and perhaps some residents of color) perceived that the victims of violence typically deserved their fate or "caroused" in dangerous places.

POLITICS, VOTING, AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM

After the end of Reconstruction in 1878, white Southerners struggled with the idea of large numbers of individuals of African descent participating in the political system and many of them sought out ways to obstruct or destroy Black political advancement.

Louisiana Democrats—often called "Bourbon Democrats" (although this name occludes significant rifts and diversity within the party [Woodward 1951])—fought against any threat to their elite position by attacking the Republican Party, Populism, and the Black electorate within the state (Cunningham 1965, Moore 1978, Parent 2004). In the late 1880s and early 1890s throughout the South, rising agricultural commodity prices, political uncertainty after the ousting of the Republicans, and domination of capital interests exposed an enormous rift in Democratic political support and orientation. Historians refer to this period as the "Agrarian Revolt" because small-scale farmers and other poor or relatively poor white Southerners briefly joined their efforts with Republicans and the majority of the Black electorate in challenging to the dominance of the Bourbon Democrats (Woodward 1951, Inverarity 1976, Hyde 1996).

In the midst of this political instability, the largely Democratic state legislature passed powerful legislation requiring segregation between whites and Blacks and trailblazing a rash of future segregation laws. These laws voided all legislation passed during Reconstruction that had made segregation illegal. In 1890, legislation required railroads to provide separate accommodations based on race. By 1894, Louisiana formally outlawed marriage between

whites and individuals of African descent, the last state in the South to do so (4 May 1894 *Farmer*, 4). The 1898 Constitutional Convention required segregated schools in Louisiana. These initial efforts issued in subsequent segregation legislation regarding drinking establishments, mental hospitals, and neighborhood exclusion (Reed 1965, 383-384).

It is no coincidence that the number of individuals murdered by lynching peaked in Louisiana in 1896. C. Vann Woodward (1993) argued that in light of significant economic and cultural diversity within the white population of the South, one theme that politically united them was the maintenance of the social hierarchy based on race. This was particularly true in the divisive era of the Agrarian Revolt when white Southerners witnessed what James Inverarity (1976) has labeled a “boundary crisis.” After the Populists/Republican “Fusion” party failed to win the 1896 Louisiana gubernatorial election (and elections across the South), many of the Fusion participants either left politics or rejoined the Democratic Party. Those that rejoined the Democrats, despite their continued support for small-scale farmers, nonetheless agreed that Black voters should be disenfranchised (Inverarity 1976, Wilson 2000). As poor whites and small-scale farmers, many of whom had supported the Fusion Party, fought to avoid disenfranchisement, differentiating themselves from Black Louisianans (often in the same economic and political circumstances) became that much more important. Violence was one way whites used to enhance that distinction.

Despite the threat (or promise) of significant political change in 1896, the Bourbon Democrats—lead by Murphy J. Foster—handily won the election by shadowy means and soon thereafter began to solidify their position by placing significant restrictions on the franchise (Parent 2004). Louisiana voters had rejected the suffrage restrictions by amendment in the election of 1896, but the legislature passed control of the suffrage issue to the Governor to be dealt with at convention. Additionally by new legislation the Governor now appointed local assessors who would register voters according to their completion and

signature of an application, to be judged by the assessor (Cunningham 1965). The registrar had the power to remove names from the registration list for the following reasons:

Whenever they have reason to believe that any name or names upon the books are fraudulently or illegally place thereon; when they know of the death or removal of the person registered; when the insanity of a person registered is legally established; upon the production of a certified copy of a judgment of felony in full force against the person registered; or upon reliable information of such conviction; upon the production of a certified copy of a judgment directing the cancellation to be made; upon the certificate of canvassers appointed by law. (28 November 1896 *Farmer*, 4)

Governor Foster, upon his inauguration, made the purpose of this centralized control of the franchise clear: to eliminate the franchise of Blacks and the “ignorant and vicious classes” (23 May 1896 *Farmer*, 4).

The problem for many white Democrats with this initial legislation was that it disenfranchised a large number of white voters who could not pass the literacy requirement. The Governor dealt with this issue at the Constitutional Convention of 1898 (the products of which did not need to be approved by voters). During this convention, representatives created a Suffrage Bill which allowed for voters to be registered on three different bases: registration in 1868 (the “grandfather clause”), education (could read and write *or* answer other questions), or owned property valued at \$300 or more. This convention also fixed the poll tax between two and three dollars and did not overlook “the preventing of the African from holding any office or honor or trust” (26 February 1898 *Farmer*, 4; 5 March 1898 *Farmer*, 4; 12 March 1898 *Farmer*, 4; Parent 2004). The Suffrage Bill had the immediate effect of reducing white suffrage in Louisiana by over 38,000 and Black suffrage by over 125,000 (Woodward 1951, 343). In 1900, only 916 “Negro” voters had registered to vote statewide (*ibid.*); however, records in St. Tammany show that 99 “Colored” voters had registered to vote within the parish, most of which qualified under the “educational” requirement (24 March 1900 *Farmer*, 4). If this number is correct, St. Tammany Parish alone had over 10

percent of the Black voters in the entire state, despite having a relatively small population of color.

Clear evidence of the rhetoric and action of white Democrats in both St. Tammany and throughout the South is visible in the *St. Tammany Farmer*, as the owners of the newspaper “published entirely in the interest of the Democratic Party...to uphold the purest principles of Democracy and not cringe or fawn to any man or set of men for public favor” (Jahncke 1988, 2). W.G. Kentzel, editor of the *Farmer* until the 1910s, often printed articles detailing Republican trickery, especially regarding Black voters (7 August 1880 *Farmer*, 5; 25 October 1884 *Farmer*, 4). He frequently, probably with the support of many white political and business leaders within the parish, demonstrated his perspective on Black and lower-class voters. In one article he explained why the North would never understand the Southern “Negro”:

To maintain either white men who own no property and work for wages, or cocoa-nut headed negroes of the same class in office, against the wishes and interests of their employers, and in opposition to the social and moral forces of an intelligent minority, requires the bayonets of the Federal government. (24 July 1880 *Farmer*, 4)

Clearly as legislation and legal action began to restrict the political and social rights of people of color in Louisiana (and across the South), the *Farmer* participated in and contributed to rhetoric aimed at maintaining the existing social hierarchy and racial divisions. The newspaper reprinted sensationally racist stories from other newspapers in Louisiana and across the South. For example, the *Farmer* presented its readers with an “explanation” of racial difference as stated by Mississippi Governor Alcorn and transcribed by the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*:

The Southern People will not have negro rule. The negro is not a white man with black skin. He is a different race. He is a barbarian, and barbarians cannot rule civilized people. His head is covered in wool. He is a sheep. The white man has straight hair like a lion. The negro is an infant. He has the flat nose, the retreating chin, the protruding lips of an infant. It will take

centuries of development to thoroughly fit him for civilization. It is a racial difference, and the strong race will rule. (4 May 1889 *Farmer*, 4)

The exclusion of “Negroes” from the “Southern People” (capitalization in original) reflects the true goal of segregation: the complete removal of people of color from the social and political world of whites. Not only white Southerners chased this goal. The achievement of a white republic, built on the “inherent” intelligence, morality, and ingenuity so evident in the white race (at least to whites), became the goal of the Northerners as well in the post-Reconstruction period (Blum 2005).

Despite the convictions and biases W.G. Kentzel so forcefully presented in the official journal of St. Tammany Parish, other evidence suggests that many residents in the parish did not view race and disenfranchisement the same way. Significant proof of this occurred in the 1893 Mandeville municipal election, hailed by a contributor to the *Farmer* as “the first time in thirty years that our town has been free from negro rule” (19 August 1893 *Farmer*, 4). In this election, a majority of voters elected an all-white ticket—both for mayor and council—but this was the first time in the fifteen years since the end of Reconstruction this had happened. Only 165 men voted in the election, which the *Farmer* nevertheless touted as a “signal victory.” Evidence that some white voters needed to be convinced to vote for an all white ticket, “eighty white voters met at the residence of Col. Geo Moorman last night and resolved that Mandeville must hereafter be governed by the white race” (ibid.). Some pockets elsewhere within the parish—Madisonville, for instance—never completely disenfranchised voters of color and continued to elect politicians of color well into the mid-twentieth century (Judge Steve Ellis personal interview, 7 February 2007), events that never received any coverage by the *Farmer*.

Reflecting the strength of political multi-racialism in parts of St. Tammany, in the 1890s the Republican Party had a very small but remarkably persistent following, led in part

by William “Wiley” Johnson in Mandeville. In 1889, the federal government appointed Johnson as postmaster in Covington, replacing a white man of German origin, Charles Heintz. Immediately white residents of Covington petitioned the government against the appointment on the grounds that Johnson was not only “colored,” but a resident of Mandeville, which was insulting to both Black and white residents of Covington (22 June 1889 *Farmer*, 4). Johnson never took the position, and the federal government again attempted to appoint him as postmaster of Covington in 1891, replacing “Mrs. Alvarez, a white lady, who ha[d] filled the position for many years” (24 January 1891 *Farmer*, 4). If Johnson ever began work as the postmaster, the appointment was short-lived, for just a few months later the *Farmer* reported that “our popular postmistress, Mrs. Alvarez, has moved the post office...” (28 January 1893 *Farmer*, 5). Johnson’s political career as one of the leaders of the Republican Party in Mandeville continued, however, and he served as the chair of the Republican Party in the Fourth Ward (Mandeville) in attempts to prevent the suffrage amendments from becoming law (23 November 1895 *Farmer*, 4). After the 1898 Constitutional Convention which effectively disenfranchised all but a few Black voters throughout the state, Johnson and Baptist minister Francis Davidson started work on a “colored” newspaper called *The American*, printed in Mandeville (21 October 1899 *Farmer*, 4). No copies of this paper exist.

These attempts at protecting the political power of Black voters ultimately failed in an increasingly hostile and racialized political climate. Fighting between white Republicans escalated concerning the inclusion of Black Republicans in party affairs, which reduced the political efficacy of Black political leaders across the South. In the first few decades of the twentieth century, white Republicans did little to protect the Black franchise (7 May 1904 *Farmer*, 4; Brown and Webb 2007). Between 1900 and 1904, the number of Black voters in St. Tammany Parish fell from 99 to 21 (24 March 1900 *Farmer*, 5; 8 October 1904 *Farmer*, 4).

By 1935, the total number of Black voters in the parish—despite the elimination of poll taxes during the Depression—was only *one* (7 June 1935 *Farmer*, 1).

The procession of disenfranchisement and other legal restrictions of Black individuals across the South accompanied continued violence and the re-emergence of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1910s and 20s (Brown and Webb 2007). Parish level government and municipal bodies in St. Tammany passed increasingly restrictive ordinances against vagrancy and carrying concealed weapons (4 August 1906 *Farmer*, 4; *Mandeville Town Council Minutes* 4 August 1913). These ordinances targeted Black individuals within the parish ostensibly to reduce the threat of violence against whites; but these laws also significantly reduced Black mobility, Black means for self-protection amidst a population of heavily-armed whites, and Black political power (conviction for a felony or other criminal act could disqualify Black voters). Increased restrictions served to maintain the racial hierarchy and boundaries.

Although St. Tammany Parish did not designate race in legal records, a sample⁴ of indictment records between 1905 and 1916 shows that the courts processed a significant percentage of charges for carrying concealed weapons. In 1905 and 1906, 35 percent and 17 percent of indictments carried charges of carrying concealed weapons (*Sixth District Court Book of Indictments 1878-1906*). In 1907 and 1915, specific dockets listed between 45 and 70 percent of indictments with the charge of carrying concealed weapons (9 February 1907 *Farmer*, 4; 29 April 1916 *Farmer*, 1). While not an exhaustive count by any means, this survey of court cases shows that law enforcement arrested many individuals for carrying concealed weapons, a charge the *Farmer* describes as directed at “negroes” (4 August 1906 *Farmer*, 4).

⁴ Court sessions in 1905 and 1906 were selected from available District Court minute books (1878-1908) summarizing case details. Court records for sessions between 1909 and 1916 are missing. *The Farmer* inconsistently printed court dockets and frequently did not indicate the racial identity of those on trial.

While St. Tammany residents believe, and some evidence corroborates, that the parish never had the “racial problems” of its neighbors New Orleans and Bogalusa (Inez Thomas, personal interview 15 November 2005; Adelaide Boettner, personal interview, 8 May 2006; Judge Steve Ellis, personal interview 2 February 2007; Reverend Leo Edgeron, personal interview 2 February 2007), St. Tammany nevertheless was the focus of two important legal cases regarding segregation and racial definition, demonstrating the necessity of legal intervention to keep different racial groups separate and distinguishable. Both cases involved “racially-ambiguous” individuals and the railroads that ran through St. Tammany Parish.

The first case originated in 1891 in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, and New Orleans involving segregation in St. Tammany Parish and the State of Louisiana. In that year, residents of color in Bay St. Louis and New Orleans raised money to test the Louisiana rail car law, which required “colored” patrons to ride in designated cars separate from white patrons (24 January 1891 *Farmer*, 4). Homer Plessy, a very light-skinned man “of color” and political activist, attempted to ride the train from New Orleans to Covington on the East Louisiana Railway, owned by the Poitevant and Favre Lumber Company, in a rail car designated for whites. The case eventually went to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1896 as *Plessy v. Ferguson*, and the Court ruled that the Louisiana law requiring racial segregation on trains was constitutional if the facilities were “separate but equal.” The court reasoned that racial identity lay “outside the law, beyond and before any act of human agency,” and therefore, no matter what Homer Plessy’s “racial status” was, the court could not undo elements of human nature (4 June 1894 *Farmer*, 1; Hale 1998, 23). This decision, based on the “natural” difference between *all* whites and *everyone* of any African descent, provided the legal foundation for white state, county, and municipal governments across the entire nation to

pass legislation or in other ways support complete social and residential segregation based on race.

The second case reaffirmed the “one-drop” rule in deciphering racial identity and the constitutionality of segregation policies. The case began in 1908 when the two daughters of Sam Lee, a resident of St. Tammany Parish near Folsom, attempted to ride the New Orleans and Great Northern Railroad from Covington to Folsom. The Lee family were members of the “Freejack” (a word considered by many to be derogatory) community on the boundary between St. Tammany and Tangipahoa Parishes. This community had a well-known tripartite racial heritage, a combination of African, European, and Native American ancestry. Sam Lee’s two daughters entered the car for whites, and the train conductor instructed them to move to the “colored” car, which they did. After the operator left, however, the girls returned to the white car. The conductor discovered the girls in the white car and gave them a choice of returning to the colored car or being put off the train. The girls chose to leave the train rather than “ride in the Negro car,” and the conductor put them off near Ramsay, a predominantly white and often lawless community west of Covington. Since the girls had no other means of transportation, they walked the eleven miles home alone, and did not reach Folsom until 3 a.m. the following morning. Sam Lee sued the N.O.G.N.R.R. for mental anguish, resulting medical bills, and defamation for accusations that his children were “negro” (*Sam Lee, et al. vs. New Orleans Great Northern Railroad*; Posey 1976).

The case ultimately came down to racial identity—whether or not the railroad operator had a right to ask the girls (only seven and nine years old) to move into a colored car, which of course depended on the racial classification of the two girls. The lawyers for the plaintiff called several witnesses testifying to the fact that while the family was not exactly white, they could not be considered “colored” or “Negro” and did not know themselves as such. The girls had attended white schools in Mississippi and had been “known as white.”

Lawyers for the railroad, however, tried to establish that the family had been known to “associate with colored people” and that the children’s maternal grandfather had been listed in the census as a free person of color. The complicated nature of racial identity became readily apparent as Sam Lee testified:

I am a white man and have always been a white man and passed for a white man. My father died when I was a small white boy, and I was always told he was from the old country Europe...I married [my wife] as a white woman and got my license for her to marry her as white. She comes of a mixture. My mother said she was of Indian blood (*Sam Lee, et al. vs. N.O.G.N.R.R.*, 5-6).

One of the girls had been raised in Mississippi for a short time by her aunt, who had married a colored man, a fact which the defense used to show that the family was in fact “colored.” Judge Thomas Burns, who presided over the case, found in favor of the railroad company because of the evidence showing the girls’ maternal grandfather as a free man of color, despite claims from the Lee family that he was no “colored nigger” (*Sam Lee, et al. vs. N.O.G.N.R.R.*; Posey 1979, 184). The case eventually went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld the ruling of the district court in St. Tammany.

These two cases both involved questions of racial identity and the constitutionality of segregation in a time period of the increasing erosion of Black political and social rights. The fact that these two cases both took place in St. Tammany Parish is probably not a coincidence considering the large number of individuals of both European and African ancestry within parish boundaries and increasing hostility toward “non-white” people. The ambiguous racial conditions in some parts of St. Tammany provided the perfect test cases to strengthen white dominance and reinforce color lines.

The Democratic regime continued to dominate in Louisiana until the 1910s and 20s, when Populism and Progressivism again resurfaced. During this transition, the editorship of the *St. Tammany Farmer* changed from the Kentzel family to a Progressive entrepreneur

named D.H. Mason, who served as editor from 1915 to 1928 (31 March 1928 *Farmer*, 1). Editor Mason in many ways epitomized the “layered” racial belief predominant among Progressive whites in St. Tammany and throughout the South during this period: he advocated segregation but community support and involvement by all races (Newby 1965); he believed education and entrepreneurship would benefit everyone within the parish; he presented stories of advancement and success within the Black population but also printed racist cartoons and other depictions in his paper. While still clinging to the notions of a racial hierarchy, he nonetheless promoted individual responsibility for both whites and Blacks. Telling of the transition at the helm of the newspaper, Mason changed the *Farmer’s* tagline from “The Blessing of Government, Like the Dews from Heaven, Should Descend Alike upon the Rich and the Poor” to “Watch St. Tammany Grow!” (13 February 1915 *Farmer*, 1). One of Mason’s first editorial columns pointed at illiteracy and readjustment to freedom as the biggest problems facing the “negro race.” Mason also acknowledged that changes in the Black community affected whites as well:

The white people are no less interested in this cause [Black prosperity and happiness] than the negro himself, because the negro’s prosperity is a part of the prosperity of the nation...The success of every man’s life, whether white or black, depends principally upon his own exertions (30 January 1915 *Farmer*, 2).

Editor Mason was just one Progressive individual in St. Tammany, but his style of journalism and emphasis on economic expansion, community, and the “good” society reflect a change in politics in Louisiana and across the South. The paternalistic Democratic politics, rooted in longing for the old South, shifted toward a future-oriented Progressivism and Populism that advocated for the rights and improvement of the individual across economic class but within racial category. While these two political movements largely ignored or entrenched political and legal inequality between whites and Blacks, they nonetheless marked

a period of investment in education and community and began to undermine racial thinking of the previous century (Newby 1965; Smith 2002; Szymanski 2003).

Populism swept across the South and marked Louisiana politics in the 1920s and 1930s, largely associated with the political career of Huey P. Long and his political machinery. Long garnered sizable support in St. Tammany Parish that lasted through his entire political career, and parish residents considered him “unafraid...honest and the poor man’s friend” (4 September 1926 *Farmer*, 1). Huey P. Long campaigned on many planks that appealed to poorer whites: free textbooks for school children, removal of tolls on public bridges, and improved roads throughout the state (including rural areas). He opposed the corruption of the New Orleans “cess-pool” and the political influence of big corporations, all the while using revenue from oil and gas to pay for some of his Populist programs. He also began the work of equalizing pay for white and Black schoolteachers (Opatowsky 1960). These strategies allowed him to appeal to a broad spectrum of white and Black voters (though few) without engaging in the vitriolic racist rhetoric used by other politicians across the South (Opatowsky 1960; Parent 2004; White 2006). This type of political campaign appealed to the majority of voters in St. Tammany in the 1920s and 1930s. Long won election easily within the parish and Longite governors continued to receive parish support; incidentally, most of them also purchased large estate homes in St. Tammany Parish (8 October 1927 *Farmer*, 1; 30 March 1929 *Farmer*, 1; 26 July 1930 *Farmer*, 1; 31 January 1936 *Farmer*, 1; 3 September 1937 *Farmer*, 1; 25 February 1938 *Farmer*, 1). The fact that Huey P. Long and his successors were so popular is even more remarkable in St. Tammany, the home parish of State Senator J.Y. Sanders, Jr. (and Huey P. Long’s archenemy) in an era of politics that strongly supported local candidates.

While the de facto racial liberalism of Huey P. Long’s regime is debatable (Fairclough 1995), it is clear that state politics took a racist turn shortly before his death. This turn was

reflected in the editorship of the *Farmer*, which passed to entrepreneur H.K. Goodwin after the death of D.H. Mason in 1926. Goodwin almost immediately revived the *Farmer*'s old tradition of racist rhetoric, urging white voters to support the Democratic ticket.

Mr. Hoover [Republican] has put himself of record in favor of equality of the races by his segregation order in the Department of Commerce. Only this week did we read with great disgust an appeal to the negroes of the South by Republicans....The whites of this great Southland must and will uphold white supremacy by voting for the Democratic nominee (3 November 1928 *Farmer*, 2).

This racist turn in politics occurred throughout the South in the 1930s and 1940s as white political candidates took advantage of white fears of changing racial hierarchies in a liberalizing national political climate. A liberal Democrat, Franklin D. Roosevelt, defeated Republican Herbert Hoover, in the national election of 1932 (12 November 1932 *Farmer*, 1). Roosevelt largely won based on his economic recovery platform, but many white Southerners voted against Hoover because of his ambiguous racial politics and lackluster economic performance. Roosevelt and his wife soon earned a reputation for racial liberalism that alienated many white Southerners and attracted the support of Black individuals across the U.S. (22 June 1929 *Farmer*, 1; Tindall 1967; Feldman 2004; Tyler 2004).

In Louisiana, many politicians campaigned against racial liberalism. Earl K. Long's campaign in 1939 and 1940 against Sam Jones embodied some of the most "dirty" racial politics of the time, as Long planted false endorsements for Jones in leading Black newspapers and widely distributed photos of Black campaigners holding signs for Jones (Optowsky 1960; Fairclough 1995, 35). Jones won the election and shortly thereafter set out unsuccessfully to dismantle the Long political machine (23 February 1940 *Farmer*, 1). In Earl Long's campaigns in the late 1940s and 1956, despite continuous use of racist rhetoric, extension of welfare rights, veterans bonuses and other benefits gave him the reputation of a racial moderate, and Black voters predictably supported him (Optowsky 1960, 159).

St. Tammany Parish had become somewhat disenchanted with the Longites prior to the 1940 election however, as Earl Long attempted to appoint a supporter of his as Mayor of Covington after the death of Mayor Marsolan in July of 1939. The Covington Board of Alderman contested this act (and the 1934 Legislative Act allowing it), preferring to hold a general election (14 July 1939 *Farmer*, 1). Amid a scandal of corruption and the indictment of former Governor Leche (and St. Tammany resident) for his involvement in the “Hot Oil” deals, Governor Long agreed that Covington could best proceed by way of municipal election (11 August 1939 *Farmer*, 1; 6 October 1939 *Farmer*, 1). The winning candidate for the mayoralty was a local councilman who had campaigned on a two-fold platform: boosting Covington and enforcement of racial segregation in bars and their vicinity (6 October 1939 *Farmer*, 1; 13 October 1939 *Farmer*, 1).

In the context of increasing racial liberalism on a national scale and New Deal policies that assisted Black Southerners (although clearly to a lesser degree than white Southerners), racial hostility intensified in Louisiana. Politics in St. Tammany in the 1940s and early 1950s, however, revolved around racial moderation and the avoidance of “stirring up racial trouble” or “creating suspicion and discord” (16 July 1943 *Farmer*, 2). St. Tammany Parish consistently voted for local Congressman Jim Morrison, a racial moderate who successfully avoided dealing with the issue of segregation (16 October 1942 *Farmer*, 1; Fairclough 1995, 303, 348).

The pursuit of “racial moderation” does not mean that white voters in St. Tammany pursued equality between the races; rather, it indicated a desire to preserve established racial boundaries and practices. For example, business leaders in St. Tammany ran ads in the *Farmer* advocating voting against the Roosevelt-Hillman-Bowder ticket in 1944 because of their connections with Communist “forces” and their creation of racial unrest with New Deal policies assisting Black residents (7 October 1944 *Farmer*, 6). *The Farmer* made no

mention of NAACP activities or any other activities of anti-segregation or Civil Rights organizations within the parish by 1956, although clearly these organizations mobilized support quite efficiently in New Orleans and elsewhere within the state (Fairclough 1995).

On the other hand, St. Tammany residents voted *against* candidates who ran on white supremacy platforms. For example, candidate for state representative from St. Tammany Parish, Percy J. Herrin declared his intentions toward Black residents within the parish:

I am unquestioningly for white supremacy. I do not want to destroy the negroes, nor do I wish to do them harm. I am in favor of better education for the negro as well as living conditions, but I will oppose the right for the negro to vote in Democratic primaries. I am not in favor of the negro usurping authority over white people. I believe in the negroes living within their own race and rank. Not to do so promotes racial hatred and I will lend every effort to correct this evil if I am elected (29 August 1947 *Farmer*, 1, 8).

St. Tammany voters did not elect Herrin, instead re-electing Earl K. Long and his supporter Rausch (27 February 1947 *Farmer*, 1). Even in the gubernatorial election of 1956, two years after the *Brown v. Board of Education* case wherein the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional school segregation based on race, St. Tammany Parish refused to vote for staunch segregationists, instead splitting their support between Earl K. Long in the northern part of the parish and Mayor of New Orleans Chep Morrison in the southern part of the parish. *The Farmer* reported that support for McLemore and Grevemberg (the self-described “white man’s candidates”) was weak because “the segregation issue has not been as paramount an issue in St. Tammany as in some other parts of the state” (13 January 1956 *Farmer*, 4).

National, state, and local politics regarding race shaped and were shaped by the racial geography of St. Tammany Parish. As a part of the South as a region, residents of color in St. Tammany Parish struggled against disenfranchisement and increasingly restrictive laws on mobility and self-protection that Black individuals across the South faced in the late 1800s and first two decades of the twentieth century. Between 1890 and 1920, almost all

individuals of color within the parish lost their voting rights, and St. Tammany parish officials attempted to enforce strict social and residential segregation. Evidence demonstrates, however, that racial boundaries in some places within the parish continued to be fluid, and law enforcement and legal systems attempted to deal with those groups with increasing scrutiny. By the 1930s and 40s, however, despite increasingly racialized politics throughout the state, politics in St. Tammany instead focused on economic development and keeping “the racial peace.”

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the issue of public education, particularly in rural areas across the South, came to the forefront of social and political issues with the rise of the Progressive movement (Link 1988). Public education in the South received little state support, and the region as a whole had the sorry reputation for having the largest number of illiterates, white and Black. By 1900, only Kentucky amongst all other Southern states had enacted a law making education compulsory, and in Louisiana almost 18 percent of whites and 50 percent of Blacks were illiterate (Woodward 1951, 400).

State and parish provision of education in many ways represents the ultimate government sanction of racial discrimination and reification of racial boundaries. This is because public education reflected divergent views of what was possible for, required of, or allocated to individuals on the basis of their race. The segregated and unequal public education system in the South (and throughout much of the country) indoctrinated Black and white school children at a very young age in the normalcy of segregated facilities and the practicality of the inequitable distribution of resources. It is no coincidence that public education became a pivotal issue during the Civil Rights movement.

During the late 1800s and early 1900s in Louisiana, local communities in rural areas held the responsibilities of establishing schools for themselves; this was necessary because

state funds were woefully inadequate. In parishes with plantation economies, planters often fought against public education for Black farmers and their children. Whites viewed education as simultaneously unnecessary and dangerous, and restrictions on education limited the economic opportunities and mobility of Black residents (de Jong 2002). In St. Tammany and other parishes with small-farm economies, Black residents tended to have greater access to education, although white and “colored” schools were largely unequal (de Jong 2002).

In the late 1800s in St. Tammany Parish, in contrast to other parishes in the state and across the South as a whole, Black and white school children had similar access to public education, although the quality and quantity of that education was by no means equal. White schools usually lasted between three and six months a year (dependent upon funds available, the willingness of teachers, and school attendance) and Black schools stayed in session for between one and three months a year. Black schools typically had higher student-to-teacher ratios as well. In 1884, white schools averaged 25 students per teacher, and Black schools averaged 39 students per teacher. With all these inequalities, however, Black children remarkably had slightly higher rates of school attendance than white children, but this varied by ward (31 January 1885 *Farmer*, 5; St. Tammany Parish School Board 9 October 1901 [published in the *Farmer* 19 October 1901, 4]).

Between 1885 and 1903, the number of children attending school in St. Tammany increased fourfold, with the number of Black children in attendance increasing by a slightly higher margin than white children (18 July 1903 *Farmer*, 4). This trend reflects the increasing public awareness of the importance of education, as the fourfold increase in school attendance far outpaced the general population increase, which had doubled between 1880 and 1900. Growing school attendance and enhanced education provision resulted from an

increase in available parish funds, which allowed the school system to go to a minimum six-month curriculum for white students in 1901 (26 January 1901 *Farmer*, 4).

The relative (though limited) equality between school *provision* for white and Black students ended abruptly after 1903, however, and the number of “colored” schools in the parish dropped from eight to five, while the number of white schools increased from 26 to 33 (20 October 1906 *Farmer*, 4). Because of paltry state support for public education and the reliance upon communities to sustain their own schools, this decrease in schooling for Black residents of the parish can be seen as both (willful) negligence on the part of the parish school board and a relative decline in the standard of living of Black residents of the parish.

Residents of color fought to re-establish the schools and develop other opportunities for their children within the parish in a socio-political climate of decreasing political power, increased segregation, and intensifying hostility toward individuals of African descent. In 1907, the Colored Teachers Institute, a training and professional organization for educators of color within the parish met to establish the new Covington Colored School, which builders eventually completed in June of that year. As the school neared completion, however, charges of financial misdealing dampened excitement over the opening of the school. Principal J.S. Tynes publicly announced that the \$221 donated for the cause by whites (and probably other monies as well) had been misappropriated. In an attempt to repair the reputation of the school administration (and perhaps remind whites not to implicate the community of color as a whole), Principal Tyner remarked, “All ‘crooks may look alike’, but they are not alike, nor do they conduct themselves alike” (6 April 1907 *Farmer*, 5).

Disparities between white and Black schools are clearly evident in the differences in salaries for white and Black educators. In 1907, school teachers of color received 15 to 20 percent less than white teachers for the same job (20 April 1907 *Farmer*, 5). By 1909, the difference

had increased significantly, while the number of children per teacher in Black schools increased as well (Table 6.1). The number of white students per teacher in 1909 was 35, while the number of Black students per teacher was 42. Male teachers of color on average earned less than white female instructors. Perhaps most tellingly, parish expenditures per white student averaged \$11, but parish expenditures per Black student averaged under \$4. Because of the system of allocation of parish tax revenues, much of this difference originated in the contribution of parish taxes at a community level, reflecting significant differences in income and standard of living between white and Black segregated communities. By July of 1911, the St. Tammany Parish School Board reported that increasingly the length of the school term for both white and Colored students was in the best interests of the community. The School Board sought to increase the white school term from an average of seven months to nine months and the Colored school term from an average of three months to seven months (15 July 1911 *Farmer*, 3).

TABLE 6.1. SCHOOL EXPENDITURES AND ATTENDANCE BY RACE, 1909

	TOTAL CHILDREN	TOTAL TEACHERS	STUDENTS PER TEACHER	AVERAGE SALARY/TERM	\$ PER STUDENT
WHITE SCHOOLS (45)	2,515	73	35	Men: \$89 Women: \$47	\$11.03
“COLORED” SCHOOLS (17)	805	19	42	Men: \$45 Women: \$27	\$3.73

Source: *St. Tammany Parish School Board Proceedings* (13 February 1909 *Farmer*, 4)

White school children also had the option of attending private academies in the parish. Two progressive academies opened in the parish to accommodate the needs of serious (and relatively wealthy) white students: Dixon Academy (for boys) in 1901 and St. Scholastica Academy (for girls) in 1903 (5 January 1901 *Farmer*, 4; 25 July 1903 *Farmer*, 4). These academies provided the first high schools in the parish and were expensive to attend. Attending the high school at Dixon Academy cost parents \$15 per term, and St. Scholastica

cost even more at \$5 per month (or about \$30 per year). In 1912, Dixon Academy became St. Paul's School for Boys (18 May 1912 *Farmer*, 2) and continued to be a segregated, private school.

Black students had no access to public high schools, and few had the means to travel to or pay tuition at private academies. The St. Tammany Parish School Board instead provided a Parish Training School for the "secondary" education of Black school children. In 1914, Superintendent of the Parish School Board, Elmer E. Lyon, addressed demands for secondary education for children of color in the parish by hiring an "industrial" teacher with the help of outside financial assistance.

The duties of this teacher was [sic] to teach the girls how to sew, cook, and scrub. She often took her classes out to a neighboring house and had them scrub floors, wash dishes, and set tables in such a manner as would receive the commendation of any person for whom they might work. I don't know how you feel toward the continuation of this kind of work, but I hope you will agree with me that it is more important that the colored children be taught to work than it is to study beyond say the fifth grade (St. Tammany Parish School Board 6 July 1914 [18 July 1914 *Farmer*, 2]).

This thinking typified predominant educational policies toward Black schoolchildren, particularly in the South, where whites viewed literacy and education disruptive to the social hierarchy, labor force, and Black morality (Newby 1975, 176-177). Whites intended industrial training schools to provide "a practical and useful education for the colored people" (21 November 1914 *Farmer*, 1), but this type of education reinforced racial and class barriers against Black social mobility.

Despite the orientation of the Training School toward instructing schoolchildren of color in domestic work and trades, the establishment of the school faced a great deal of opposition within the parish. Superintendent Lyon announced in 1921 that the Parish would build a Training School for Black children near Slidell using a variety of funds including donations from the Slater Educational Fund, the Julius Rosenwald Fund, and donated land

from the Salmen Brick and Lumber Company (4 June 1921 *Farmer*, 1). Plans to build the school soon faltered with opposition from leaders in Slidell, who (including Fritz Salmen, owner of the Salmen Brick and Lumber Company) claimed that Slidell did “not want, nor could it control such a negro institution where several hundred students would be housed” (13 August 1921 *Farmer*, 1). The Parish School Board eventually succeeded in building the Training School in Slidell, arguing that St. Tammany needed to “do in the future as we have in the past everything possible for the proper training of our colored youth.” The establishment of the school also attempted to thwart Northern labor agents, who had been seen in the area trying to recruit Black individuals to migrate North (13 October 1923 *Farmer*, 3). The Parish Training School at Slidell became the first high school for students of color in the parish in 1935, when the School Board upgraded the library and increased requirements to meet state standards for high schools (12 April 1935 *Farmer*, 1,4).

In the 1920s, the Parish School Board relied extensively on Rosenwald funds to build schools for colored students. By the 1930s, most of the biggest towns in St. Tammany had constructed Rosenwald schools for their students of color, often with the donation of land by individuals within the community where the school was built. With the assistance of the Rosenwald Fund, the Parish School Board built “colored” schools in Mandeville, Madisonville, Covington, Folsom, Sun, and Slidell (11 October 1930 *Farmer*, 1, 8), although the availability of Rosenwald money had the negative effect of decreasing School Board interest in building colored schools without financial assistance. The School Board typically situated the schools in mostly-Black neighborhoods or on segregated streets within specific towns.

Illustrative of the difficulty residents of color had in establishing schools for their children, in 1930, residents in Lacombe delivered \$240 to the Parish School Board to hold for them until they raised enough money to qualify for Rosenwald funds. The Parish School

Board nearly fourteen years earlier had purchased a tract of land from Augustine Roquette for the purpose of building the school but had never allocated funds for its construction. Less than one month after the transfer of money to the Parish School Board in 1930, the Board found that the land they had purchased (fourteen years earlier) was “inadequate and unsatisfactory;” the unanimous decision of the Board was to sell the land, and place the proceeds in an account with the donated money “to the credit of the Lacombe colored school building fund” (St. Tammany Parish School Board 5 November 1930 [8 November 1930 *Farmer*, 1, 4]). While the activities of the Board seem illogical or negligent at best and suspicious and unfair at worst, having cash in the School Board coffers during a very difficult economic time may have motivated members of the Board to “delay” the construction of the school in favor of other projects.

During the Great Depression, the entire St. Tammany Parish School system suffered tremendously. Many white patrons of schools within the parish pressured the Board into cutting the amount of money spent on schools for children of color. Superintendent Lyon justified parish expenditure on schools for children of color on the grounds that the School Board had received hundreds of dollars from the Rosenwald, Jeanes, and Slater Funds. He furthermore compared school expenditures per student, white and Black, to other states across the South. In 1932 Louisiana spent more per white student than any state in the South at \$67.47, and gave \$16.54 per student of color to earn third place behind Maryland and Oklahoma (who spent \$43 and \$34, respectively (St. Tammany Parish School Board 8 January 1932 [16 January 1932 *Farmer*, 1,6]). The effects of the Great Depression, however, caused tax revenues within the parish to fall dramatically, and the School Board cut both white and Black teacher salaries by 20 percent in 1932 (St. Tammany Parish School Board 19 February 1932 [27 February 1932 *Farmer*, 5]). By the end of the year, the Board had to reduce the length of the school term and delayed payment to transfer drivers and teachers

until after the receipts from the 1932 taxes been returned to the Parish tax collector (St. Tammany Parish School Board 19 August 1932 [27 August 1932 *Farmer*, 1, 4]). The following year, the Board paid many school teachers in scrip to the Community Exchange in Covington (St. Tammany Parish School Board 7 July 1933 [14 July 1933 *Farmer*, 1, 2]).

The 1930s in Louisiana, despite difficult economic conditions, proved to be a turning point in the educational system, for the Populist policies of Huey P. Long and federal New Deal programs began to pump money into state and local coffers (Fairclough 1995; de Jong 2002). Huey P. Long famously gave free textbooks to students throughout the state; and in 1932, the Louisiana voters passed amendments to the state constitution making education free, mandatory, and segregated (1 October 1932 *Farmer*, 5; Opatowsky 1960, 45). These educational programs began to slowly narrow the tremendous gap between white and Black schoolchildren in Louisiana, although most whites agreed that Black children did not need as much education as white children so education remained grossly unequal (Tindall 1967; de Jong 2002).

In a parish with a significant population of mixed-race ancestry, the Parish School Board officials sometimes had difficulty deciding who should go to which schools based on race, particularly in the areas around Lacombe and Folsom. White parents made deliberate attempts to exclude children of “questionable” racial identity from white schools. In 1912, the School Board received a petition from white patrons of the Ramsay school to eject two children because of suspicions that they had “colored blood.” Superintendent Lyon invited the father of the two children to his office to discuss the matter, and he denied the allegations. Surprisingly, considering the increasingly hostile atmosphere in St. Tammany against anyone of color or rumored to be of African descent, the Superintendent sided with the children’s father, and required that the individuals who complained provide proof that the family was not white (12 October 1912 *Farmer*, 2). A similar case occurred twenty years

later near Lacombe. A School Board employee, taking a census of school aged children, classified the children of a Lacombe resident as white. The School Board questioned the classification based on the fact that the children had always been reported as “colored” in previous records. The employee, Mrs. Todd, explained that the mother of the children insisted the children were white and threatened legal action if Mrs. Todd reported that they were colored. After looking into the matter, the board referred to an investigation of the very same matter eight years earlier. At that time, the School Board had found that the children were indeed colored and could not attend any white school in the parish. In 1935, the School Board once again determined that the children were colored (St. Tammany Parish School Board 16 August 1935 [23 August 1935 *Farmer*, 1, 3]).

After a decade of economic recovery, New Deal programs, and other financial assistance, the education system in St. Tammany revived and grew to accommodate the growing population. By the 1940s, the school terms for all schools, white and Black, within the parish averaged nine months, although Black teachers and administrators still received salaries that were 20 to 25 percent lower than the same salaries for whites (10 August 1945 *Farmer*, 2). By 1950, the St. Tammany Parish Training School was still the only high school in the parish for students of color, but graduates of the school frequently went on to attend college at Grambling, Dillard, and Southern University (26 May 1950 *Farmer*, 1).

Schools in St. Tammany Parish were in many ways microcosms of the racial environment within the parish. In the late 1800s, when the population in the parish was low, Black and white schoolchildren had equally limited access to education. As the parish population grew, and the political and social climate became increasingly antagonistic to Black residents, access by residents of color to these resources declined significantly. In the 1930s, the Great Depression affected both Black and white schools, but government programs and private donations helped construct and maintain schools for children of color

when they otherwise might have been eliminated from the School Board's budget.

Predominant thinking of the time, which held that Black people did not need or utilize education to the same extent as whites, informed policy decisions by the school board and created barriers to Black advancement in the parish. By the 1950s, the parish had only one high school for children of color and continued to operate segregated schools. After the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the State and parish took no action to integrate the schools, relying on legal maneuvers to prevent this from occurring.

CONCLUSION: A "LAYERED" SOCIETY

Evidence available from newspapers and government records indicates that St. Tammany, following trends across the South, became a more segregated and unequal society between 1878 and 1956. White voters and civic leaders ensured segregation and inequality through legal means by voting for politicians that disenfranchised voters of color or enacted policies that entrenched segregation. White residents ensured segregation and inequality through illegal means by violent attacks and threats against individuals of color who transgressed racial boundaries. Law enforcement and local and state government sanctioned this illegal violence by failing to prosecute or convict white perpetrators of violence against residents of color.

By the 1920s and 30s, the precipitous decline of Black political, social, and economic power began to level off, particularly during the peak of Populism and Progressivism within the South. New Deal programs and educational support like the Rosenwald fund helped provided resources for a struggling Black population, even if these programs distributed assistance in favor of whites. In the 1940s and 50s, white residents in St. Tammany continued to support segregation and political inequality but at the same time rejected political movements that intensified white hostility toward Black residents.

On the surface, newspaper and official documents present a picture of St. Tammany as a segregated and unequal society, and there is no doubt that this general atmosphere existed. Memories elderly residents hold of “the way things were” in the 1940s and 50s, however, suggest a more fluid and complicated racial picture. In the context of a rapidly growing white population in the parish, some interracial sexual relationships continued in St. Tammany, particularly in those rural and somewhat isolated localities known for racial mixing: Folsom, Madisonville, Lacombe, and Bonfouca. Local residents, both white and Black, remember that everyone for the most part got along, particularly in the older mixed neighborhoods such as old Mandeville and Madisonville. They suggest that despite segregation, neighbors would frequently pass each other on the street or at the market and talk about their lives and attend public entertainment or church together. And importantly, they often make the distinction between the attitudes of the “original” residents of the parish toward race and the attitudes of newcomers to the parish, particularly New Orleanians who came in the 1940s and 1950s (Inez Thomas, personal interview 15 November 2005; Adelaide Boettner, personal interview, 8 May 2006; Judge Steve Ellis, personal interview 2 February 2007; Reverend Leo Edgerson, personal interview 2 February 2007). Although many of these memories may be romanticized or colored by the lens of more recent events, they nevertheless provide proof that racial identity is a complicated and abstract entity, cultivated by social, cultural, political, and economic forces.

The political culture in St. Tammany Parish between 1878 and 1956 suggests that attempts to disenfranchise and exclude Black residents from the political and social life of whites never proved completely successful. Complicated racial and familial connections within the parish in some ways made complete segregation and disempowerment impossible. Political and social trends across the South heavily shaped life for both whites and individuals of African descent within the parish, but some evidence—such as voting patterns

in St. Tammany—shows that the white residents who lived in the parish before the large-scale immigration of New Orleanians after 1956 had become comfortable with the status quo and no longer cared for racial hostility. The slowdown in parish in-migration of families of color after the decline of the lumber industries in the 1920s implies that by the 1950s, whites in St. Tammany knew their neighbors of color and had established patterns of interaction that made violent confrontation no longer necessary or desired. Elderly St. Tammany Parish residents remember that the parish had few problems during the Civil Rights movement, and this may reflect entrenched patterns of segregation and a careful preservation of social relations in addition to an atmosphere of neighborliness, verifying once again the “layered” nature of the concept of race.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

St. Tammany Parish, a somewhat-isolated, rural parish for much of its history, has in recent years grown into a primarily white suburb of New Orleans. While the construction of the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway in 1956 accelerated the rapid growth of the white population and subdivisions in St. Tammany, the idea that St. Tammany “should be” a suburb has its roots in the parish’s historical geography. The representation of the area as an attractive, safe place for white commuters to live emerged from a dualistic history regarding race. On one hand, the parish had a legacy of racial fluidity and limited opportunity not commonly found in other parts of the South. On the other hand, residents of African ancestry faced virulent political, social, and physical attacks aimed at reinforcing color lines and thus white supremacy. The result of these two racial traditions after the nearly eighty years between 1878 and 1956 was a racially “moderate” parish in which whites and Blacks got along relatively well, but Black residents had far fewer opportunities and rights as a result of 80 years of exclusion, segregation, and violence.

This process began in 1878 the year following Reconstruction when the majority of white voters across the South ousted Republican politicians and federal safeguards for civil rights. This allowed for a systematic and rapid renunciation of the political and social rights for individuals of African descent. Social and residential segregation undergirded the resulting racial inequality. Of course at its very foundation, constructed inequality and segregation required legal definitions of who was white and who was Black. Two of the most pivotal “one-drop” judicial decisions, in *Sam Lee vs. Railroad* and *Plessy v. Ferguson* occurred in the context of the racial ambiguity present in St. Tammany. The impact of these cases was the legal precedent that recognized anyone with African ancestry as “Black.” This label segregated over half of the population of the South and a significant percentage of the population in the North (many of whom had complex racial heritage) into “Black” churches,

schools restaurants, neighborhoods, medical clinics, and parks. These facilities, while theoretically “equal,” often relied on segregated private funding or unequal public funding, rendering them generally inferior to their white counterparts.

Whites reinforced color lines in other ways as well, including violence. The period 1890 to 1920 marked both the highest number of lynchings across the South as well as the most legislation aimed at enforcing segregation, a testament to the difficulty and the desperation whites had in clinging to their perceptions of racial superiority. And racial segregation increased, particularly in comparison to earlier time periods. The picture that 1920 census data provides of racial segregation in old Covington of the 1830s next to new Covington of the 1880s attests to this purposeful, planned segregation (Chapter 3).

In St. Tammany the difficulty in maintaining color lines arose from the vitally important role of men of color in parish industries. In particular, the lumber, brick manufacturing, and shipbuilding industries relied heavily on the labor of individuals of African descent. Not only did these industries employ a majority of men of color, they placed men of different racial groups together in the same brickyard, shipyard, or forest. While Black men more frequently worked as unskilled laborers performing dangerous and difficult tasks, frequently white men, Black men, and mulatto men would perform the same tasks, which eroded a key component of racial boundaries. Men and women of different racial groups also associated at lumber camps, company stores, and saloons when they were not at work; white supremacist groups of the 1890s and 1920s targeted these places of racial transgression as “evils” in the community.

Across much of the South after the Civil War, sharecropping and tenant farming replaced slave-based plantation systems of labor. Land owners, company stores, and periodic drought kept these farmers—a significant proportion of whom were Black—financially and legally tied to the land. Thus throughout the region, farmers of African

descent had many of the same social, economic, and geographic fetters as enslaved persons before emancipation; agriculture continued to be a means of oppression and maintenance of white elitism (Wilson 2000, Rodrigue 2001). This was not the case in St. Tammany, where relatively few farmers participated in tenant farming or sharecropping. Whites accounted for at least 80 percent of all agriculture in this parish, and many small-scale farmers had ties to Upland South folk culture (Newton 1967); therefore, agriculture in St. Tammany became associated with a “white” cultural and racial identity. This trend continued after the growth of truck and orchard farming and the continued importance of cattle raising in the parish in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, the majority of which were white-owned enterprises. White farmers in the parish committed acts of incendiarism and sabotage against government fire crews and other officials symbolizing a defense of white, Upland South agricultural traditions (including burning the woods) despite lumber company and government control.

This agricultural orientation also had important implications for residents of color in the parish. Without financial or legal ties to farmland, they constituted an economically and spatially mobile workforce geared toward working for wages, which gave them relative power and autonomy in choosing to sell their labor. This is not to say that residents of color had as much economic freedom as whites or earned equal wages, but it did allow for mobility in a way that threatened a strict racial hierarchy because many whites within the parish often worked as day laborers as well. The lumber companies tapped into this population of laborers to assemble their workforce.

In an environment of racial ambiguity and relative economic power of residents of color, the health resort industry in the parish catered only to whites. Medical theory of the nineteenth and early twentieth century viewed people of color as both causes of disease and deserving of disease through their ignorance and immorality. By the 1930s and 40s, the prevalence of specific diseases—such as venereal diseases—in the population of color

confirmed white racist perceptions of people of African ancestry as immoral and uncivilized, and parish officials only began to promote treatment when the U.S. Army rejected Black draftees because of their diagnosis. White parish residents on multiple occasions between 1878 and 1956 rejected attempts to establish treatment centers for patients of color despite claims of parish hospitality and generosity in reaching out to those in need. According to Sanborn Fire Insurance maps of the 1920s, the main towns of the parish had no hotels or sanitariums for individuals of color. Because white property owners controlled access to mineral springs throughout the parish, access to these facilities for Black patrons was also restricted or denied. Health and the pursuit of health in St. Tammany Parish in this way became associated with a white racial identity as well; clearly those seeking medical treatment in the parish fit easily into white racial categories.

After the decline of the lumber, shipbuilding, and brick manufacturing companies in the 1930s, the population of African descent in the parish began to decline relative to the white population. By this time, legal precedents had already attempted to segregate whites from Blacks residentially⁵ and socially, defined racial groups according to ancestry, and completely disenfranchised Black voters. To a large extent these measures were successful; however, pockets of “racially-mixed” areas still persisted within the parish. Residents of the old parts of the towns and small communities still interacted with members of different racial groups on a daily basis at stores or in the streets, particularly in the southern part of the parish. And by the 1940s and 1950s, the majority of white voters within the parish continued to elect “racial moderates” who focused on economic or community improvement instead of segregation or white supremacy. The economic, social, and geographic processes that culminated in this stable but unequal racial environment also

⁵ Although evidence from newspapers and the census after 1880 indicates that residential areas were increasingly segregated, no contractor or developer filed any restrictive covenants based on race with the St. Tammany Parish Clerk of Court.

produced a place that business owners and entrepreneurs considered to be an ideal location for a New Orleans suburb.

This research has attempted to uncover the important history of the population of color in an area now known for being predominantly white. St. Tammany in many ways—partially because much of its white population and population of color were equally poor and isolated—had an atmosphere in which plantation agricultural systems did not ground racial identity as they did elsewhere in the South. Some evidence suggests that St. Tammany may have been slower to favor segregation and complete disenfranchisement compared to other areas in the South. For example, voters in Mandeville continued to elect alderman and mayors of color into the 1890s, two decades after the end of Reconstruction. And residents of St. Tammany welcomed the campaigns of Huey P. Long and his fellow Populists, who promoted racially moderate political agendas. These beliefs and practices of many white and Black residents of the parish caused staunch segregationists and white supremacists to push even harder to achieve their goals with violence. And it is no coincidence that two of the most important “one-drop” legal cases in U.S. history occurred in the context of racial ambiguity in St. Tammany Parish⁶.

The associations between race and labor, the environment, and political culture played pivotal roles in setting the parameters for advancement and mobility for both white and Black residents of St. Tammany Parish, as they have across the U.S. Understanding the connections across these variables is important because labor has simultaneously reinforced and weakened color lines. Perceptions of health and the environment have both shored up color boundaries and reflected beliefs about race. Political culture and legal systems have created frameworks for social recognition and outcomes based on race. All of these have

⁶ *Plessy v. Ferguson* specifically tested the Louisiana segregated railcar law on the New Orleans and Great Northern Railroad, which individuals of different racial groups from across Gulf Coast frequently utilized for passenger service.

affected individual lives and shaped places, choices, relationships, and longevity and hinged on the salience of racial categories.

This research has contributed to geographic work on the construction of race by investigating race in the historical geography of a rural place—a place outside of the plantation system in which rurality, relative isolation, and a colonial legacy of racial fluidity allowed for significant negotiations of racial identity and politics. This study has furthered historic work on the connections between labor and race and the importance of geography as a medium between the two. It has also added the important element of race to developing research on historic perceptions of health, environment, and resorts. And finally, this research illuminates the history of a part of the South lacking in thorough, scholarly investigation.

It is my hope that this project will provide a springboard for further geographic research on St. Tammany, the Florida Parishes, and the piney woods region of the South, particularly regarding the construction of racial identity. The breadth of this dissertation has in some ways forced a sacrifice of depth in investigation, and much room is available for future research in this area. Research that collects and incorporates the voices of families of the area—of all racial ancestries—into the economic, political, and environmental history of the area would greatly enhance the geographic story waiting to be told.

WORKS CITED

- Aiken, C. 2001. Blacks in the plantation South: unique homelands. In R. Nostrand and L. Estaville, eds. *Homelands: A Geography of Culture and Place across America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 53-72.
- Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined Communities*, revised edition. New York: Verso.
- Anderson, K.J. 1987. The idea of Chinatown: The power of place and institutional practice in the making of a racial category. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77(4): 580-598.
- _____. 1988. Cultural hegemony and the race-definition process in Chinatown, Vancouver: 1880-1980. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 6(2): 127-149.
- Anderson, W. 2003. *The Cultivation of Whiteness: Science, Health, and Racial Destiny in Australia*. New York: Basic Books.
- Alvesson, M. and K. Sköldbberg. 2000. *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Arnesen, E. 2001. Whiteness and the historians' imagination. *International Labor and Working-Class History* 60(1): 3-32.
- Auerbach, C.F. and L.B. Silverstein. 2003. *Qualitative Data: An Introduction to Coding and Analysis*. New York: New York University Press.
- Austin, A. 2005. *St. Tammany Parish Postcards: A Glimpse Back in Time*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company.
- Ayers, E.L. 1984. *Vengeance and Justice: Crime and Punishment in the 19th-Century American South*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bailey, C., C. White, and R. Pain. 1999. Evaluating qualitative research: dealing with the tension between 'science' and 'creativity.' *Area* 31(2): 169-183.
- Baker, L. 1998. *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896-1954*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Balibar, E. 1990. Padoxes of universality. In D.T. Goldberg, ed. *Anatomy of Racism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Baughman, J.P. 1962. A Southern spa: Ante-bellum Lake Pontchartrain. *Louisiana History* 3(1): 5-32.
- Beardsley, E. 1987. *A History of Neglect: Health Care for Blacks and Mill Workers in the Twentieth-Century*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press.

- Berlin, I. 1974. *Slaves without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Berry, M. 1978. Repression of Blacks in the South 1890-1945: enforcing the system of segregation. In R. Haws, ed. *The Age of Segregation: Race Relations in the South, 1890-1945*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, pp. 29-44.
- Berthoff, R.T. 1951. Southern attitudes toward immigration, 1865-1914. *The Journal of Southern History* 17(3):328-360.
- Blum, E. *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Boettner, Adelaide. *Personal interview conducted in Mandeville, LA*. 8 May 2006.
- Bonnett, A. and A. Nayak. 2003. Cultural geographies of racialization—the territory of race. In K. Anderson, M. Domosh, S. Pile, and N. Thrift, eds. *Handbook of Cultural Geography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Botting, I. 2004. Understanding domestic service through oral history and the Census: The case of Grand Falls, New Foundland. In S.N. Hesse-Biber and P. Leavy, eds. *Approaches to Qualitative Research: A Reader on Theory and Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 243-262.
- Boagni, E.H. 1980. *The St. Tammany Historical Society Gazette, Vol. IV, Madisonville Issue*. Mandeville, LA: St. Tammany Parish Historical Society.
- Brody, D. 2001. Charismatic history: pros and cons. *International Labor and Working-Class History* 60(1): 43-47.
- Brown, D. and C. Webb. 2007. *Race in the American South: From Slavery to Civil Rights*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.
- Bullard, R.D. 2000. *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality, 3rd ed.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Bunge, W. 1971. *Fitzgerald: Geography of a Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing Company.
- Burns, A. 1968. *A History of the Louisiana Forestry Commission*. Natchitoches, LA: The Louisiana Studies Institute, Northwestern State College.
- Cable, G.W. 1969[1889]. *The Silent South, together with The Freedman's Case in Equity, The Convict Lease System, The Appendix to the 1889 Edition, and Eight Uncollected Essays on Prison and Asylum Report*. Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith [Originally published New Orleans: Charles Scribner and Sons, and in the *New Orleans Times-Democrat*.]

- Charmaz, K. 2000. Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In N.K. Denzin, and Y.S. Lincoln, eds. 2000. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 509-536.
- City of Mandeville. 2008. *Welcome to the City of Mandeville*. <http://www.cityofmandeville.org/>. Last accessed 5 February 2008
- Clark, T. 1984. *The Greening of the South; The Recovery of Land and Forest*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Cobb, J. 1984. *Industrialization and Southern Society, 1877-1984*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Collier-Thomas, B. and J. Turner. 1994. Race, class, and color: the African American discourse on identity. *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14(1): 5-32.
- Colten, C.E. 2002. Basin Street blues: Drainage and environmental equity in New Orleans, 1890-1930. *Journal of Historical Geography* 28(2): 237-257.
- Conley, D. 1999. *Being Black, Living in the Red: Race, Wealth, and Social Policy in America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- The Covington and St. Tammany Land and Improvement Company. 1887. *New Covington, in St. Tammany Parish, La. The Great Southern Sanitarium*. New Orleans: Hopkins' Printing Office.
- Covington Town Council Minutes*, printed in the *St. Tammany Farmer*.
- Cowdrey, A. 1983. *This Land, This South: An Environmental History*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky.
- Cresswell, J.W. 1998. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Cunningham, G. 1965. The Italian, a hindrance to white solidarity in Louisiana, 1890-1898. *Journal of Negro History* 50(1): 22-36.
- Cutter, S.L. 1995. Race, class, and environmental justice. *Progress in Human Geography* 19(1): 111-122.
- Daniel, P. 1972. *The Shadow of Slavery: Peonage in the South*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Davis, G.A. and O. F. Donaldson. 1975. *Blacks in the United States: A Geographic Perspective*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- De Jong, G. 2002. *A Different Day: African American Struggles for Justice in Rural Louisiana, 1900-1970*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

- Delaney, D. 1998. *Race, Place, and the Law, 1836-1948*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- _____. 2002. The space that race makes. *The Professional Geographer* 54(1): 6-14.
- Denzin, N.K. and Y.S. Lincoln, eds. 2000. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- _____. 2000. Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin and Y.K. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 1-29.
- Domínguez, V. 1986. *White by Definition: Social Classification in Creole Louisiana*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Domosh, M. 1991. Towards a feminist historiography of geography. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 16(1): 95-104.
- Dormandy, T. 2000. *The White Death: A History of Tuberculosis*. New York: New York University Press.
- Douglas, M. 1966. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Driver, F. 2001. *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. 1998 [1920]. The souls of white folk. In D. Roediger, ed. *Black on White: Black Writers on What It Means to Be White*. New York: Schocken Books. Originally published in W.E.B. DuBois, 1920. *Darkwater*.
- Dunbar, G. 1966. Thermal belts in North Carolina. *Geographical Review* 56(4): 516-526.
- Duncan, J.S., and N.G. Duncan. 2004. *Landscapes of Privilege: The Politics of the Aesthetic in an American Suburb*. New York: Routledge.
- Dupree, J.W. 1891. *Disposal of Sewage. An Extract from the Report of Health Officer J.W. Dupree, for the Year 1891*. Baton Rouge, LA: publisher unknown.
- Edgeron, Reverend Leo. *Personal interview conducted in Mandeville, LA*. 8 February 2007.
- Edwards-Simpson, L. 1996. *Sicilian Immigration to New Orleans, 1870-1910: Ethnicity, Race, and Social Position in the New South*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Minnesota.
- Ellis, F.S. 1981. *St. Tammany Parish: L'autre Côte du Lac*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company.
- Ellis, Judge Frederick "Steve." *Personal interview conducted in Covington, LA*. 8 February 2007.

- Fairclough, A. 1995. *Race and Democracy: The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915-1972*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.
- Fanon, F. 1991 [1967]. *Black Skin, White Masks*, translated by C.L. Markmann. New York: Grove Weidenfield. Originally published 1967, New York: Grove Press.
- Feldman, G. 2004. Epilogue: Ugly roots: race, emotion, and the rise of the modern Republican Party in Alabama and the South. In G. Feldman, ed. *Before Brown: Civil Rights and White Backlash in the Modern South*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 268-310.
- Fields, B.J. 1982. Ideology and race in American history. In J.M. Kousser and J.M. McPherson, eds. *Region, Race, and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2001. Whiteness, racism, and identity. *International Labor and Working-Class History* 60(1): 48-56.
- Finlayson, J. 2005. *Habermas: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Flanagan, M. 2007. *America Reformed: Progressives and Progressivisms, 1890s-1920s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Flick, U. 2006. *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Flint, C. 2004. United States hegemony and the construction of racial hatreds: The agency of hate groups and the changing world political map. In C. Flint, ed. *Spaces of Hate: Geographies of Discrimination and Intolerance in the U.S.A.* New York: Routledge.
- Foner, E. 2001. Response to Eric Arnesen. *International Labor and Working-Class History* 60(1): 57-60.
- Fontana, A. and J.H. Frey. 2000. The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. In N.K. Denzin and Y.K. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 645-672.
- Ford, Jr., L.K. 1999. Making the "white man's country" white: Race, slavery, and state-building in the Jacksonian South. *Journal of the Early Republic* 19(4): 713-737.
- Ford, L. and E. Griffin. 1979. The ghettoization of paradise. *Geographical Review* 69(2): 140-158.
- Frankenberg, R. 1993. *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Galishoff, S. 1985. Germs know no color line: Black health and public policy in Atlanta, 1900-1918. *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 40(1): 22-41.

- Gallagher, C.A. 2000. White like me? Methods, meaning, and manipulation in the field of white studies. In R.W. Twine and J.W. Warren, eds. *Racing Research, Researching Race: Methodological Dilemmas in Critical Race Studies*. New York: New York University Press, pp. 67-92.
- Gandy, M. 2002. *Concrete and Clay: Reworking Nature in New York City*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Garratt, D. 2003. *My Qualitative Research Journey: Researching Against the Rules*. Cresswell, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc.
- Geores, M. 1998. Surviving on a metaphor: how “heath = hot springs” created and sustained a town. In R. Kearns and W. Gesler, eds. *Putting Health into Place: Landscape, Identity, and Well-Being*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Geuss, R. 1981. *The Idea of Critical Theory: Habermas and the Frankfurt School*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gilmore, R.W. 2002. Fatal couplings of power and difference: notes on racism and geography. *The Professional Geographer* 54(1): 15-24.
- Gilroy, P. 1997 [1987]. ‘The whisper wakes, the shudder plays’: ‘Race,’ nation and ethnic absolutism. In L. McDowell, ed. *Undoing Place? A Geographical Reader*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. Originally published in P. Gilroy. 1987. *There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack*. London: Routledge.
- Godlewska, A. and N. Smith, eds. 1994. *Geography and Empire*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Goldfield, D. 1997. *Region, Race, and Cities: Interpreting the Urban South*. Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press.
- Gregory, D. 1978. *Ideology, Science, and Human Geography*. London: Hutchinson and Co.
- Grob, G. 2002. *The Deadly Truth: A History of Disease in America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hale, G.E. 1998. *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Hall, G.M. 1992. *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Hangar, K.S. 1997 *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places: Free Black Society in Colonial New Orleans, 1769-1803*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Hansbrough, T. 1963. Human behavior and forest fires. In T. Hansbrough, ed. *Southern Forests and Southern People*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, pp. 22-35.

- Harrell, K. 1966. *The Ku Klux Klan in Louisiana, 1920-1930*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Louisiana State University.
- Harris, C. 2001. Archival fieldwork. *The Geographical Review* 91(1-2): 328-334.
- Hart, J. 1960. A rural retreat for Northern Negroes. *Geographical Review* 50(2): 147-168.
- Hartigan, J. 1999. *Racial Situations: Class Predicaments of Whiteness in Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Harvey, D. 1996. *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Hattam, V.C. 2001. Whiteness: theorizing race, eliding ethnicity. *International Labor and Working-Class History* (60): 61-68.
- Henige, D. 2005. *Historical Evidence and Argument*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Hershberg, T., A.N. Burstein, E.P. Ericksen, S.W. Greenberg, and W.L. Yancey. 1979. A tale of three cities: Blacks and immigrants in Philadelphia: 1850-1880, 1930, and 1970. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 441(1): 55-81.
- Hilliard, S.B. 1984. *Atlas of Antebellum Southern Agriculture*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press.
- Hines, M. 1992. *Death at the Hands of Persons Unknown: The Geography of Lynching in the Deep South, 1882 to 1910*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Louisiana State University.
- Hobbs, D. and R. Wright, eds. 2006. *The Sage Handbook of Fieldwork*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hoelscher, S. 2003. Making place, making race: Performances of whiteness in the Jim Crow South. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 93(3): 657-686.
- Holloway, S.L. 2005. Articulating otherness? White rural residents talk about Gypsy-Travellers. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30(?): 351-367.
- Howell, M. and W. Prevenier. 2001. *From Reliable Resources: An Introduction to Historical Methods*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Ignatiev, N. 1995. *How the Irish Became White*. New York: Routledge.
- Inverarity, J. 1976. Populism and lynching in Louisiana, 1889-1896: a test of Erikson's theory of the relationship between boundary crises and repressive justice. *American Sociological Review* 41(2): 262-280.
- Inwood, J. 2005. Making the legal visible: Wilhelmina Griffin Jones' experience of living in Alabama during segregation. *The Southeastern Geographer* 45(1): 54-66.

- Jackson, P. 1987. 'The idea of 'race' and the geography of racism. In P. Jackson, ed. *Race and Racism: Essays in Social Geography*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- Jahncke, C. 1988. *Mr. Kentzel's Covington: 1878-1890*. Covington, LA: Covington Press/Carol's Corner Books.
- James, A. 2006. Critical moments in the production of 'rigorous' and 'relevant' cultural economic geographies. *Progress in Human Geography* 30(3): 289-308.
- Jay, M. 1973. *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923-1950*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.
- Jeater, D. 1997 [1992]. Roast beef and reggae music: The passing of whiteness. In L. McDowell, ed. *Undoing Place? A Geographical Reader*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. Originally published 1992, *New Formations* 18: 107-121.
- Johnson, D. and E. Yodis. 1998. *Geography of Louisiana*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Johnson, P.D. 1999. Reflections on critical white(ness) studies. In T.K. Nakayama and J.N. Martin, eds. *Whiteness: The Communication of a Social Identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Jones, W.P. 2005. *The Tribe of Black Ulysses: African American Lumber Workers in the Jim Crow South*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Kellogg, J. 1977. Negro urban clusters in the postbellum South. *Geographical Review* 67(3): 310-321.
- Kincheloe, J.L. and P. McLaren. 2000. Rethinking Critical Theory and qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin and Y.K. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 279-314.
- Kitchin, R. and N.J. Tate. 2000. *Conducting Research into Human Geography: Theory, Methodology, and Practice*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Knigge, L. and M. Cope. 2006. Grounded visualization: Integrating the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data through grounded theory and visualization. *Environment and Planning A* 38(?): 2021-2037.
- Knobel, D. 1996. *America for the Americans: The Nativist Movement in the United States*. New York: Twayne Publishers (Simon and Schuster Macmillan).
- Kobayashi, A. 2003. The construction of geographical knowledge—racialization, spatialization. In K. Anderson, M. Domosh, S. Pile, and N. Thrift, eds. *Handbook of Cultural Geography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Kuhlken, R. 1999. Settin' the woods on fire: rural incendiarism as protest. *Geographical Review* 89 (3): 343-363.

- Ladson-Billings, G. 2000. Racialized discourses and ethnic epistemologies. In N.K. Denzin and Y.K. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 257-278.
- Landphair, J. 1999. Sewerage, sidewalks, and schools: the New Orleans ninth ward and public school desegregation. *Louisiana History* 40(1): 35-62.
- Lawrence, H. 1983. Southern spas: source of the American resort tradition. *Landscape* 27(2): 1-12.
- Lee, R. 2000. Economic geography. In R.J. Johnston, D. Gregory, G. Pratt, and M. Watts, eds. *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, 4th edition. London: Blackwell Publishers.
- Lemly, J.H. 1953. *The Gulf, Mobile, and Ohio: A Railroad that Had to Expand or Expire*. Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin, Inc.
- Lewis, P. 2003. *New Orleans: The Making of an Urban Landscape, Second Edition*. Santa Fe, NM: Center for American Places.
- Link, W. 1988. Privies, Progressivism, and public schools: Health reform and education in the rural South, 1909-1920. *Journal of Southern History* 54(4): 623-642.
- Livingstone, D.N. 1984. Science and society: Nathaniel S. Shaler and racial ideology. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 9(2): 181-201.
- _____. 1993. *The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of a Contested Enterprise*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Louisiana Forestry Commission. 1946. *Forestry Bulletin, February 1946*. Volume 6, No. 2.
- _____. 1946. *Forestry Bulletin, September 1946*. Volume 6, No. 9.
- _____. 1947. *Forest Landownership in Louisiana, 2nd Edition*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana Forestry Commission.
- Louisiana State Board of Health. 1919. *Extract from Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Board of Health to the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana, 1918-1919*. New Orleans, LA: Hauser Printing Co.
- _____. 1923. *Louisiana State Board of Health Quarterly Bulletin, 1922 Fourth Quarter* 14(1).
- _____. 1923. *Louisiana State Board of Health Quarterly Bulletin, 1923 First Quarter* 14(2).
- _____. 1925. The Negro's health problem. *Louisiana State Board of Health Quarterly Bulletin* 16(1): 36-46.
- _____. 1933. *Louisiana State Board of Health Quarterly Bulletin* 24(1): 6.

- _____. 1939. *Louisiana State Board of Health Quarterly Bulletin Fourth Quarter 1938*. 30(1).
- _____. 1941. *Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Board of Health to the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, 1940-1941*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State Board of Health.
- _____. 1951. *Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Board of Health*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State Board of Health.
- Mandeville Town Council Minutes*, City Hall, Mandeville, LA.
- Martin, J.N., R.L. Krizek, T.K. Nakayama, and L. Bradford. 1999. What do white people want to be called? A study of self-labels for white Americans. In T.K. Nakayama and J.N. Martin, eds. *Whiteness: The Communication of a Social Identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Marx, A. W. 1998. *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Massey, D. 1984. *Spatial Divisions of Labor: Social Structures and the Geography of Production*. New York: Methuen.
- Mazzei, L.A. 2007. *Inhabited Silence in Qualitative Research: Putting Poststructural Theory to Work*. New York: Peter Lang.
- McCarthy, J. and E. Hague. 2004. Race, nation, and nature: The cultural politics of “Celtic” identification in the American West. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94(2): 387-408.
- McDearman, K. 2006. Piney woods. In R. Pillsbury (vol. ed.) and C.R. Wilson (gen. ed.) *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture, Volume 2: Geography*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- McMahon, M. 2004. Mill town: prostitution and the rule of lumber in Lake Charles, Louisiana, 1867-1918. *Louisiana History* 45(2): 151-171.
- McWhiney, G. 1986. Antebellum pine woods culture: continuity over time and place. In N. Polk, ed. *Mississippi's Piney Woods: A Human Perspective*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, pp. 40-58.
- _____. 1988. *Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Melosi, M. 2000. *The Sanitary City: Urban Infrastructure in America from Colonial Times to Present*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Miles, M.B. and A. M. Huberman. 1994. *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Montagu, A. 1997[1942]. *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race, 6th Edition, Abridged Student Edition*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press (Sage Publications).
- Moon, D. 1999. White enculturation and bourgeois ideology: The discursive production of "good (white) girls." In T.K. Nakayama and J.N. Martin, eds. *Whiteness: The Communication of a Social Identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Moorman, J. 1873. *Mineral Springs of North America; How to Reach, and How to Use Them, by J.J. Moorman, M.D.* Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co.
- Morrill, R.L. 1965. The Negro ghetto: problems and alternatives. *Geographical Review* 55(3): 339-371.
- Myrick, J.L. 1970. *A History of the Great Southern Lumber Company, 1902-1938*. Master's Thesis, Department of History, Louisiana State University.
- Napier, J.H. 1986. Piney woods past: a pastoral elegy. In N. Polk, ed. *Mississippi's Piney Woods: A Human Perspective*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.
- National Hansen's Disease Museum, 2008. *History of the National Leprosarium*. Accessed online at http://bphc.hrsa.gov/nhdp/CARVILLE_INFO_MUSEUM.htm#History
- Newby, I. 1965. *Jim Crow's Defense: Anti-Negro Thought in America, 1900-1930*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- New Orleans Waterworks Company. 1883. *Fifth Annual Report of the New Orleans Waterworks Company, April 9th, 1883*. New Orleans: A.W. Hyatt.
- New Orleans Waterworks Company. 1886. *Eighth Annual Report of the New Orleans Waterworks Company, April 9th, 1886*. New Orleans: A.W. Hyatt.
- Newton, M. 1967. *The Peasant Farm of St. Helena Parish, Louisiana: A Cultural Geography*. Dissertation, Department of Geography and Anthropology, Louisiana State University.
- _____. 1986. Water-powered sawmills and related structures in the piney woods. In N. Polk, ed. *Mississippi's Piney Woods: A Human Perspective*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi.
- Nicholls, C.H. 1990. *Mandeville on the Lake: A Sesquicentennial Album, 1840-1990*. Covington, LA: St. Tammany Parish Historical Society.
- O'Brien, W. 2007. The strange career of a Florida state park: uncovering a Jim Crow past. *Historical Geography* 35: 160-184.
- Olmstead, F.L. 1860. *A Journey in the Back Country*. London: Sampson, Low, Son and Co. ??
- Omi, M. and H. Winant. 1986. *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1980s*. New York: Routledge.

- Opotowsky, S. 1960. *The Longs of Louisiana*. New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc.
- Ortner, S. 1998. Identities: the hidden life of class. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 54(1): 1-17.
- Outland, R.B. 2004. *Tapping the Pines: The Naval Stores Industry in the American South*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Outlaw, L. 1990. Toward a critical theory of “race.” In D.T. Goldberg, ed. *Anatomy of Racism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- _____. 2005. *Critical Social Theory in the Interests of Black Folks*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Owsley, F.L. 1949. *Plain Fold of the Old South*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Parent, W. 2004. *Inside the Carnival: Unmasking Louisiana Politics*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Pattison, H.A. 1943. *Rehabilitation of the Tuberculous*. Livingston, NY: The Livingston Press.
- Peake, L. 1993. “Race” and sexuality: Challenging the patriarchal structuring of urban social space. *Society and Space* 11: 415-432.
- Peake, L. and A. Kobayashi. 2002. Policies and practices for an antiracist geography at the millennium. *The Professional Geographer* 54(1): 50-61.
- Peck, J. 1996. *Work Place: The Social Regulation of Labor Markets*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Percy, W. 1971. *Love in the Ruins: The Adventures of a Bad Catholic at a Time Very Near the End of the World*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- Pickford, J. 1858. *Hygiene, or Health as Depending upon the Conditions of the Atmosphere, Foods and Drinks, Motion and Rest, Sleep and Wakefulness, Secretions, Excretions, and Retentions, Mental Emotions, Clothing, Bathing, &c.* London: John Churchill.
- Pile, S. 2000. The troubled spaces of Frantz Fanon. In M. Crang and N. Thrift, eds. *Thinking Space*. New York: Routledge.
- Posey, D.A. 1979. Origin, development, and maintenance of a Louisiana mixed-blood community: the ethnohistory of the “Freejacks” of the First [sic-Fifth] Ward settlement. *Ethnohistory* 26(2): 177-192.
- Powell, J.C. 1976[1891]. *The American Siberia, or Fourteen Years’ Experience in a Southern Convict Camp*. Florida: State Board of Regents [Originally published by H.J. Smith and Company].

- Pulido, L. 2000. Rethinking environmental racism: white privilege and urban development in southern California. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90(1): 12-40.
- _____. 2002. Reflections on a white discipline. *The Professional Geographer* 54(1): 42-49.
- Radford, J.P. 1976. Race, residence, and ideology: Charleston, South Carolina in the mid-nineteenth century. *Journal of Historical Geography* 2(4): 329-346.
- Reed, A. 2001. Response to Eric Arnesen. *International Labor and Working-Class History* (60): 69-80.
- Reed, G. 1965. Race legislation in Louisiana, 1864-1920. *Louisiana History* 6(4): 379-392.
- Richards, L. 2005. *Handling Qualitative Data: A Practical Guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rodrigue, J. 2001. *Reconstruction in the Cane Fields: From Slavery to Free Labor in Louisiana's Sugar Parishes, 1862-1880*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Roediger, D.R. 1991. *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*. London: Verso.
- _____. 1999. The pursuit of whiteness: property, terror, and expansion, 1790-1860, *Journal of the Early Republic* 19: 579-600.
- Romm, N. R. 2001. *Accountability in Social Research: Issues and Debates*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Rose, H.M. 1965. The all-Negro town: its evolution and function. *Geographical Review* 55(3): 362-381.
- Ruggles, S., M. Sobek, T. Alexander, C. Fitch, R. Goeken, P. Hall, M. King, C. Ronnander. 2004. *Integrated Public Use Microdata Series*. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota Population Center. <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/> Last accessed 31 Jan 2008.
- Sam Lee, et al. vs. New Orleans and Great Northern Railroad Company, 1908. Case no. 1140 of the Twenty-sixth Judicial District Court, Parish of St. Tammany, State of Louisiana.* Official court proceedings and transcripts located in Archives, St. Tammany Parish Clerk of Court, St. Tammany Parish Justice Building, Covington, LA.
- Sanborn Map Company. 1921. *Covington, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana. November 1921*. New York: Sanborn Map Company.
- _____. 1922. *Abita Springs, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana. July 1922*. New York: Sanborn Map Company.
- _____. 1926. *Mandeville, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana. January 1926*. New York: Sanborn Map Company.

- _____. 1930. *Slidell, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana. June 1930*. New York: Sanborn Map Company.
- Sanford, W. and J.I. Sanford. 1905. *The World Famous "Ozone Belt" St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana*. New Orleans: American Printing Company.
- Sangarasivam, Y. 2001. Researcher, informant, "assassin," me. *The Geographical Review* 91(1-2): 95-104.
- Scarpaci, V. 2003. Walking the color line: Italian immigrants in rural Louisiana, 1880-1910. In J. Guglielmo and S. Salerno, eds. *Are Italians White? How Race is Made in America*. New York: Routledge, pp. 60-76.
- Schein, R. 2002. Race, racism, and geography: Introduction. *The Professional Geographer* 54(1): 1-5.
- Schein, R., ed. 2006. *Landscape and Race in the United States*. New York: Routledge.
- Schwartz, A.D. 1953. *A Brief Outline of St. Tammany Parish History*. Covington, LA: St. Tammany Parish Fair Association.
- Seamus, J.C. 1906. *Map of St. Tammany Parish, La., From the Original United States Surveys, with Towns and Railroads Added, Drawn and Compiled under the Authority of the Police Jury by John C. Seamus, Covington, Louisiana, 1906*. Covington, La.: Land Records Department, St. Tammany Parish Clerk of Court.
- Semple, E.C. 1911. *Influences of the Geographic Environment on the Basis of Ratzel's System of Anthropo-geography*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Shanabruach, C. 1996. The Louisiana immigration movement, 1891-1907: an analysis of efforts, attitudes, and opportunities. In C.A. Brasseaux, ed. *A Refuge for All Ages: Immigration in Louisiana History*. Lafayette, LA: The Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Southwestern Louisiana, pp. 501-520.
- Shome, R. 1999. Whiteness and the politics of location: Postcolonial reflections. In T.K. Nakayama and J.N. Martin, eds. *Whiteness: The Communication of a Social Identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Sibley, D. 1992. *Geographies of Exclusion: Society and Difference in the West*. New York: Routledge.
- _____. 1995. Outsiders in society and space. In K. Anderson and G. Gale, eds. *Inventing Places: Studies in Cultural Geography*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.
- Sixth Judicial District Court Indictment Book, 1878-1906*. St. Tammany Parish Clerk of Court Archives, St. Tammany Parish Justice Center, Covington, LA.

- Slater, D. 1997. On the borders of social theory: Learning from other regions. In T. Barnes and D. Gregory, eds. *Reading Human Geography: The Poetics and Politics of Inquiry*. New York: Arnold. Originally published 1992, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 10: 307-327.
- Smith, J. 2002. The campaign for racial purity and the erosion of paternalism, 1922-1930: “nominally white, biologically mixed, legally Negro.” *Journal of Southern History* 68(1): 65-106.
- Sowell, T. 1994. *Race and Culture: A World View*. New York: Basic Books.
- Sprague, J. and M. Zimmerman. 2004. Overcoming dualisms: A feminist agenda for sociological methodology. In S.N. Hesse-Biber and P. Leavy, eds. *Approaches to Qualitative Research: A Reader on Theory and Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 39-61.
- The St. Tammany Farmer*. 1878-1956.
- St. Tammany Parish Police Jury Proceedings*, printed in the *St. Tammany Farmer*.
- St. Tammany Parish School Board Proceedings*, printed in the *St. Tammany Farmer*.
- Stafford, N.J. 1960. *The Development of Dairying in St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, 1900-1960*. M.A. Thesis, Louisiana State University.
- Stage, C.W. 1999. We celebrate 100 years: An “indigenous” analysis of the metaphors that shape the cultural identity of Small Town, U.S.A. In T.K. Nakayama and J.N. Martin, eds. *Whiteness: The Communication of a Social Identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications
- Sterngass, J. 2001. *First Resorts: Pursing Pleasure at Sarasota Springs, Newport, and Coney Island*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Strauss, A.L. 1987. *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Szymanski, A. 2003. Beyond parochialism: southern Progressivism, prohibition, and state-building. *Journal of Southern History* 69(1): 107-136.
- Taylor, G. 1951. Racial Geography. In G. Taylor, ed. *Geography in the Twentieth Century: A Study of Growth, Field Techniques, Aims and Trends*. New York: Philosophical Library.
- Thrift, N. and P. Williams. 1987. The geography of class formation. In N. Thrift and P. Williams, eds. *Class and Space: The Making of Urban Society*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 1-24
- Thomas, Inez. *Personal interview conducted in Mandeville, LA*. 15 November 2005.

- Tindall, G.B. 1967. *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Trask, B. 2005. *Fearful Ravages: Yellow Fever in New Orleans, 1796-1905*. Lafayette: Center for Louisiana Studies, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.
- Tulane Herbarium Lantern Slides, ca 1925-1940*. Tulane University Herbarium Collection, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. New Orleans: Tulane University. <http://www.tulane.edu/~darwin/LanternSlidesWeb.htm>. Last accessed 14 December 2007.
- Twine, R.W. 2000. Racial ideologies and racial methodologies. In R.W. Twine and J.W. Warren, eds. *Racing Research, Researching Race: Methodological Dilemmas in Critical Race Studies*. New York: New York University Press., pp. 1-34.
- Twine, R.W. and J.W. Warren, eds. 2000. *Racing Research, Researching Race: Methodological Dilemmas in Critical Race Studies*. New York: New York University Press.
- Tyler, P. 2004. "Blood on your hands": white Southerners' criticism of Eleanor Roosevelt during World War II. In G. Feldman, ed. *Before Brown: Civil Rights and White Backlash in the Modern South*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, pp. 96-115.
- United States Census Bureau. 1880. *Agriculture Census*.
- United States Bureau of the Census. 1913. *Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910. Volume VI: Agriculture 1909 and 1910*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- _____. 1922. *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920. Volume VI, part 2: Agriculture*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- _____. 1942. *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Agriculture: Volume I, part 5*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1943. *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population, Volume II, Characteristics of the Population, Part 3: Kansas-Michigan*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- _____, 1961. *The Eighteenth Decennial Census of the United States, Census of Population: 1960, Volume I: Characteristics of Population, Part 20: Louisiana*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2008. *2000 Census*. Accessed online at <http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html>
- Valencius, C.B. 2002. *The Health of the Country: How American Settlers Understood Themselves and Their Land*. New York: Basic Books.

- Valenza, J. 2000. *Taking the Waters in Texas: Springs, Spas, and Fountains of Youth*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Vance, R.B. 1968. *Human Geography of the South. A Study in Regional Resources and Human Adequacy*. New York: Russell & Russell.
- Vidich, A.J. and S.M. Lyman. 2000. Qualitative methods: Their history in sociology and anthropology. In N.K. Denzin and Y.K. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 37-84.
- Waldrep, C. 2000. War of words: the controversy over the definition of lynching, 1899-1940. *Journal of Southern History* 66(1): 75-100.
- Walker, L. 1991. *The Southern Forest: A Chronicle*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Wallerstein, I. 1991. The ideological tensions of capitalism: universalism versus racism and sexism. In E. Balibar and I. Wallerstein, eds. *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*. London: Verso, pp. 29-36.
- Wander, P.C., J.N. Martin, and T.K. Nakayama. 1999. Whiteness and beyond: Sociohistorical foundations of whiteness and contemporary challenges. In T.K. Nakayama and J.N. Martin, eds. *Whiteness: The Communication of a Social Identity*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Ward, D. 1989. *Poverty, Ethnicity, and the American City, 1840-1925: Changing Conceptions of the Slum and Ghetto*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Warren, J. W. 2000. Masters in the field: White talk, white privileges, white biases. In R.W. Twine and J.W. Warren, eds. *Racing Research, Researching Race: Methodological Dilemmas in Critical Race Studies*. New York: New York University Press., pp. 135-164.
- White, R. 2006. *Kingfish: The Reign of Huey P. Long*. New York: Random House.
- Williams, M. 1989. *Americans and Their Forests: A Historical Geography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wilson, B. 2000. *America's Johannesburg: Industrialization and Racial Transformation in Birmingham*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- _____. 2002. Critically understanding race-connected practices: a reading of W.E.B. DuBois and Richard Wright. *The Professional Geographer* 54(1): 31-40.
- Winders, J. 2003. White in all the wrong places: white rural poverty in the postbellum U.S. South. *Cultural Geographies* 10(1): 45-63.
- Wolcott, H.F. 1994. *Transforming Qualitative Data: Description, Analysis, and Interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Woodward, C.V. 1971 [1951]. *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- _____. 1993 [1960]. The search for southern identity. In C. V. Woodward. *The Burden of Southern History, Third Edition*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Wright, G. 1996. *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy since the Civil War*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Wyche, B.H. 1999. Paternalism, patriotism, and protest in “the already best city in the land”: Bogalusa, Louisiana, 1906-1919. *Louisiana History* 40(1): 63-84
- Yanchar, S.C., E.E. Gantt, and S.L. Clay. 2005. On the nature of a critical methodology. *Theory and Psychology* 15(1): 27-50.
- Yeung, H.W. 2003. Practicing new economic geographies: A methodological examination. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 93(2): 442-462.
- Dr. Frank Fenwick Young vs. Dr. Oscar Dowling, 1918. Case No. 1242 of the Twenty-Sixth Judicial District Court, October Term 1918, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana.* Official court proceedings located in Archives, St. Tammany Parish Clerk of Court, St. Tammany Parish Justice Building, Covington, LA.
- Zeidel, R.F. 2004. *Immigrants, Progressives, and Exclusion Politics: The Dillingham Commission, 1900-1927*. Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.

VITA

Amy R. Sumpter was born in Lafayette, Indiana, and spent her childhood in O'Fallon, Illinois, before moving to Mandeville, Louisiana, as a teenager. She received her undergraduate degree in political science and international studies from the University of Kansas in 1999 and her master's degree in geography from the University of Colorado in 2000. She earned her doctoral degree in geography from Louisiana State University in August 2008. Her principal research interests include the study of race and historical, economic, and political geographies, particularly in the context of the U.S. South.