

## Tenuous Place in History

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### **Abstract:**

This study seeks to ascertain whether the Chicago Daily Defender's coverage of the December 4, 1969 assassination of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton represents a prevailing pattern among black newspapers or an aberration in the black media's treatment of the infamous event. Moreover, we wish to determine how the black press coverage differed from that of the mainstream media. The study proceeds with a brief synopsis of the police actions taken on that fateful December morning, after which the data and methodological design of the study are presented and followed by an analysis of the findings. We then offer a biographical capsule of Mark Clark's life and activism; heretofore, largely overlooked in the scholarly narratives of the raid. Finally, the study concludes with a discussion of the sources contributing to Clark's near erasure from the annals of history

**Keywords:** Mark Clark | Fred Hampton | December 4, 1969 | Raid | Assassination | Pack journalism | Media representation | Black Panther Party | Chicago raid

### **Article:**

The 1969 assassinations of Mark Clark, Defense Captain of the Peoria Branch of the Black Panther Party, and Fred Hampton, Deputy Chairman of the Illinois State Chapter of the Black Panther Party, were just two individuals among a litany of racially motivated murders of black freedom fighters committed by white perpetrators, some of whom were law enforcement officers, during the turbulent 1960s. In the decade prior to the deaths of Clark and Hampton, there were several heinous murders of black activists, including Harry T. Moore and Harriette V. Moore, who died in 1951 from injuries stemming from the Christmas Day bombing of their home in Brevard County, Florida, where the couple founded a local NAACP chapter (Green 1999; Williams 1987); the 1952 shooting death of Hilliard Brooks, killed by a Montgomery, Alabama police officer after a dispute with a bus driver over the city's segregated bus policy (Bullard 1994, p. 16–17); and the 1955 brutal murders of Black Mississippians Reverend George Lee in Belzoni County and Lamar Smith in Brookhaven due to their respective voter registration activism (Bullard 1994, pp. 40–43). Although many documented murders of African American activists occurred in the South, the northern region of the nation is not without its own ignominious history as evidenced by the horrific deaths of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. For scores of Americans, black and white, the

infamous December 4, 1969 Chicago police raid that resulted in the murders of Clark and Hampton was analogous to a Bnorthern lynching^ that violated the sanctity of the nation's values and principles embodied in its most precious documents—the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution (Rutberg 2011).

Sunday, November 30, 1969 began like any other typical winter week in the BWindY City^ as Chicagoans were readying themselves for yet another busy work week. It was three days removed from the McDonald's Thanksgiving Day Parade, the city's grand holiday tradition that, per the Chicago Tribune, was witnessed by more than 1.5 million people who lined the parade route. As the year was ending, the city's sports teams performed poorly par the course of the late 1960s. The Chicago Bears were on their way to a miserable 1–13 season after falling short yet again, this time to the Cleveland Browns. On the hard court, the Bulls dropped two games in consecutive days, while the Blackhawks limped off the Bice^ and out of New York with a 3–3 tie against the Rangers.

Little did city residents realize that during the pre-dawn hours of the morning on December 4th, law enforcement officers assigned to the Cook County State's Attorney Office gathered one final time at the 26th Street office of the State's Attorney to finalize plans to raid a dwelling on the city's west side that housed local Black Panther Party (BPP) members. Chicago police officers executed the raid under the pretense that the occupants possessed Ba cache of illegal weapons^ that included sawed-off shotguns, riot guns, and other firearms, some that supposedly belonged to the Chicago police department (Epstein 1971). According to Assistant State Attorney Richard Javolec, one of the shotguns confiscated during the raid was stolen from a police squad car (Rooney and Felcher 1969, p. 1). By the end of the work day that Thursday, the aftershock of the raid reverberated across the city of Chicago and the nation. Considered by many as one of the most egregious acts of police misconduct in the twentieth century, the raid resulted in the murders of Hampton and Clark, as well as injuries sustained by four additional party members, including two young women, who were all shot multiple times (Wilkins and Clark 1973).

Although both Clark and Hampton made the ultimate sacrifice, the loss of their respective lives on behalf of the liberation of black and oppressed people, Clark's activism is relegated to the margins of the Black Freedom Struggle. Clark, a founding member and leader of the Peoria, Illinois branch of the Black Panther Party, who was also killed during the December 4, 1969 Chicago police raid, remains a mere footnote in the extant scholarly literature and the collective memory of the broader public. By contrast, Hampton's murder is documented in *The Assassination of Fred Hampton: How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther*, a book authored by Haas (2010), one of the lawyers who secured a \$1.85-million-dollar settlement for the survivors of the raid and the families of Clark and Hampton. While two BPP members died in the December 4 police raid, Clark's murder is conspicuously absent from the book's title.

Surprisingly, this tendency to marginalize Clark occurred in the Chicago Daily Defender—the nation's oldest African American newspaper—and its coverage of the December 4, 1969 raid. Prior research indicates that the Chicago Daily Defender's news treatment of the raid differed little from that of the mainstream press (Jeffries and Dyson 2010). While the Chicago Daily Defender emphasized the human side of Hampton and situated his murder within the larger context of racism in American society, the black news organ, nonetheless, privileged Hampton while minimizing Clark. Jeffries and Dyson conclude:

“Yet upon close inspection, coverage of the raid and the murders of Clark and Hampton in the Chicago Daily Defender reveal that in many respects, Clark, while

not rendered invisible, fared worse in the black press than he did in the white press” (Jeffries and Dyson, pp. 129–130).

This unexpected deduction is contrary to the distinguished history of the black press as a tireless advocate for and about people of African descent residing in the United States. Whereas the white media have traditionally couched African Americans in an unsavory fashion, the black press vigorously countered such derogatory images by touting the achievements, character, and aspirations of black Americans. Historically, the black press has been the lamplighter illuminating that which the white media minimized, neglected, or omitted altogether about black life. Yet, the Chicago Daily Defender’s coverage of Clark and Hampton failed to live up to the lofty expectations of the black press.

Responsively, we seek to ascertain whether the Chicago Daily Defender’s coverage of the raid represents a prevailing pattern among black newspapers or an aberration in the black media’s treatment of the infamous raid. Moreover, we wish to determine the way the black press coverage differed, if any, from that of the mainstream media. The study proceeds with a brief synopsis of the police actions taken on that fateful December morning, after which the data and methodological design of the study are presented and followed by an analysis of the findings. We then offer a biographical capsule of Mark Clark’s life and activism; heretofore, largely overlooked in the scholarly narratives of the raid. Finally, the study concludes with a discussion of the sources contributing to Clark’s near erasure from the annals of the Black Freedom Struggle.

### **The Raid, in Brief**

On Thursday, at approximately 4:15 AM on December 4, 1969, fourteen members of a special unit of the Cook County State Attorney’s Office rode in three unmarked cars and a panel truck that cruised slowly for approximately ten minutes through the barren streets of the city’s west side. Ironically, cloaked in civilian leather jackets and fur hats, the police officers parked fifty yards away from the targeted 2337 West Monroe Street apartment and, briskly but quietly, exited their vehicles making their way to cover the front and back of the residence. The heavily armed 14-member police contingent’s weapons inventory included a .357-caliber pistol, nineteen .38-caliber pistols, one carbine, five shotguns, and one Thompson submachine gun with more than 100 rounds of ammunition (Wilkins and Clark 1973). Absent were tear-gas canisters, bullhorns, spotlights, and any other tools of the trade generally associated with a primary objective of apprehending suspects held up in a dwelling without the loss of life. As planned, the police officers divided into three groups. Five police officers walked up the building’s stairs and entered a small hallway, while six other members of the raiding party approached from the rear of the building. The three remaining police officers waited outside on the sidewalk.

Sergeant Daniel Groth, the officer in charge, banged on the front door to which one of the Panther residents called, “Who’s there?” Groth ordered the occupants to open the door amid the usual shuffling occurring when one is suddenly awakened in the early hours of the morning. Then, silence fell (Arlen 1974). Officer James “Gloves” Davis, an African American who had a reputation for brutalizing black civilians, kicked in the front door as he, along with Groth and three other officers, stormed into the residence firing their weapons indiscriminately in the darkened apartment. Meanwhile, the six officers at the rear of the apartment followed suit amid shouting, screams, and moans among wounded Panther occupants who had been shot during the police intrusion of the apartment. Outside the dwelling, an officer who had just arrived on the scene

radioed, BThe premises are under control.^ When the smoked cleared, Mark Clark, 22, Defense Captain of the Peoria, Illinois Branch of the BPP, and Fred Hampton, 21, Deputy Chairman of the Illinois State Chapter of the BPP, lay dead. Clark, shot in the heart, once in the chest and the shoulder, as well as twice in the forehead, laid crumbled on the floor at the front door of the apartment. In addition, four other Black Panther Party members in the apartment suffered multiple gunshot wounds. Ronald Doc Satchel, 20, was shot four times while Verlina Brewer, 17, Blair Anderson, 22, and Brenda Harris, 18, were all hit twice by the fusillade of bullets fired into the apartment. The lone police officer hit by gunfire was wounded by a stray bullet from one of the police weapons fired during the raid (Wilkins and Clark 1973). As details of the incident were relayed over the police two-way radio, the downtown dispatcher reported hearing cheers from police cars scattered throughout the city. During these radio transmissions, one police officer was heard boasting into his radio, BThat's when to get them— when they are in their bed^ (McClory 1989).

In a preemptive move, the Cook County State's Attorney Edward Hanrahan immediately issued a press statement stating that Clark and Hampton died during a Panther-initiated shoot-out with the police. BPP representatives immediately countered and stated that what occurred was tantamount to a shoot-in rather than a shoot-out. Indeed, an analysis of the crime scene indicated that of the nearly 100 shots fired during the raid, only one bullet came from inside the apartment—a single shot fired from Clark's shotgun that most likely discharged when he was shot in the heart by James BGloves^ Davis. BPP officials further alleged that a police officer shot Hampton in the head from point-blank range while he slept, an assertion buttressed by an independent autopsy. In what proved to be a stroke of luck or perhaps arrogance on the part of Cook County law enforcement officials, the police failed to designate the dwelling as a restricted crime scene. Because of this police blunder, over the next several days, BPP members gave guided tours of the bullet-riddled residence to hundreds of individuals from all walks of life who braved Chicago's wintry conditions to witness personally the bloody site of the raid. After touring the battle-torn apartment, Leonard V. Chabala, the mayor of Maywood, Illinois, hometown of Fred Hampton, issued a press statement declaring the raid Ba blatant act of legitimized murder^ (Tribute Paid to Panther at Funeral Here 1969).

## **Data and Method**

This study seeks to answer the following three research questions:

1. Are the prior findings of the Chicago Daily Defender's coverage of the December 4, 1969 police raid reflected and promulgated in the news treatment of other major black newspapers?
2. Does the black press coverage of the December 4, 1969 police raid differ from that of the mainstream press?
3. How are Mark Clark and Fred Hampton framed in the media?

To answer these questions, we gleaned data from earlier research that comprised five mainstream Illinois newspapers, two national newspapers, and one black Chicago news daily (Jeffries and Dyson 2010). Then, we combined these newspapers with news stories collected from three additional black-oriented newspapers. Of course, the Chicago media had a vested interest in

the events that unfolded on that December 4, 1969 morning. Therefore, we selected the city's three major mainstream newspapers: the Chicago Daily News, the Chicago SunTimes, and the Chicago Tribune (Jeffries and Dyson 2010). At the time of the raid, the three news organs were the largest circulating newspapers in the state: the Chicago Daily News, a one-time popular afternoon daily known for its aggressive investigative style reporting and mass appeal, terminated its operations in the late 1970s; the highly acclaimed Chicago Sun-Times, the city's oldest newspaper renowned as one of the nation's most progressive newspapers; and the Chicago Tribune, on the other hand, relished its reputation as a beacon of conservatism evident by its long policy of endorsing Republican candidates for elective office. Two other Illinois newspapers, the Maywood Herald and the Peoria Journal Star, with considerable smaller circulations, were selected because both news organs represented the respective hometown newspapers of Hampton and Clark. The final Illinois newspaper, the Chicago Daily Defender, was included to determine whether black press coverage of the raid differed from that of the mainstream press. Finally, given the high-profile nature and political ramifications of the raid, two national newspapers were also examined—The New York Times and the Washington Post, two highly regarded national print news organs with an international readership dispatched reporters to the Windy City to cover the aftermath of the racially and politically charged event.

Three black owned newspapers—the New Pittsburgh Courier, the Baltimore AfroAmerican (aka the Afro), and the Norfolk Journal and Guide were added to this study. All three newspapers were among the oldest and most prestigious (along with the Chicago Daily Defender) black news organs in the nation. The New Pittsburgh Courier possessed the largest circulation among black news weeklies while the Baltimore AfroAmerican jockeyed for supremacy within the mid-Atlantic area that included Maryland, Virginia, and Washington D.C., and also competed with the Norfolk Journal and Guide, which reigned in circulation among black news weeklies in the southeast. Similar to the Chicago Daily Defender, these newspapers played an integral role in the African American struggle for acceptance, recognition, and racial equality. As was the case with the selection of the Chicago Daily Defender in the initial study, the inclusion of three other black-owned newspapers allowed us to gauge whether the Chicago Daily Defender's treatment of the raid constitutes an aberration or sustained pattern of news coverage among the black press. Furthermore, the inclusion of these additional black newspapers permits one to discern continuities and discontinuities among the coverage of the raid among both the black press and the mainstream newspapers.

Newspapers were chosen as the unit of analyses for two reasons. First, the medium is much more accessible to researchers than television news coverage. Second, at the time of the raid, the medium was considered America's most reliable news source that enjoyed record high readership.<sup>2</sup> Arguably, the medium was at its apex of influence during the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s when the American public witnessed the ousting of an U.S. president by the Bfourth estate<sup>^</sup> (Roberts and Klibanoff 2007). In a May 1969 speech, delivered at the 38th annual conference of the International Newspaper Promotion Association, Walter C. Kurz, the then executive vice president of the Chicago Tribune Company and general manager of the Chicago Tribune, underscored the primacy of newspapers when he noted that newspapers were an Bexpert medium<sup>^</sup> with the broadest base of spectrum of coverage that Bprovides the document, the record, the ready reference<sup>^</sup> with Ban atmosphere of action which runs thru every good newspaper that has a stronger strain than any other medium<sup>^</sup> (Strong 1969).

We employed content analysis, a research technique used for systematically examining written, spoken, or visual communication. Content analysis has an advantage shared by all

unobtrusive measures in that it limits the researcher's impact on the studied phenomenon. In other words, newspapers that were previously published preclude manipulation by the researcher. Moreover, it allows the researcher to derive quantitative metrics that characterize material in a way that is both reliable and valid, thus making this method particularly well suited for our study. The authors read all news articles (n = 664) pertaining to the raid over a 6-month period from December 4, 1969 to June 30, 1970, in 11 newspapers to determine how the cohort of newspapers reported the raid.

We operationalize Bmarginalization<sup>^</sup> in terms of the frequency, order, and placement of the appearance of the names of Clark and Hampton in the news stories covering the raid published in the 11 newspapers. Each news article was coded as follows: (a) the number of times either Clark or Hampton was mentioned in each article,<sup>3</sup> (b) the order in which their names appeared in each article,<sup>4</sup> and (c) the number of times each of their names appeared in the headline of relevant news articles.<sup>5</sup> We analyzed each day's news published in the seven mainstream daily newspapers, as well as each week's news appearing in the four black-oriented news outlets over the same 6-month time frame to avoid the pitfall of a narrow sample. This study's strength lies in its extended period of investigation that generated a large swath of news articles which enabled the authors to make more valid interpretations about the newspaper's coverage of the December 4, 1969 police raid. While we can draw inferences from the frequency and placement of the names of Clark and Hampton in respective news stories of this analysis, the procedure sheds little light on the nature of the coverage of the raid among the various newspapers. For instance, how were Hampton and Clark framed in the news stories? Were Hampton and Clark depicted as wayward criminals or concerned young citizens? Therefore, in addition to increasing and diversifying our data sources (three additional black-oriented newspapers), we re-read all 644 articles with a singular purpose in mind, namely to ascertain the content and narrative of the news stories to gain insight on the life and activism of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton.

## **Finding**

### **The Black Press: a Comparison of Intra-Racial News Coverage**

Table 1 shows significant congruence between the Chicago Daily Defender's coverage of the December 4, 1969 police raid and that of the three black newspapers added to this study. Both the Chicago Daily Defender and the cohort of black newspapers' coverage privileged Hampton while marginalizing Clark. This pattern of media coverage was reflected across all three indicators with data gleaned from the news stories pertaining to the raid that appeared in the pages of the four black newspapers (n = 131) which comprised approximately one fifth (19.7%) of the study's total number of news articles from black weekly news organs (see Table 1). Many of these news stories were published in the Chicago Daily Defender (n = 76), followed by Baltimore Afro-American (n = 30), the New Pittsburgh Courier (n = 15), and the Journal and Guide (n = 10) (see Table 1).

Hampton was mentioned with greater frequency in the news stories of all four black newspapers. In the Chicago Daily Defender, Hampton's name appeared more frequently (71.6%) than Mark Clark's (see Table 1). Similarly, both the New Pittsburgh Courier and the Baltimore Afro-American noted Hampton more frequently than Clark. Hampton's frequency rate was 85.7% compared to Clark's rate of 14.3% in the New Pittsburgh Courier, while in the Baltimore Afro-American Hampton's frequency rate was 70.0% compared to 30% for Clark (see Table 1). In the Norfolk Journal and Guide, Hampton's frequency rate (62.5%) was the only black news organ that

fell below that of the Chicago Daily Defender (71.6%). Nonetheless, Hampton is noted most of the time in the popular southern weekly's coverage of the raid (see Table 1). Finally, in contrast to the Chicago Daily Defender, Clark's name did not appear first or in the headlines of any news story published by the three other black newspapers (see Table 1). In short, these results show that the Chicago Daily Defender's coverage of the raid was not an anomaly among the black press.

### Black Press and the Mainstream News Media: Continuities and Discontinuities

The black press coverage of the December 4, 1969 raid is strikingly similar to the mainstream media's treatment of the infamous act of police misconduct (see Table 2). As was the case for the black press, Hampton received the lion's share of mainstream media's attention (see Table 2). Approximately 80% of the total number of news articles (n = 513) appeared in the seven mainstream newspapers with the bulk of news

**Table 1** Black press coverage of the December 4, 1969 police raid of the Chicago Black Panther Party residence

Newspaper	Number of articles	Frequency of mentions		Frequency of name appearing first		Frequency of name in headline	
		Clark	Hampton	Clark	Hampton	Clark	Hampton
<i>Baltimore Afro-American</i>	30	40 (30%)	93 (70%)	0 (0%)	30 (100%)	0	2
<i>Chicago Daily Defender</i>	76	90 (28.4%)	227 (71.6%)	2 (2.9%)	67 (97.1%)	1	11
<i>Norfolk Journal and Guide</i>	10	15 (37.5%)	25 (62.5%)	0 (0%)	10 (100%)	0	0
<i>New Pittsburgh Courier</i>	15	7 (14.3%)	42 (85.7%)	0 (0%)	15 (100%)	0	0
Average		33.25%	67.65%	3.27%	96.73%		
Total	131						

stories coming from the five Illinois mainstream newspapers (n = 465). The two national news organs, New York Times and the Washington Post, accounted for the remaining 48 news stories. Chicago's three major mainstream newspapers provided the overwhelming majority of the news stories on the raid (n = 421) with each paper publishing over 100 news articles, led by the Chicago Sun-Times (n = 171), followed by the Chicago Daily News (n = 125) and the Chicago Tribune (n = 109) (see Table 2). Among the mainstream press, Hampton's hometown newspaper, the Maywood Herald, and the Washington Post published the fewest number of news articles, 17 and 18, respectively. Nonetheless, these amounts surpassed the inventory of two of the blackoriented newspapers, the New Pittsburgh Courier's 15 news articles and the Norfolk Journal and Guide's 10 news stories (see Table 2).

For the most part, the mainstream newspapers, like the black press, prominently featured Hampton in their news coverage of the raid. The news treatment of the raid by the Peoria Journal Star, Clark's hometown newspaper, and the national coverage of the Washington Post were the only mainstream newspapers to diverge from the pattern that spotlights Hampton while largely neglecting Clark in news narratives of the raid. Data from the mainstream newspapers show that Hampton was highlighted vis-à-vis Mark Clark across all three indicators (see Table 2). Most

revealing is the finding that the black press mentioned Hampton with a greater frequency rate than all the mainstream newspapers except the Maywood Herald (see Table 2). Clearly, the Maywood Herald's 96.6% frequency rate is an outlier since Fred Hampton hailed from the city of Maywood. The black press noted Hampton more frequently in their news stories than all but two mainstream newspapers: the Peoria Journal Star and the Washington Post (see Table 2). The Peoria Journal Star is the only newspaper (mainstream or ethnic based) that mentioned Clark (56%) more often than Hampton (44%) in its news stories (see Table 2). This finding is not altogether surprising in light given that Peoria was Clark's hometown.

At the national level, coverage of Clark and Hampton in the New York Times, the country's most respected news daily, mirrored that of the mainstream Illinois press in which Hampton's frequency rate was 72.3% compared to 27.7% for Clark (see Table 2). However, the Washington Post did offer balanced coverage of the raid, citing both men's names an equal amount of times, 50.8% for Hampton and 49.2% in the case of Clark (see Table 2).

Our results are even more skewed with respect to the second indicator—the order in which the two fallen Panthers appeared in the various news articles. Among the news stories of the mainstream press, state and national newspapers, Clark's name nearly always followed Hampton's. Hampton's name appeared first more than 90% of the time. Although a native son of Peoria, Illinois, Clark still received short shrift from his hometown newspaper, the Peoria Journal Star, in which his name appeared first only 17.5% of the time (see Table 2). By contrast, Hampton's hometown newspaper, the Maywood Herald, decidedly favored Hampton in its coverage of the raid. For example, Clark's name did not appear first in any news story published in the Maywood Herald. This glaring imbalance is also equally apparent among the news coverage of the black press that reflects the continuity between the coverage of ethnic-based newspapers and the mainstream media (see Table 2).

An examination of the headlines of the news stories pertaining to the raid also discerned a similar indifference to Clark in the media coverage of the two Panthers. Clark's name appeared in the headlines of the seven mainstream newspapers a mere three times compared to 68 news articles that Hampton headlined (see Table 2). Notwithstanding these minuscule numbers, Clark still enjoyed a greater likelihood of appearing among the headlines of news stories in the mainstream media rather than the black press. Indeed, Clark's name appeared in the headlines of a sole news story in the Chicago Daily Defender out of the 131 total articles published by the four black newspapers (see Table 2). Suffice to say, these findings show that the press coverage of the raid tended to relegate Clark's participation to the margins of news accounts about the raid. Moreover, the results also indicate a convergence between the black press and mainstream news coverage of the raid. Hence, the black press failed in this instance to live up to the legacy that the esteemed poet and essayist Langston Hughes once described as the *voice of the voiceless* (De Santis 1995, p. 13). As discussed earlier, the findings only speak to the appearance (frequency, order, and placement) of Clark and Hampton within the various news articles published in the 11 newspapers. We now turn our attention to the content and narrative of the raid to ascertain the way the two fallen BPP members were framed.

**Table 2** Mainstream and black press coverage of the December 4, 1969 police raid of the Chicago Black Panther Party residence

<sup>1</sup>	Number of articles	Frequency of mentions		Frequency of name appearing first		Frequency of name in headline	
Illinois newspapers							
		Clark	Hampton	Clark	Hampton	Clark	Hampton
Chicago Daily News	125	124 (33.8%)	243 (66.2%)	4 (4%)	97 (96%)	0	20
Chicago Sun-Times	171	239 (35.6%)	433 (64.4%)	3 (2%)	150 (98%)	1	33
Chicago Tribune	109	165 (40%)	247 (60%)	7 (7.6%)	85 (92.4%)	2	3
Maywood Herald	17	5 (3.4%)	143 (96.6%)	0 (0%)	17 (100%)	0	12
Peoria Journal Star	43	84 (56%)	66 (44%)	7 (17.5%)	33 (82.5%)	0	0
Average		33.25%	67.65%	3.27%	96.73%		
Total of IL newspapers	465						
National newspapers							
		Clark	Hampton	Clark	Hampton	Clark	Hampton
New York Times	30	28 (27.7%)	73 (72.3%)	0	23	0	1
Washington Post	18	32 (49.2%)	33 (50.8%)	1	16	0	0
Average		33.25%	67.65%	3.27%	96.73%		
Total of national newspapers	48						
Black newspapers							
		Clark	Hampton	Clark	Hampton	Clark	Hampton
Baltimore Afro-American	30	40 (30%)	93 (70%)	0 (0%)	30 (100%)	0	2
Chicago Daily Defender	76	90 (28.4%)	227 (71.6%)	2 (2.9%)	67 (97.1%)	1	11
Norfolk Journal and Guide	10	15 (37.5%)	25 (62.5%)	0 (0%)	10 (100%)	0	0
New Pittsburgh Courier	15	7 (14.3%)	42 (85.7%)	0 (0%)	15 (100%)	0	0
Average		33.25%	67.65%	3.27%	96.73%		
Total of black newspapers	131						
Total number of articles from Illinois, national, and black newspapers: 644							

## Nature of Coverage: Framing Clark and Hampton

Given the importance that the black press has historically placed on fairness and balance when reporting on African Americans, it is not unreasonable to expect more inclusive, well-researched, and informative news stories about Clark and Hampton. Conversely, considering the Black Panther Party's negative and controversial image, the mainstream press could hardly be counted on to contextualize and interrogate effectively the subtleties of black men and women armed with guns. Consequently, attention to the content and narrative of the news articles may assist in differentiating between the black press and mainstream coverage of the raid. However, our reassessment of the news articles indicates that the black press failed to distinguish itself from the mainstream media. Neither the black nor the mainstream press published many articles on Hampton and Clark that offered a sense of the two activists' totality as human beings. Instead, most of the news stories that appeared in the 11 newspapers either covered various aspects of the raid, such as its rationale, multiple versions of the incident, and legal strategies, or were replete with less consequential descriptors such as age, organization affiliation, title, and/or hometown of the two fallen Panthers.

The readership of the Norfolk Journal and Guide would have learned little other than Hampton was the leader of the Illinois Panthers,<sup>^</sup> or Clark was a Downstate Panther<sup>^</sup> by consulting the southern weekly. News articles in the Norfolk Journal and Guide failed to note any meaningful personal or biographical information about either of the two slain members of the Black Panther Party. The Baltimore Afro-American's news stories comprised similar inconsequential descriptors. Coverage of the two young activists in the New Pittsburgh Courier was scant and equally uninformative as well. On more than one occasion, the New Pittsburgh Courier's readers were at least made aware of Hampton's NAACP affiliation, which was noted in several articles. Clark's only mention in the newspaper was that he hailed from Peoria, Illinois. News articles published in the two national newspapers, the Washington Post and the New York Times, were also satiated with surface descriptors. Most of the articles in the New York Times provided sparse information beyond Hampton's leadership of the Illinois Black Panthers, while also noting that Clark headed the Peoria BPP affiliate. The news coverage of the raid in the Washington Post mirrored similar media treatment.

The Chicago Daily Defender tended to focus on the circumstances surrounding the raid. Attention was given to the law enforcement officials and police officers responsible for carrying out the raid and the investigation during the raid's aftermath. Moreover, the Chicago Daily Defender's news coverage challenged the shaky evidence provided by Edward Hanrahan, the Cook County State's Attorney and other city officials claiming that the Panthers instigated a shoot-out. However, the Chicago Daily Defender published few articles on Clark and Hampton as young activists in their early twenties who were committed to working on behalf of their communities. In short, there was a dearth of incisive, informative, and personal stories about the two slain members of the Black Panther Party among the black press. This pattern was also evident among mainstream newspapers as well. Like the black press, Chicago's three city newspapers were characterized by a paucity of interest for news articles that focused on the lives and activism of the two slain Panthers. While the Tribune and the Sun-Times did publish a small number of personal stories on the two BPP activists, the Chicago Daily News failed to publish a single human interest article about either Hampton or Clark. Given the development of investigative journalism in the 1960s in which many of the country's major news dailies (including the Chicago Tribune)

established investigative task forces, one might have expected greater in-depth coverage of not only the actual raid but also the subjects against whom the raid was conducted (Schudson 1978).

Among the small cohort of positive news articles, nearly all of news stories centered on various personal aspects of Hampton's life that offered readers a more balanced portrayal of the BPP leader. For example, one story in the Tribune published months after the raid reported that Hampton was the father of a 4-month-old boy, while another news article appearing in the Sun-Times noted several personal facets of Hampton's life. 6 William Granger, who authored the BViolent Public Life of Hampton Began Only 2 Years Ago,^ published the day after the raid, highlighted the slain Hampton's involvement in the NAACP as a student at Proviso East High; his first arrest in June 1967; Hampton's willingness to lead protests at a relatively young age; and his later repudiation of the bomb-happy Weathermen as Banarchistic and Custeristic^ (Granger 1969). Among the splattering of human interest articles appearing in the Chicago Daily Defender was an article authored by the Reverend Jesse Jackson published during the week of December 13–19 in which he remembered Hampton as, Ba stellar athlete and a virtual all 'A'student in high school. A brilliant intellect who aspired to be a lawyer. A firm church goer and bible student from his childhood up, Fred developed a strong moral consciousness^ (Jackson 1969). Coverage of Hampton in the Peoria Journal Star was sparse and flushed with boilerplate descriptors. What little appeared on Hampton in the Peoria Journal Star had been previously noted in other newspapers. The coverage of Clark and Hampton in the national press also left much to be desired. Neither the New York Times nor the Washington Post offered much insight of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton as individuals.

On the other hand, Hampton's hometown newspaper, the Maywood Herald, included a wealth of biographical and other personal information that provided a refreshing look at the dynamic young Panther leader. The Maywood Herald was the only newspaper that referred to Hampton by his full name, Frederick Allen Hampton. Readers were privy to extensive biographical information that included Hampton's birth as well as educational background. Although Hampton failed to earn a college degree, his attendance at Triton College, Central College, and Malcolm X Junior College was noted in various news stories found in the Maywood Herald. Readers also learned that in 1967, Hampton served as president of the Maywood NAACP Youth Council and was a devout church goer who since 1961 attended Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church. This bountiful supply of positive news stories about Hampton may be attributed to several Maywood Herald reporters who witnessed first-hand Hampton's dedication to helping people improve their lives. According to Paul Sassone, who met Hampton at a community meeting held at Melrose Park's First Baptist Church 2 months before he was killed, BHampton was no hoodlum or gangster. He was an intelligent and highly articulate revolutionary. That is, he didn't like the way America was being run and wanted a change, using any means necessary^ (Sassone 1969). He further noted, Bthe Panther Chairman appealed to poor people of every color to unite against capitalism^ (Sassone 1969). Carol Swatos, another Maywood Herald reporter, recalled that Hampton initially wanted to be a lawyer, but then changed his mind citing the slow wheels of justice. She waxed poetically about making Hampton's acquaintance after a Maywood Human Relations Commission meeting where the Panther leader spoke eloquently about the unfair treatment of African Americans within Maywood's public school system (Swatos 1969). The Maywood Herald reporter would later acknowledge that Hampton prompted her to rethink several her longstanding assumptions about the local educational system and the broader political system in general (Swatos 1969).

Conversely, Clark's hometown paper, the Peoria Journal Star, largely vilified him. The overwhelming number of articles covering the raid published in the Peoria Journal Star revolved around Clark's various run-ins with the law. The hometown newspaper of the Peoria Panther highlighted Clark's lengthy arrest record, which included two short stints of imprisonment—a 4-month jail sentence and a 6-month prison term—on assault charges. In addition to his troubles with the law, readers were also informed that Clark dropped out of school in the eighth grade (Ex-Peoria Black Panther dies in Chicago shootout 1969). His November 8, arrest on charges of disorderly conduct stemming from hawking Black Panther newspapers in Bradley University's student union after the school had passed a regulation prohibiting sale of papers in campus buildings was also noted (Ex-Peoria Black Panther dies in Chicago shootout 1969). Approximately a week after the raid, the conservative Peoria Journal Star offered a scathing editorial which seemed to rationalize the shooting deaths of Clark and Hampton:

“The real sympathy that the Panthers need from black leaders of the day is the kind which attempts to protect these young men not from the Police but from the idiotic Panther leadership which should not be allowed to continue to drive young men like Mark Clark to early graves” (The Panthers Need Help 1969).

The Peoria Journal Star did, however, publish a few news stories emphasizing personal aspects of Clark's life, such as his late father being a popular pastor who presided over a local Peoria church. Another Peoria Journal Star news story included excerpts from Reverend Blaine M. Ramsey's eulogy of Mark Clark in which he stated that Peoria Panther leader's Bconcern for the poor and dispossessed did not indicate that he was the type of person to engage in violence^ (Tribute Paid to Panther at Funeral Here 1969). Reverend Ramsey also spoke of the free breakfast program started by the hometown BPP member that for Ramsey offered further evidence of Clark's commitment to young people. The Peoria Journal Star also reported on the Bradley University Black Student Alliance's BContribution to the Revolutionaries^ which honored Mark Clark, Fred Hampton, and other fallen black activists. During the event, Horace Jones, head of the Black Student Alliance, noted Clark helped feed poor and hungry children breakfast in Peoria while a childhood friend of Mark Clark declared that the leader of the Peoria Panthers Bwasn't the finest person he knew, nor was he a hardened criminal; but that he was a person trying to contribute something to humanity^ (BU Negro Group Hails Slain Panthers 1969). Nevertheless, in the main, the news coverage of the Peoria Journal Star would have not endeared the local Panther leader to Peoria residents unfamiliar with Clark. One of the rare human interest news stories about Clark appearing in the Chicago Tribune provided insightful personal information about Clark dating back to his childhood and his various community activities gleaned from interviews with relatives, childhood friends, and community leaders who were well positioned to talk intimately about Mark, including the slain Panther's sister, Elnor Clark, and John Gwynn, the president of the local NAACP chapter who recalled that Mark joined the NAACP at the age of thirteen (Boyce 1969). Notwithstanding these exceptions, Clark's life and activism were generally minimized if not ignored by both the black and mainstream press. Indeed, if readers sought to learn more about Mark Clark other than his criminal record, they would have been disappointed with the news coverage provided by the 11 newspapers investigated in this study.

Mark Clark has been relegated to a tenuous place in the Black Freedom Struggle who often appears on the margins of scholarly and popular accounts of the raid. This oversight diminishes his role and commitment to the liberation of black and oppressed people. Clark, like Hampton,

was firmly committed to a cause to which he sacrificed his life. Rev. Blaine Ramsey, the pastor of the Ward Chapel A. M. E. church, asserts Bcertainly, Mark Clark should be considered one of the martyrs to the cause of black dignity and human equality^ (Maushard 1999). Yet, he is often overlooked by both scholars and the general public. For example, Mark Clark has not been the subject of either a monograph or extensive scholarly inquiry. Resultantly, Clark remains an Bunknown^ Panther, whose life and activism have not been captured by many of the scholarly narratives of the raid. Amazingly, with the exception of three works, the final report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Black Panthers and the Police (Wilkins and Clark 1973), Curtis Austin's *Up Against the Wall: Violence in the Making and Unmaking of the Black Panther Party* (Austin 2006), and Jeffery Haas' *The Assassination of Fred Hampton: How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther* (Haas 2010), the voluminous scholarship on the Black Panther Party only makes a passing reference to Mark Clark. The following section offers a biographical capsule that illuminates Mark Clark's human dimensions, revolutionary essence, and his commitment to improving the quality of life for black people.

### **Mark Clark: an Unknown Panther**

On June 28, 1947, Mark Clark was born into a large close-knit, blue collar family in Peoria, Illinois. His parents William and Fannie Clark were stalwarts of the local black community. Clark's father, who died in May 1969, was employed 28 years at the Caterpillar Company where he worked in the foundry. In addition, the elder Clark was also a local popular Pentecostal pastor who presided over the Holy Temple Church of God in Christ (Wilkins and Clark 1973, p. 5). His mother was primarily a stay-at-home mom, who did have an employment history with the St. Francis Hospital where she gave birth to Mark and occasionally worked as a domestic to earn additional income to help support the rather sizeable Clark family. The ninth child among 17 children, Clark was an adventurous and talented youth who, at an early age, showed a propensity for empathy toward the downtrodden. Mark's sister, Elnor, recalls that Bhe admired Geronimo because he refused to accept the reservation or neo-slavery^ (Boyce 1969).

Although he displayed talent in art, drama, and speech, Clark was an average student (Wilkins and Clark 1973, p. 5) who Bdid not like school^ and therefore failed to graduate from high school (E. Clark 2010). Elnor explained that Bhe liked the process of learning, but he didn't like school. Most of his knowledge came from his own efforts^ (Boyce 1969). Clark attended Lincoln elementary school and Roosevelt Junior High school before quitting school in the 8th grade when he left Manual Training High School. Jeffrey Haas reported that Mrs. Fannie Clark, Mark's mother, told the lawyers representing the survivors and families of the two murdered party members that BMark had been one of the many black children mistreated in the Peoria school^ (Haas 2010, p. 95). Elnor also underscored the racially inhospitable environment that confronted black students at Manual: BThere are sporadic outbreaks there all the time because the teachers don't treat black students fairly^ (Boyce 1969). The Civil Rights Commission noted in 1968 the Peoria School District was overwhelmingly composed of a white faculty staff (95%) (U. S. Commission on Civil Rights 1977). Based on testimony provided by Mark Clark's mother during the lawsuit proceedings, BMark completed high school through correspondence and worked at Caterpillar and as a barber and helped support his family from his earnings^ (Haas 2010, pp. 291–292). He would also enroll in a few classes at Illinois Central Junior College in Peoria (Wilkins and Clark 1973, p. 5).

The reserved and reticent Mark Clark possessed many of the attributes that defined the legendary Fred Hampton. He was an intelligent, principled, fearless, and a committed revolutionary. Bobby Rush, the Deputy Minister of Defense of the Illinois State Chapter of the Black Panther Party and current U.S. congressman serving, recalled that Mark Clark was a quiet leader, who was one of those people whose strength came from within (Maushard 1999). As his mother testified, that Clark was an intelligent, energetic and dedicated individual (Haas 2010, p. 292), a sentiment echoed by Moses Hardy, a longtime friend who asserted Mark was a thinker first and foremost (Boyce 1969). Ward Churchill, the activist-scholar who co-authored, with Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Political Repression: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement* (Churchill and Vander Hall 1990), and was a student at Peoria's Bradley University during the late 1960s, remembered Clark as tough and serious but also intellectually engaging (Churchill 2011).

Family members, friends, and activists alike all highlight Clark's commitment and dedication to the Black Freedom Struggle. One of his siblings stated, he was the type of person who, regardless of whether anyone went along with his ideas, it didn't make any difference. He was going to do what he thought was right and appropriate (Boyce 1969). Moses Hardy remembered that Mark wanted to do something far and above being a member of the Black Panther Party. He had a feeling for people and placed them before himself (Boyce 1969). Rev. Ramsey Blaine recalled that Mark Clark was committed, very warm, very affable, and he had a dedication to help his people (Maushard 1999). These observations are in sharp contrast to the Peoria Journal Star's unflattering characterization of Clark.

Prior to joining the Black Panther Party, Clark simultaneously pursued the contradictory paths of numerous run-ins with local law enforcement officials and grass roots activism. As regularly noted by the Peoria Journal Star and other mainstream newspapers, Clark had an extensive criminal record. However, he was largely convicted on minor criminal infractions. Clark's litany of arrests included curfew violations, theft, various traffic offenses, and carrying a concealed weapon (Wilkins and Clark 1973, p. 6). In 1965, Clark served a 4-month jail term for aggravated battery involving a movie usher followed by a 6-month prison stint in 1967 for assaulting two Manual High School teachers (Wilkins and Clark 1973, p. 6; Ex-Peoria Black Panther dies in Chicago shootout 1969).

Mark Clark's previous involvement in civil rights activism led by the local NAACP affiliate in Peoria laid important groundwork for his subsequent Black Panther Party organizing in the city. At 13 years old, Mark, along with his brothers and sisters, participated in numerous NAACP sponsored demonstrations for full employment, open housing, and quality education. John Gwyn, the president of the Peoria NAACP chapter, underscored Mark Clark's proclivity for action when he stated that Clark didn't seem to have too much interest in our meetings unless they were for action. He would rather move than sit and talk (Boyce 1969). Gwyn further recalled that Mark played a major part in keeping teenagers in line whom we normally would have had trouble with; he could call for order when older persons or adults could not (Boyce 1969). According to his older brother, Matthew, Mark was good with his hands and a decent boxer, an attribute which may have partially accounted for his ability to maintain discipline among his peers (Clark 2008a, b).

In late 1968, the Black Panther Party captured Mark Clark's attention. His sister, Elner, recalled Mark telling her that the Panthers were really doing something in California—something worthwhile. This was before anything had started here (Boyce 1969). During the summer in 1969, Mark reportedly decided to join the Black Panther Party after discussing BPP literature with a

California Panther who was a family friend visiting Peoria. While Mark's mother noted that the Black Panther Party Bmade him feel pride in himself^ (Haas 2010, p. 292), Clark found it tough treading to establish a viable BPP outpost in the downstate Illinois city. Ramsey explained that Mark Bwas of the avant garde and these people were not very well received. He preached a very radical black self-help philosophy. And people were not ready for him^ (Maushard 1999). Matthew Clark recalled, BNo one really supported the Panthers here. They believed the newspaper stories that we were robbing stores^ (Clark 2008a, b). He further noted Bwe (local Panthers) called different black organizations but no one would come to our aid^ (Clark 2008a, b).

The membership of the Peoria Branch ranged from 5 to 25 members during the organization's short duration—less than 18 months—in Peoria. Elnor noted Mark Bwas the first member here. Other friends joined but some quit, some were not very active, and others didn't participate. Most were in the training stage^ (Boyce 1969). Several of Mark's siblings, including Matthew, joined the local BPP unit (Clark 2008a, b). Matthew Clark described the Peoria BPP cadre as Bgang-bangers that had a sense of direction^ (Clark 2008a, b). Under Mark's leadership as defense captain, BPP comrades of the Peoria branch sold the organization's newspaper, *The Black Panther*; sponsored a free Breakfast program; participated in Rainbow coalition politics; and challenged prostitution in the city.

Selling *The Black Panther* constituted a core activity of all BPP branches and chapters across the nation. The party's news organ was not only a vehicle for transmitting the BPP's ideology but also a key source of revenue for the organization. Peoria police arrested Mark Clark twice on disorderly conduct charges stemming from attempts to sell the party's newspaper at the Bradley University's Student Center. On November 8, less than a month before his murder, Clark was arrested with James Adams and Anthony R. Harris, two of his fellow Peoria party members (Fine 2 Youths for Disturbance at Bradley 1969).

Peoria Panthers operated a free breakfast program that fed 30 children, Monday thru Friday, in the basement of the Ward Chapel A. M. E. church for approximately 6 months before the termination of the program. Rev. Blaine Ramsey, the pastor of Ward Chapel, explained Mark Clark Bcame to the church and asked me, Rev. Ramsey, can we use Ward Chapel A. M. E. for our breakfast program? And I consented to it—no other church in Peoria would open their doors—for what I considered a worthwhile endeavor. There were several little children who really needed a good breakfast^ (Maushard 1999). Parishioners voted to end the breakfast program after 6 months due to angst expressed over police monitoring that included a raid of the breakfast program (BU Negro Group Hails Slain Panthers 1969). According to Elnor Clark, Ramsey was eventually ousted as pastor of the church because he permitted the party members to use church facilities to operate the free breakfast program (Clark 2008a, b).

Mark Clark also spearheaded the Peoria Panther outpost's participation in local rainbow coalition politics, another staple of BPP organizing (Williams 2013). The activities of the local rainbow coalition comprising the branch of the Black Panther Party, the Student for a Democratic Society (SDS), the Black Student Alliance, and the Peoria Peace Congress largely revolved around anti-Vietnam war efforts. According to Ward Churchill, these organizations collaborated on a number of peace rallies held in Peoria (Churchill 2011). While the activities were uniformly carried out by nearly all BPP affiliates, Peoria Panther's opposition against prostitution was an issue linked to the locality of the downstate BPP branch. Similar to BPP party comrades in Houston, Texas who disrupted prostitution on Dowling Street (Jones 2010), Mark Clark and his fellow BPP members sought to stop the exploitation of black women by black pimps and white Bjohns^ in Peoria (Clark 2008a, b). Matthew Clark explained that Peoria, Illinois was known for prostitution that the local

Panthers vowed to curtail which pitted them against the many pimps in the city. He recalled one incident in which a pimp told him that Mark who had previously taken one of his girls, was selling Black Panther Party newspapers on a popular street corner. The pimp told Mark 'we ain't buying no papers; we pimps' to which Mark promptly knocked him down and then helped the pimp up and sold him a newspaper (Clark 2008a, b).

Very familiar to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous 'I Have Been to the Mountaintop' speech given on the eve of his assassination in Memphis, Tennessee, as Mark Clark on Thanksgiving Day, November 27, prepared to return to Chicago, he told family members 'I know that they are not going to let me live. I probably will not see the New Year' (Clark 2008a, b). Unfortunately, Clark's words were prophetic. When Mrs. Fannie Clark received the check for her portion of the \$1.85 million settlement from the lawyers of the People's Law office, she reportedly told the attorneys that 'My family and I will never forget the work you did. You won and you showed the world that Mark was trying to do something to make things better' (Haas 2010, p. 351). We hope that this study also contributes to the important endeavor of rescuing Mark Clark from the margins of the Black Freedom Struggle.

## Conclusion

Very familiar to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous 'I Have Been to the Mountaintop' speech given on the eve of his assassination in Memphis, Tennessee, as Mark Clark on Thanksgiving Day, November 27, prepared to return to Chicago, he told family members 'I know that they are not going to let me live. I probably will not see the New Year' (Clark 2008a, b). Unfortunately, Clark's words were prophetic. When Mrs. Fannie Clark received the check for her portion of the \$1.85 million settlement from the lawyers of the People's Law office, she reportedly told the attorneys that 'My family and I will never forget the work you did. You won and you showed the world that Mark was trying to do something to make things better' (Haas 2010, p. 351). We hope that this study also contributes to the important endeavor of rescuing Mark Clark from the margins of the Black Freedom Struggle.

Our results also show that Hampton was the subject of far more human interest news stories than Clark which provided greater insight of Hampton, particularly in the case of the news stories published in the *Maywood Herald*. Hampton's hometown newspaper offered its readers a more balanced assessment of Hampton than did the other newspapers examined in this study. However, this was not the case for Clark. While he did receive some media treatment that highlighted his life and activism, for the most part, news coverage focused on Clark's lengthy criminal record.

We offer two broad sets of factors—the charismatic personality of Fred Hampton as well as the mechanization of news reporting—to explain the disparity in the coverage of the two fallen members of the Black Panther Party by both the black press and mainstream media. First, this skewed news coverage may have been related to the extraordinary attributes of the Blarger than life figures known as Chairman Fred who was the chapter's Deputy Chairman, making him second in command to Bobby Rush who held the rank of Deputy Minister of Defense, the top leadership position within the Illinois State Chapter of the Black Panther Party. Hampton, the charismatic and celebrated Panther leader was generally recognized as one of the most effective speakers, respected, and beloved comrades of the Black Panther Party. Hampton's oratorical skills are well documented among Party members and the left-wing political community. Moreover, several documentaries illuminate the dynamic Hampton interacting masterfully with both large and small audiences (Gray and Alk 1971; Nelson 2016). Chaka Khan, the R&B icon, who joined

the Black Panther Party in Chicago for a brief period, reminisces about the dynamic Hampton in her autobiography, *Chaka! Through the Fire*:

“I remember wondering if Fred ever had a good belly laugh, ever cut up and clowned around. For all I know, perhaps he did in private. But whenever I saw him, he was in “movement mode.” He was like an army sergeant. Not that I ever saw him be cruel to anyone. He might put a friendly arm around your shoulder by way of encouragement—“Hello Sister Chaka”—but he wasn’t about a lot of chitchat. Fred was about “the struggle” (Khan 2003, p. 44).

Undoubtedly, Hampton’s outstanding leadership qualities, stature, charisma, local residency, and prior relationships with members of the local press enhanced his media appeal. Although Clark was the highest-ranking member of the party’s Peoria branch, this top position was not comparable to that of the Deputy Chairman of a major city such as Chicago, which afforded Hampton the leadership stature that Clark could not emulate as a founding member and leader of a BPP unit in a city with less than 130,000 residents. The Peoria Panther leader certainly did not have Hampton’s visibility and recognition among BPP comrades or broader radical circles within the Chicago metropolitan area. Moreover, Clark’s reserved disposition was in sharp contrast to Hampton’s commanding presence. The Peoria Panther leader lacked Hampton’s oratorical skills and relationships with members of the local press in the Chicago metropolitan area. Simply put, it is highly unlikely that Clark could command the kind of media attention that Hampton received.

In addition to Hampton’s significant media appeal, we also underscore the way the media produce news stories as a possible contributing factor to the skewed coverage between Clark and Hampton. Specifically, the role of pack journalism should be explored in explaining the divergent news coverage of the two slain BPP members. Pack journalism ensures that the media will tend to focus their attention on the same subjects which leads reporters and editors to cover the stories in similar fashion. Since many reporters are dependent upon the same official sources, they end up reporting news in a uniform fashion. Uniformity of the news is further promulgated by a well-defined pecking order in the media industry by which reporters of the prestigious newspapers act as harbingers of the news. Consequently, news stories are often products of wire services that lesser-known news outlets across the country appropriate with minimal revisions.

In closing, regardless of the contributory source to the imbalance of news coverage between Clark and Hampton, the fact remains that Clark has been consigned to the back pages of history which diminishes his contribution and sacrifice to the Black Freedom Struggle. We trust that this research provides another important step in calling attention to the glaring oversight of Mark Clark, a dedicated revolutionary who lost his life for the freedom of black people.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> All the Black newspapers that were analyzed for this study were weeklies except for the *Daily Defender*. The *Defender* evolved from a weekly paper to a daily paper in 1955. The *Daily Defender* was published from Monday through Thursday with a Friday to Sunday weekend edition and therefore did not begin coverage until Monday, December 8, 1969. We had hoped to analyze the news coverage in the *Los Angeles Sentinel* and the *Atlanta Daily World*, but we found the coverage to be scant and repetitive and decided to omit those publications. The *Daily Defender* was the first

Black newspaper to cover the story. Coverage of the murders in the other three Black newspapers did not appear until the week of December 13th at the earliest.

<sup>2</sup> Approximately 66,500,000 newspapers were sold each day in 1968 in the United States and Canada, representing a substantial increase from the last decade. See James Strong, *BNewspaper Growth Keyed to Belief in Youth*<sup>^</sup>: Kurz. *The Chicago Tribune*. 15 May 1969, section 1, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> The number of times either Clark or Hampton's name was mentioned throughout the 6-month timeframe of the study is ascertained by counting the number of times each person's name was mentioned. Percentages were then calculated by totaling the amount of time both Clark and Hampton's names were mentioned, and dividing that number into the number of times each person was cited. For example, for the *Chicago Daily News*, Clark was mentioned 124 times compared to 243 times for Hampton, totaling 367 mentions. The percentage was calculated by taking 124 and dividing it by 367 (0.3378) and multiplying this number by 100. Thus, in articles that appeared in the *Chicago Daily News*, Clark's name was cited 33.8% of the time (rounded to the nearest tenth), whereas Hampton's name was cited in two thirds of those articles (66.2%)

<sup>4</sup> The order in which their names appeared over the course of 6 months was ascertained by simply counting the number of times the reporter/editor cited Hampton's name before Clark's and/or Clark's name before Hampton's. Only those articles that mentioned both men were analyzed for this purpose. Percentages were calculated in the same fashion as is presented above. For example, in the *Chicago Daily News*, Clark's name appeared first 4 times while Hampton's name was cited 97 times; the sum of these numbers is 101. To calculate the percentage for Clark, the authors of this study divided 4 by 101 (0.0396) and multiplied this number by 100. Thus, for article in the *Chicago Daily News*, Clark was mentioned first 4% of the time (rounded to the nearest tenth).

<sup>5</sup> The number of times each man's name appeared in the headlines was determined by counting the number of times each name appeared in a story's headline. In instances where both names appeared in the headline of a given story both men were given credit. It should be noted that there were numerous articles in which neither Clark's nor Hampton's name appeared in the headline. The authors of this study did not calculate percentages for "number of times each name appeared in the headlines" because Clark's name appeared so few times in the headlines.

<sup>6</sup> There were one or two sentences that mentioned the birth of his son on the 29th of December to his fiancée, Deborah Johnson, but that was the extent of it.

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