

As a black urbanist, I follow in a long tradition of intellectual and experiential practices by black people to place ourselves in the city. In continuing this work, I am drawn to uncover the experiences of black and brown bodies in urban space that reveal the multitude of our contributions to meaning-making in cities. In the research annotations that follow, I turn to the *Negro Motorist Green Book* as an artifact and resource for contemporary urbanists and designers that, in its method and form, gestures toward a more liberatory urban spatial politics.

Started in 1936 by a mailman named Victor H. Green in Harlem, *The Green Book* began as a modest effort to list establishments that African-Americans could patronize in New York City. It soon grew to include numerous other cities in the U.S. and became an essential companion for black people traveling across the country during the violently segregated Jim Crow era. Green hacked the U.S. Postal Service network to gain detailed information about safe places where black people could commune, including hotels, restaurants, and individual homes, thereby appropriating an already existing system for a new function or use. Postal employees became intermediaries, collecting information from residents of the neighborhoods on their delivery routes. Because the information was provided by sources embedded in communities, the ability to review and evaluate spaces for their safety (and alter the guide accordingly) could be done relatively quickly.

In the 1949 edition of the *Negro Motorist Green Book* there were 3,706 total facilities listed. Of these, 1,643 of the facilities were travel accommodations including hotels, motels, and tourist homes. The remaining listings consisted of beauty parlors, nightclubs, and various other social sites. The 1959 edition listed 1,749 travel accommodations.^[1] A possible reason for this increase was that in the post-war era, more and more African-Americans owned automobiles and were traveling long distances for leisure and tourism. Eventually, the Green Book covered all 50 states and parts of Bermuda, Mexico, and Canada. At its height, the Book's circulation reached two million copies in 1962.^[2] Since 1945, the publication had been supported by Standard Oil. The Book hosted printed advertisements for the oil company and was distributed at Esso gas stations across the country, until its final edition in 1964, following the passage of the Civil Rights Act. This partnership with Standard Oil indicates the complicated intersections of capitalism and race at the time.

Today, as tools for understanding and visualizing space become more complex and descriptive, blackness is still so often emphasized as a quantifiable variable, and flattened as demographic information. When GIS mapping is used as a tool to visualize racial injustice, it is still premised on the understanding that race and space are fixed variables that may simply be superimposed, one onto the other, to identify and address the effects of racism. In the words of geographers Katherine McKittrick and Clyde Woods, this portrayal “naturalizes racial difference in place.” While this method is important in revealing inequity and the effects of dispossession—including access to housing, employment, and health and other services in urban space—an analysis of how race and space are co-produced is lost.

Following McKittrick and Clyde, and other scholars working at the intersection of urban studies and critical race studies, urban scholarship must contend with the limits of treating blackness as a measurable unit of difference; it must also acknowledge the richness of geographic meaning that black people make in their daily lives. This would demand a shift in urban research practice to include both qualitative socio-historical narratives and technical data, not only commenting on ‘what is’ but how things came into being. Speaking to this point, McKittrick writes:

Identifying the “where” of blackness in positivist terms can reduce black lives to essential measurable “facts” rather than presenting communities that have struggled, resisted, and significantly contributed to the production of space.

McKittrick and Wood, *No One Knows the Mysteries at the Bottom of the Ocean* (2007, P.6)

The Negro Motorist Green Book presents a methodological rupture that describes both blackness and space not as fixed categories but as socially and historically produced and shifting. Engaging a participatory, community network of knowledge-makers, it mapped a safe black territory within an extremely dangerous geography, undergirded by the values of white supremacy.

Today, as black urbanists confront the unfinished project of building a liberatory urban spatial politics, *The Green Book* comes alive as a reminder that:

Like Green did with the U.S. Postal Service we must learn to retune everyday systems into moments of extraordinary function;

Expertise must be returned to the experiences of black people, not vested solely in technocratic approaches to urban policy and planning;

Participatory and flexible networks must be capitalized upon to subvert the hegemonic value system of white supremacy.

Here, I perform the initial stages of my engagement with this powerful historical archive in the form of raw annotations. My notes, underlines, and keywords perform a link between Green’s original project—the ‘matter’ or lived experiences of black lives; personal research; and the larger liberatory social politics of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. I choose this working form in order to suggest openings for the development of a new urban knowledge equal to the predicaments of our present conjuncture, in which black lives are lost too often and too soon.

Notes

[1] Sorin, Gretchen Sullivan. “Keep Going: African Americans on the Road in the Era of Jim Crow”. University of Ann Arbor. 2009

[2] Gross, Andrew Steven. “The Changing Shape of the American Landscape: Travel, Corporate Expansion, and Consumer Culture, 1845-1945”. University of Ann Arbor. 2001

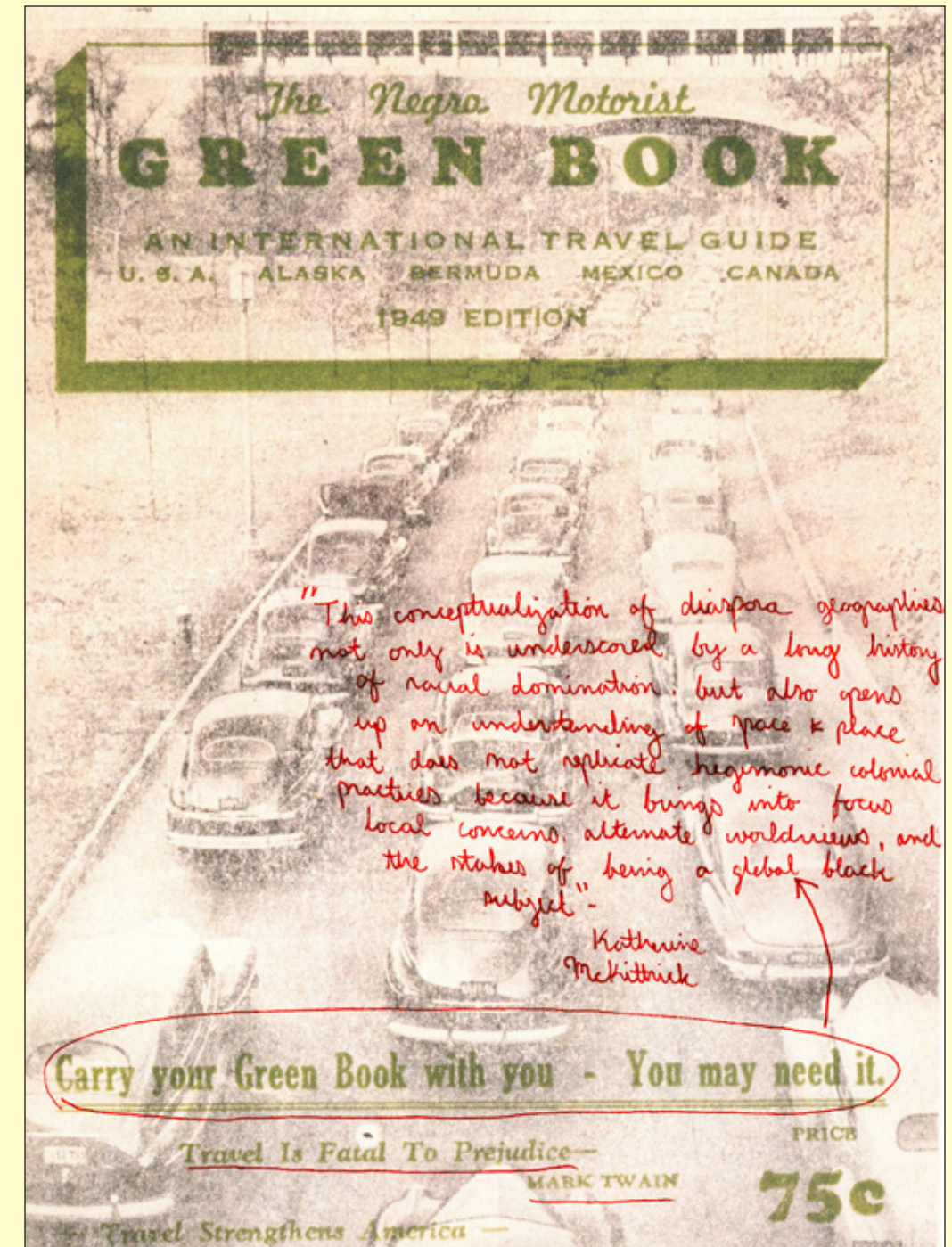



Figure 1. *The Negro Motorist Green Book*. From the Collections of The Henry Ford (autolife.umd.umich.edu).

When Vacation Pleasures Beckon

Send for

The Green Book Vacation Guide

FOR REST—RELAXATION—RECREATION



Tells you where hundreds of summer resorts are located—Information—Pictures

To help you decide which resort in their locality offers you the recreation you are looking for

Write today for a FREE COPY

Send 10c to cover cost of handling and mailing

VICTOR H. GREEN & CO., Publishers
 200 WEST 135TH ST. ROOM 215-A
 NEW YORK, N. Y.

ESTABLISHED 1936

THE Negro Motorist GREEN BOOK

INTRODUCTION

With the introduction of this travel guide in 1936, it has been our idea to give the Negro traveler information that will keep him from running into difficulties, embarrassments and to make his trips more enjoyable.

The Jewish press has long published information about places that are restricted and there are numerous publications that give the gentile whites all kinds of information. But during these long years of discrimination, before 1936 other guides have been published for the Negro, some are still published, but the majority have gone out of business for various reasons.

In 1936 the Green Book was only a local publication for Metropolitan New York, the response for copies was so great it was turned into a national issue in 1937 to cover the United States. This guide while lacking in many respects was accepted by thousands of travelers. Through the courtesy of the United States Travel Bureau of which Mr. Chas. A. R. McDowell was the collaborator on Negro Affairs, more valuable information was secured. With the two working together, this guide contained the best ideas for the Negro traveler. Year after year it grew until 1941 "PM" one of New York's great white newspapers found out about it. Wrote an article about the guide and praised it highly. At the present time the guide contains 80 pages and lists numerous business places, including whites which cater to the Negro trade.

There are thousands of first class business places that we don't know about and can't list, which would be glad to serve the traveler, but it is hard to secure listings of these places since we can't secure enough agents to send us the information. Each year before we go to press the new information is included in the new edition.

When you are traveling please mention the Green Book, in order that they might know how you found their place of business, as they can see that you are strangers. If they haven't heard about this guide, ask them to get in touch with us so that we might list their place.

If this guide has proved useful to you on your trips, let us know. If not, tell us also as we appreciate your criticisms and ideas in the improvement of this guide from which you benefit.

There will be a day sometime in the near future when this guide will not have to be published. That is when we as a race will have equal opportunities and privileges in the United States. It will be a great day for us to suspend this publication for then we can go wherever we please, and without embarrassment. But until that time comes we shall continue to publish this information for your convenience each year.

1

coded language referencing the violence of white supremacy

built on the violation of local knowledge

Figure 2. *The Negro Motorist Green Book*. From the Collections of The Henry Ford (autolife.umd.umich.edu).

INDEX	
The Green Book	3
Ford Cars	5
Reservation Bureau	7
ALABAMA	8
ARKANSAS	8
ARIZONA	10
CALIFORNIA	10
COLORADO	13
CONNECTICUT	14
DELAWARE	14
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	15
FLORIDA	15
GEORGIA	17
IDAHO	18
ILLINOIS	18
What to See in Chicago	19
ROBBINS, ILLINOIS	26
INDIANA	28
IOWA	29
KANSAS	30
KENTUCKY	31
LOUISIANA	32
MAINE	33
MARYLAND	34
MASSACHUSETTS	34
MICHIGAN	36
MINNESOTA	37
MISSISSIPPI	38
MISSOURI	39
MONTANA	42
NEBRASKA	42
NEW JERSEY	43
NEW YORK STATE	48
NEW YORK CITY	50
New York City (Brooklyn)	53
New York City (Bronx)	54
LONG ISLAND	54
STATEN ISLAND	54
WESTCHESTER	54
NEVADA	55
NEW MEXICO	55
NORTH CAROLINA	55
OHIO	58
OKLAHOMA	61
OREGON	62
PENNSYLVANIA	62
RHODE ISLAND	64
SOUTH CAROLINA	64
SOUTH DAKOTA	66
TENNESSEE	66
TEXAS	67
UTAH	70
VERMONT	70
VIRGINIA	70
WASHINGTON STATE	73
WEST VIRGINIA	74
WISCONSIN	75
WYOMING	75
ALASKA	75
BERMUDA	76
MEXICO	79
CANADA	79

Arthur Ralph—Advertising Manager
ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVE
New Jersey Star Services Co.
276 Bloomfield Ave., Montclair, N. J.
Mississippi
Mrs. Leroy P. ...
Piney Woods, Miss.
West Virginia
Mrs. A. Pack Hairs ...
Clifftop, W. Va.
Subscriptions: Seventy-five cents per copy.
Foreign: One Dollar per copy.
Publication Office—Leonis ...
Victor H. Green, Editor
Published yearly by Victor H. Green & Co.
Advertising Office—200 West 135th St.,
Room 215-A, New York City, N. Y.
Copyrighted—1949 by Victor H. Green.
Manuscripts submitted for publication should
be sent to 200 West 135th St., Room 215-A,
New York 30, N. Y., and must be accompanied
by return postage. No liability can be assumed
for the loss or damage to manuscripts although
every possible precaution will be taken.
Subscription: Seventy-five cents per copy.
Advertising: For rates, write to the publisher.
Last forms close on Nov. 1st. We reserve the
right to reject any advertising which in our
opinion does not conform to our standards.

PHOTO CREDITS COVER
WESTSIDE HIGHWAY, NEW YORK CITY
DE MILIE FOTO FEATURES
PAGE 6, FORD MOTOR CORP.
PAGE 76-77-78, BERMUDA
THE BERMUDA TRADE DEVELOPE-
MENT BOARD

racial violence fixed to place

The Green Book helps solve your travel problems'

By Wendell P. Alston, Special Representative, Esso Standard Oil Co.

Through the ages, men of all races have moved from place to place. Some to seek new lands, others to avoid persecution or intolerance and still others for the sake of adventure.

Today, men of all races continue to move and for much the same reasons, though since the days of the foot-traveler and the ox-cart, they travel with much more convenience and comfort and at far greater speed.

For most travelers, whether they travel in modern high-speed motor cars, streamlined Diesel-powered trains, luxurious ocean liners or globe encircling planes, there are hotels of all sizes and classes, waiting and competing for their patronage. Pleasure resorts in the mountains and at the sea shore beckon him. Roadside inns and cabins spot the highways and all are available if he has the price.

For some travelers however, the facilities of many of these places are not available, even though they may have the price, and any traveler to whom they are not available, is thereby faced with many and sometimes difficult problems.

The Negro traveler's inconveniences are many and they are increasing because today so many more are traveling, individually and in groups.

This year for the annual convention of the largest Negro organization in the world, nine special trains in addition to the regularly scheduled trains of a number of railroads were required to transport more than fifty thousand of its members to a mid-western city. Several more thousands made the trip by car and some by plane.

Top ranking orchestras and numerous minor ones, concert singers and various musical organizations are moving over the country in increasing numbers. Touring clubs, like the one in the nation's capital which chartered three of the most modern buses of one of the country's largest bus lines for a trip to California and Mexico this year, are growing in number. More students and teachers and many others in the field of education seeking further training in the country's major centers of learning are traveling. More business men, representing increasing Negro enterprises, are traveling from city to city, and more white corporations cognizant of the mounting purchasing power of the Negro consumer, have Negro representatives in the field, a number of whom, like ourselves, spend half the year traveling.

access is determined by reading race on the body

Figure 3. The Negro Motorist Green Book. From the Collections of The Henry Ford (autolife.umd.umich.edu).



JAMES A. JACKSON (SEATED) AND WENDELL P. ALSTON, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ESSO MARKETERS IN THEIR NEW YORK OFFICE

Numerous religious, sorority and fraternity groups travel constantly through the year to quarterly or annual conferences—all faced with the problem of finding suitable places to stay, places to eat and the convenience and comforts which all travelers need and desire.

The GREEN BOOK with its list of hotels, boarding houses, restaurants, beauty shops, barber shops and various other services can most certainly help solve your travel problems. It was the idea of Victor H. Green, the publisher, in introducing the Green Book, to save the travelers of his race as many difficulties and embarrassments as possible.

The many requests we receive for information about it convince us that he has done much to ease the anxieties of the average Negro traveler.

As representatives of the Esso Standard Oil Co., we are pleased to recommend the GREEN BOOK for your travel convenience. Keep one on hand each year and when you are planning your trips, let Esso Touring Service supply you with maps and complete routings, and for real "Happy Motoring"—use Esso Products and Esso Service wherever you find the Esso sign.

reappropriating Capital's interest in black

"To critically view and imagine black geographies as interdisciplinary sites... brings to focus networks and relations of power, resistance, histories, and the everyday, rather 'Ford' than locations that are simply subjugated, perpetually ghettoized, or unrepresented"

A precedent has been established in the low-priced automotive field by combining handsomeness and beauty with durability and comfort in the interiors of the 1949 Ford cars.

Ford has broken away from the neutral tones which have been traditional for mass production automobiles as designers have turned to textured fabrics popular in fashions and interior decorating.

Of the three new fabrics, the most unusual is a soft gray tweed mixture with a blue stripe which gives the 1949 Ford interiors a freshly tailored look. It has been combined with a bolster of blue-gray broadcloth to protect the upper section of both front and rear seats.

The clock dial has been centered on the panel and placed higher. Night glare is eliminated on all instruments by "black lighting."

Chrome trim throughout the car has been reduced. On the panel it is expressed in a neat arrangement of uniform knobs which control choke, windshield wiper, lights, heater and defroster.

On each door, the chrome strip makes a decorative arc over the heavy artificial leather kick pad at the bottom. Flame-shaped center pillar lights provide plenty of illumination for the interior and for stepping into and out of the car.

middleclass consumers

The same tailored good looks are obtained with the other fabrics — a smooth green striped broadcloth and two new adaptations of mohair in a green and maroon stripe and green and gray stripe combination. In proper combination, they complement the new Ford exterior colors such as Sea Mist Green, Birch Gray, Arabian Green and Bayview Blue.

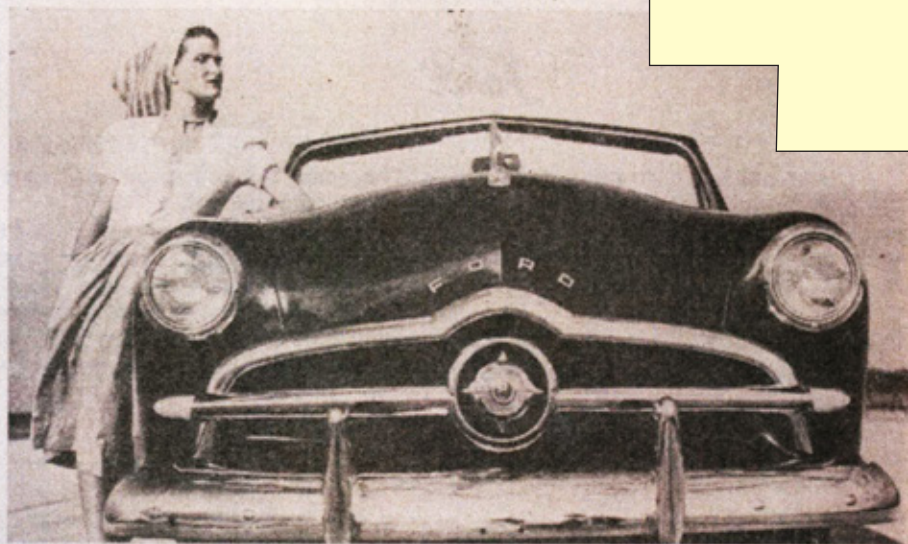
The instrument panel of the new Ford has been simplified. All instruments are combined in a single cluster directly in line with the driver's view. Projecting slightly for better visibility, the large figures on a telescoped dial indicate speed, fuel level, rate of battery charge and oil pressure.

Interior door handles pull up instead of down to open the door. This eliminates the possibility of the car doors swinging open if the handle should be pressed down accidentally.

The new Ford's functionalism has been extended to the roomy seats—57 inches wide in front and 60 inches in the rear, plenty of room for six persons.

New windows demonstrate the new trend. The rear window alone is 88 per cent larger—as large as the ordinary windshield. The windshield is deeper and wider. They give a picture window effect to the entire car and greatly improve all around visibility.

Figure 4. *The Negro Motorist Green Book*. From the Collections of The Henry Ford (autolife.umd.umich.edu).



The smooth, flowing lines of the 1949 Ford passenger cars are accented by the simplicity of the air-scoop grille. Fresh air for the pressurized ventilation system also enters through the grille. The distinctive styling of the 1949 Ford convertible features smooth, flowing contours, full fender-width body and luxurious interior appointments. Completely new, the convertible chassis is doubly reinforced.

IMPORTANT CONVENTION DATES

Organization — National Medical Association

Date of next Convention — August 8-12, 1949

Where to be held — Detroit, Michigan

Organization — Imperial Council Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order Nobles
Mystic Shrine

Date of next Convention — August 14-18th, 1949

Where to be held — Detroit, Michigan

Organization — National Technical Association

Date of next Convention — September 1-4th, 1949

Where to be held — Chicago, Ill. (Probably)

6

*alludes to the material
violence of white
supremacy*

RESERVATION BUREAU

Going to take a trip, attend some convention — make sure of your accommodations before you leave.



HOUSING CONDITIONS MAKE THIS NECESSARY

Reservations for all Hotels, Tourist Homes and Vacation Resorts throughout the United States, Alaska, Mexico and Bermuda can be made for you through our Reservation Bureau.

We have contacts with all Hotels, Tourist Homes and Vacation Resorts. Send us a list of the cities that you expect to pass through, the dates wanted, how many in your party and have us make your reservations. Fees are moderate.

Saves You Time and Money — Write Reservation Bureau

VICTOR H. GREEN & CO.

200 WEST 135th STREET Room 215-A NEW YORK 30, N. Y.

EXPLANATION

No travel guide is ever perfect with the changing conditions, not only in the world, but also in the United States. The listings contained in this guide are given to you just as it is given to us from its source. There is a possibility that the address might be a few numbers out of the way—or the business has moved, so that by the time you receive your guide, start to use it you will find some discrepancies. This is due to the fact, from the time that the guide goes to press until you get it a few months have passed and many changes have taken place in the business world. This we can not help and we don't want you to get the idea that this guide is of no value; we try to have it as correct as possible. Each year these listings are checked before we go to press.

Our guides are published for every one, hence we have supplied you with any number of places in cities and towns so that one can select what they want within their price range. We do not recommend any of these places, although hundreds of them could be. But due to the thousands of listings, it is impossible to inspect all, so we leave it to your decision. We would welcome letters from you giving the name and address of any place that you feel that isn't up to our standards of a first class business place. They will be removed, which would give not only you, but other travelers the benefit of only first class places.

In order that you won't find any difficulty in finding the kind of business that you are looking for, we have placed the listings under their proper classification in cities and towns.

7

Figure 5. *The Negro Motorist Green Book*. From the Collections of The Henry Ford (autolife.umd.umich.edu).

EASTMAN

TOURIST HOMES

J. P. Cooper—211 College St.

MACON

HOTELS

Douglas—361 Broadway
Richmond—319 Broadway

TOURIST HOMES

Mrs. E. C. Moore—122 Spring St.
Brs. F. W. Henndon—139 1st Ave.

RESTAURANTS

Mables—Main Street
Red Front—417 Wall St.
Jean's—429 Cotton Avenue
West Side—961 Dempsey Ave.

BEAUTY PARLORS

Marquiata—554 New Street
La Bonita—455 Cotton Avenue
Carrie's—133 Forest Avenue
Lula Life—425 E. 2nd Street

TAILORS

Huschel—264 Broadway
Community—550 - 3rd Avenue

SERVICE STATIONS

Anderson's—Pursley at Pond Street

SAVANNAH

RESTAURANTS

Dreamland—43rd & Hopkins St.

BEAUTY PARLORS

Rose—348 Price St.

SCHOOL OF BEAUTY CULTURE

456 Montgomery St.

SERVICE STATIONS

Gibson's—442 West Broad St.

DRUG STORES

Moores—37th & Florence

TAILORS

Halls—1014 W. Broad St.

TRAILER PARK

Cocanut Grove—Mrs. J. Cox

WAY CROSS

HOTELS

Cooper—Oak St.

TOURIST HOMES

Mrs. K. G. Scarlett—843 Reynolds
Smith's—State St.

RESTAURANTS

Paradise—Oak St.

BARBER SHOPS

Johnson's—Oak St.

SERVICE STATIONS

Union Cab—State St.

GARAGES

State Street—State Street

IDAHO

BOISE

HOTELS

California—1110½ Main St.

TOURIST HOMES

Mrs. S. Love—1164 River St.
Open Door Mission—1159 River St.

RESTAURANTS

Union Pacific Greyhound Depot—9th and
Bannock Sts.

POCATELLO

TOURIST HOMES

A. M. E. Parsnape—625 E. Fremont St.
Tourist Park—E. Fremont St.

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO

HOTELS

MANOR HOUSE HOTEL

4635 SOUTH PARKWAY

Tel. Li. 8-9312 — Li. 8-9840

Ritz Hotel—409 East Oakwood Blvd.
Hotel Como—5204-6 South Parkway
Green Gables—2920 S. Lake Park Ave.
Du Sable—764 Oakwood Blvd.
Evans Hotel—733 East 61st St.
Pershing Hotel—6400 Cottage Grove Ave.
Southway Hotel—6014 South Parkway
Spencer Hotel—300 E. Garfield Blvd.
Grand Hotel—5044 South Parkway
Y. M. C. A.—3763 Wabash Ave.

S & S HOTEL

4142-48 SOUTH PARKWAY

Y. W. C. A.—4559 South Parkway
Monarch Hotel—4530 Prairie Ave.
Albion Hotel—4009 Lake Park Ave.
Prairie Hotel—2836 Prairie Ave.
Eberhart Hotel—6050 Eberhart Ave.
Hotel Elliot—2645-47 Washington Blvd.
The Don Hotel—3337 Michigan Ave.
Harlem Hotel—5020 S. Michigan Ave.

RESTAURANTS

Morris—410 E. 47th St.
Wrights—3753 S. Wabash Ave.
A & J—105 E. 51st St.
Pitta—812 E. 39th St.
Palm Gardens—720 E. Oakwood Blvd.
400 Club—715 E. 63rd St.
Pioneer—533 E. 43rd St.
Pershing—755 East 64th Street

TOURIST HOMES

DAY'S VISITORS HOME

3616 SO. PARKWAY

Mrs. Ethel M. Day, Mgr.

Mabel Bank—712 E. 44th St.
Poro College—4415 S. Parkway

BEAUTY PARLORS

Matties—4212 Cottage Grove Ave.

BARBER SHOPS

Bank's—209 E. 39th St.

individuals turning their homes to spaces of rest

What to See in Chicago

Every section of Chicago is served by the Chicago surface lines. Car stops are indicated by White Bands on the poles at street intersections. 98% of the population live within three blocks of one or more surface lines.

Below are listed many of the principal points of interest in Chicago.

AIRPORTS — Chicago Municipal Airport—63rd St. and Cicero Ave. One of the nations finest airports and the greatest scene of aeronautical activity in the United States. Board southbound State St. cars on State St. or Clark-Wentworth or through Route No. 22 cars in Clark St. and transfer West on 63rd St. to Cicero Ave.

AMUSEMENTS

Riverside Park—Belmont and Western Aves. A large summer amusement park. Take Riverview-Larrabee cars at Dearborn and Randolph Sts. or Clybourn Ave. cars at Wells St. direct to park. By transfer north on Western Ave. or west on Belmont Ave. direct to park.

BASEBALL PARKS

Cubs Park (Wrigley Field) Clark and Addison Sts. (1100 W.—3600 N.) Home grounds of the Chicago National League baseball team. Take Clark-Wentworth or through Route No. 22 cars on Clark St. north to main entrance.

White Sox Park (Comiskey Park) West 35th St. and Shields Ave. Home grounds of the Chicago American League baseball team. Take Clark-Wentworth or through Route No. 22 cars on Clark St., south to 35th St.

and Wentworth Ave. Baseball park, one block west.

MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRIES

Central Manufacturing District — Between Ashland Ave., Morgan St., 35th St. and Pershing Road (1600 W. to 1000 W. and 3500 S. to 3900 S.) Also along Pershing Road between Ashland and Western Aves. This district contains about 250 nationally known manufacturing concerns. Take south bound Ashland Ave. cars on State St. and transfer on 35th St.

Union Stock Yards—Between Pershing Road, 47th St., Halstead St. and S. Ashland Ave. (3900 S. to 4700 S.) (800 W. to 1600 W.) The world's famous center of the packing industry. Take south bound Halstead St. cars on Clark St., or Wallace-Racine Ave. cars on State St. direct to main entrance at Halstead and Root Sts.

MUSEUMS

Chicago Historical Museum — The best collection of American historical mementos are displayed here. Relics of Columbus, Lincoln, Spanish explorers, the French voyageurs and the Indian Northwest are shown. A real education. Admission Free Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Address, in Lincoln Park at Clark St. and North Ave.

Adler Planetarium and Astronomical Museum—Located on Lake Michigan at Roosevelt Road (1200 S.) and open to the public. Demonstrations with lectures at 11 A.M. and 3 P.M. on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. At 11 A.M., 3 and 8 P.M., on Tuesday and Friday; at 3 and 4 P.M. on Sunday. Admission Free on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday.

Figure 6. *The Negro Motorist Green Book*. From the Collections of The Henry Ford (autolife.umd.umich.edu).

directs travelers towards growing sites of black refuge

Robbins, Illinois Steps Out In Front

By GEORGE W. SHEPPARD

The fastest growing town in the state of Illinois is one that is OWNED AND OPERATED BY NEGROES.* It is Robbins, Illinois, located seventeen miles from Chicago. Ninety-five per cent of the more than six thousand inhabitants OWN THEIR OWN HOMES.

But Robbins is no "Boom Town." It was founded in 1917 by Thomas J. Kellar and has since experienced a slow but sure growth.

It owes the rapid strides it is making at present to a number of factors. First, perhaps, is the fact that the city of Chicago, like most cities, has an acute housing shortage and its inhabitants, looking for places to live, have been attracted by the many advantages that Robbins offers.

Secondly, the town is a "natural" as a resort. It affords many picnic grounds and is an ideal place for summer outings. Many lakes are close by and inhabitants claim that fishing is good too.

Thirdly, the courage, the foresight and ability of the present mayor, Holis L. Reeves, is bringing good, sound, practical business into the local government. In that way the village is in a good position to cope with the many problems that a fast growing community must face. He is ably assisted by Misses Bertha L. Hendricks, deputy clerk, and Bessie M. Stephens, secretary to the administration. William March is chief of police with thirteen patrolmen working under his direction. Milton A. Robinson is chief of detectives.

The village is run by six trustees in addition to the mayor. They are

Fletcher Tillman, DeWitt Williams, Joseph Moore, Lee Riston and Victor Anderson. Together they have guided the destinies of the community for the last eight years.

National Leaders Started in Robbins

Edward A. Starks, a business man in Robbins for 41 years, recalls that Herman E. Moore, now Federal judge of the Virgin Islands, served as Village attorney.

William L. Dawson, congressman from the First Illinois District, also served the Village as attorney. Mr. Stark states that they helped to set up the legal machinery for the town and that the village owes them a debt of gratitude. Legal business and the courts are conducted by one elected judge, Ernest Lemon; Village attorney. Today there is little crime in Robbins.

No Prejudice and Restrictions

The change that the visitor sees in Robbins now is only of population but of industry. Where there were shelters covered with tar paper, there are homes built of stone, concrete and marble. Water is supplied from the city of Chicago and efforts are being made to increase the supply. Because of the absence of prejudice and restrictions, opportunities for the Negro are unlimited.

There are ten churches of various denominations, one centrally located school of which William E. Jackson is principal and a community high school in the adjoining city of Blue Island. There are sixty places of business and two physicians who serve Robbins; Dr. Waurice Winston, county physician and Dr. Williams. The Rev.

and autonomy with freedom associated black presence

26

building upon spaces situated as inherently participatory

Matthew Anthony is pastor of Greater Hope Baptist Church, the largest from the standpoint of membership of the ten churches. The court, the city jail and the fire department, headed by Edward Willett, are housed in the administration building.

One Can Play Here, Too!

But all is not work in this throbbing community. There are night spots that would do justice to Chicago or New York's brightest. The oldest and most popular is Walter (Pop) Flowers place. A complete floor show is found at the Apex Club. The Community Club and Grill, operated by Williams Rhodes and Orr is another to which pleasure seekers throng.

The future of Robbins, the full realization of Thomas J. Kellar's dream, is in the hands of the straight thinking citizens who will refuse to get lost in a maze of politics and internal strife and who will continue in office those who are working night and day for its betterment. IT IS WORTH THE TROUBLE TO GO OUT AND TAKE A LOOK AT AN EXPERIMENT OF WHAT NEGROES WORKING TOGETHER CAN DO. Indeed, it would not be a bad idea to pitch in and help.

* During the last eight years Robbins built 582 units. Per cent of increase 139.2, according to Real Estate Research Corp. Covering 30 cities and villages.

(CONT. FROM P. 25)

Take west bound Madison St. cars on Monroe St., direct to stadium. on Wabash Ave., except cars marked Wabash-Harrison and transfer to east bound Roosevelt Road cars to terminal. Walk one block south to entrance. Address, on Lake Front at 14th St.

Coliseum — 1513 S. Wabash Ave. (50E) Auditorium seats 14,000 persons. Take south bound Cottage Grove, Indiana, Stony Island-Wabash or Thru Route No. 1 or No. 3 cars on Wabash Ave. direct to Coliseum.

Soldiers Field—14th St. and Lake Shore (1400S) Take south bound Clark St. cars, except those marked Clark-Downtown or south bound cars

Race Track—Six months racing and six real tracks. Between May 1st and October 31st. Reached by railroads, also good automobile highways. Parking spaces are available for the motorist at all tracks.

27

Figure 7. *The Negro Motorist Green Book*. From the Collections of The Henry Ford (autolife.umd.umich.edu).

References

Badger, Emily. "How Race Still Influences Where We Choose to Live." *The Washington Post*, July 17, 2015, Accessed July 18, 2015. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2015/07/17/how-race-still-influences-where-we-chose-to-live/>.html.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. "The Case for Reparations." *The Atlantic*, June 2014, Accessed July 10, 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/05/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>.html.

Du Bois, W.E.B. *Black Reconstruction: An Essay toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880*. New York: Russel & Russel, 1935.

Gilmore, Ruth W. "Fatal Couplings of Power and Difference: Notes on Racism and Geography." *The Professional Geographer*, 54: 15-24, Accessed July 10, 2015.

Green, Victor H. "The Negro Motorist Green Book". 1949,1959, 1962. Victor H. Green & Co. Publishers. New York, NY

Griffin, Toni. "There is a Syllabus for an Urban Design Course on Race and Justice in Harlem," *Next City*, May 27, 2015, Accessed July 10, 2015 <https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/design-for-the-just-city-a-curriculum-in-urban-justice.html>.

Gross, Andrew Steven. "The Changing Shape of the American Landscape: Travel, Corporate Expansion, and Consumer Culture, 1845-1945". University of Ann Arbor. 2001

Jordan, June and Jan Heller Levi. *Directed by Desire: The Collected Poems of June Jordan*. Port Townsend, Wash.: Copper Canyon Press, 2005.

Kelley, Robin D. G. "We Are Not What We Seem: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *Journal of American History* (1993): 75-112.

Khan, Janaya. "Black Radicalism As Vulnerability," *Race BaitR*, July 6, 2015, Accessed July 10, 2015, <http://racebaitr.com/2015/07/06/black-radicalism-as-vulnerability/>.html.

McKittrick, Katherine and Woods, Clyde. "No One Knows the Mysteries at the Bottom of the Ocean". *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*. South End Press, 2007

Richard Rothstein, "From Ferguson to Baltimore: The Fruits of Government-Sponsored Segregation," *Economic Policy Institute*, April 29, 2015, Accessed July 5, 2015, <http://www.epi.org/blog/from-ferguson-to-baltimore-the-fruits-of-government-sponsored-segregation/>.html.

Sorin, Gretchen Sullivan. "Keep Going: African Americans on the Road in the Era of Jim Crow". University of Ann Arbor. 2009

Woods, Clyde. "Sitting on Top of the World: The Challenges of Blues of Hip-Hop Geography", *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*. South End Press, 2007