



Decolonial Theory in James Baldwin's "No Name in the Street"

Reading Baldwin's "No Name in the Street" alongside the decolonial theory of Frantz Fanon's "The Wretched of the Earth"

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May 5, 2020

Cover image: <https://afropunk.com/2019/08/james-baldwins-crown-our-throne/>

In this story map, we will introduce the decolonial theory of Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* to frame our reading of James Baldwin's *No Name in the Street*.

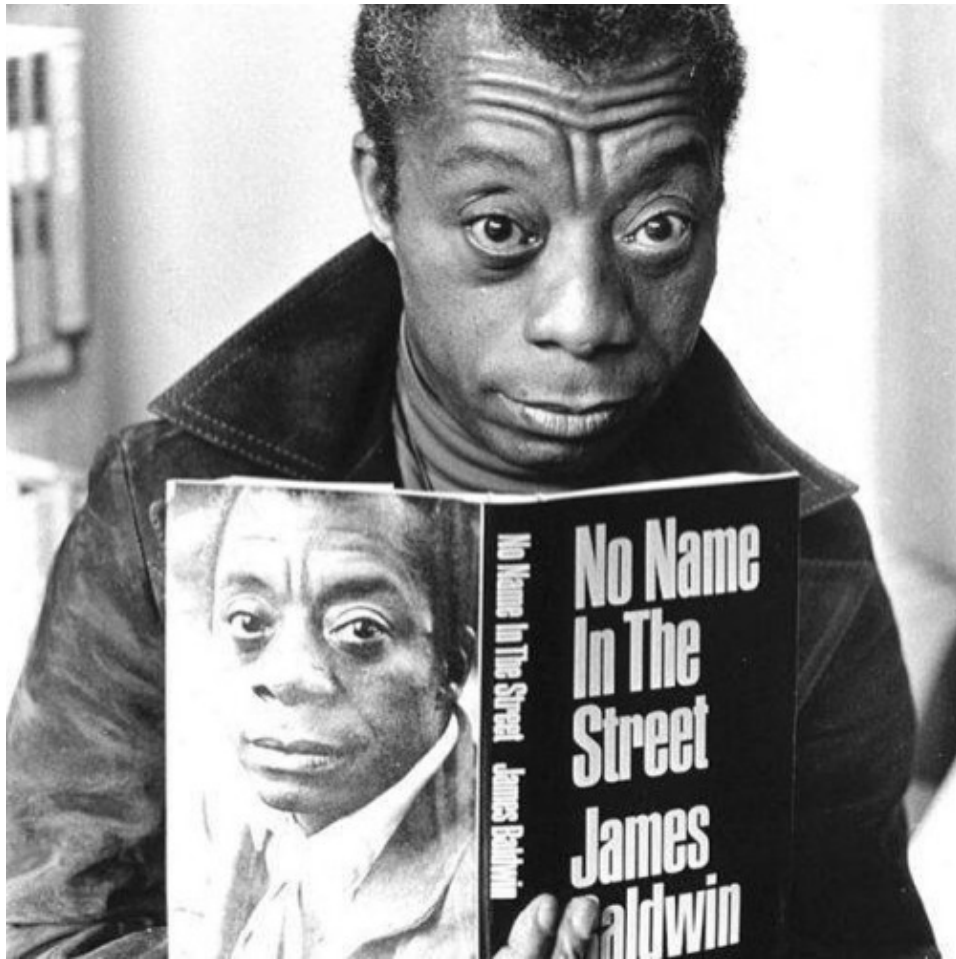
*This story-map is a framework for unpacking what Baldwin writes about French colonialism in Algeria and Vietnam and witnessing violence against colonized Algerians in Paris, before returning to America. Baldwin then frames Malcolm X, Huey P. Newton, and the Black Panthers as enactors of decolonial theory within the American context. In this project, we focus on select locations and events Baldwin discusses in **No Name in the Street**. The images we've included are photos of relevant historical events and people and photos of James Baldwin. The chronology of our story map follows Baldwin's text. All*

*quotations from Baldwin are from **No Name in the Street** unless otherwise specified.*

*****Content Warning: This project contains graphic images of racial violence (blood, physical violence, etc.) as well as racial epithets*****

We've structured this story map in four sections:

- 1. Introduction: Rationale for using Fannon's *The Wretched of the Earth* as a framework for reading Baldwin's *No Name in the Street*, as well as Fannon's definition of decolonialism**
- 2. James Baldwin's analysis of international decolonialism, particularly in Vietnam, Paris and Algeria**
- 3. How Baldwin's experiences in Paris seeing French colonialism enacted inform his writing about racism in the United States and the Black Panthers**
- 4. James Baldwin's analysis of decolonialism in the United States through his discussion of Malcolm X, Huey Newton, and the Black Panthers**



Baldwin, with a copy of his 1972 book.

<https://a1abwriter.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/nonameinthestreet.jpg>

Introduction: How we see Baldwin and Fannon in connection



Fanon's work focuses on the psychological effects of colonialism on colonized peoples. He remains an influential voice in liberation movements today. In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Fanon analyzes the psychology of colonialism, looking specifically at the French colonization of Algeria, and the systemic violence perpetrated against colonized peoples by colonizers.

Pictured right: *Frantz Fanon at a press conference of writers in Tunis, 1959. <https://www.thetricontinental.org/dossier-26-fanon/>.*



For this project, we define decolonization as undoing the logics of colonialism in both its physical and psychological forms. Decolonization involves the liberation from the psychological and cultural effects of colonialism, **as well as the physical removal of the colonizer and the reclamation of stolen/occupied land.**

Pictured right: *Sanitation workers protesting working conditions.*

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2018/02/12/i-am-a-man-the-1968-memphis-sanitation-workers-strike-that-led-to-mlks-assassination/>.



Fanon further defines decolonialism as “the encounter between two congenitally antagonistic forces that in fact owe their singularity to the kind of reification secreted and nurtured by the colonial situation...It is the colonist who fabricated and continues to fabricate the colonized subject. The colonist derives his validity, i.e., his wealth, from the colonial system (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 2).

Pictured right: *Frantz Fanon speaking in Accra, 1958, photographer unknown. Courtesy: London Review of Books. <https://frieze.com/article/weekend-reading-list-45>.*



*"Decolonization, we know, is an historical process: In other words, it can only be understood, it can only find its significance and become self coherent insofar as we can discern the history-making movement that gives it substance" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 2).*

Pictured right: *"Paratroopers stop Algerians from demonstrating against French colonial rule in the European districts of Algiers (AFP)." The Algerian freedom movement during the Algerian War (1954-1962) along with the fight for Vietnamese independence from French colonial rule will frame Part 1 of our project.*

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/fr/node/60584>.



The structure of our project reflects Baldwin's interaction with Fanon's concept of decolonialism. The following section begins with instances of French colonialism and the actions of Vietnam and Algeria to decolonize. In part 2, we see Baldwin return to America, in which he wrote about the same processes reflected in African American resistance to colonial power structures implemented by white American society.

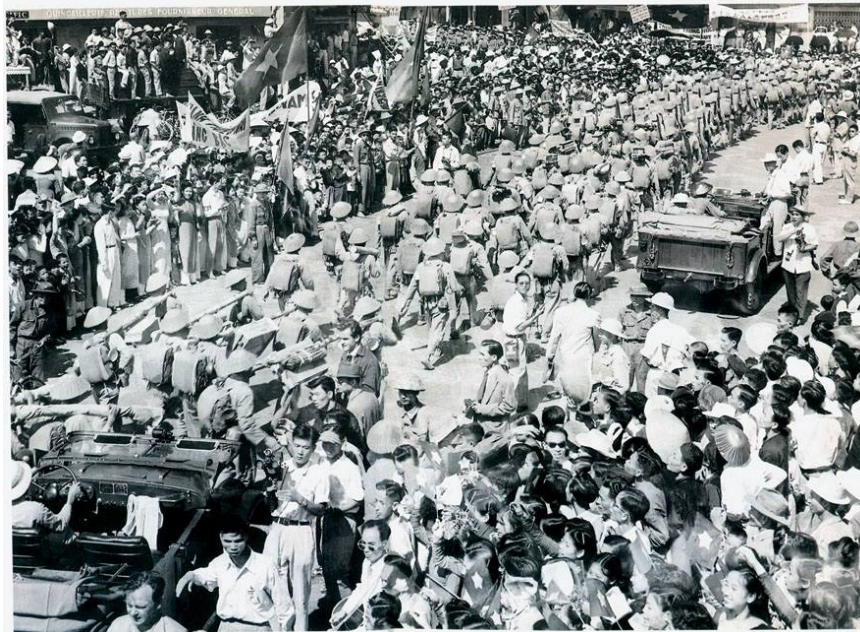
Pictured right: *"Michael Jackman of the Detroit Metro Times said the 1943 riots pushed Detroit into the civil rights*

movement well ahead of its peer cities. Sonny Edwards / Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University." The 1943 riots were an early event of the American civil rights movement. This movement will provide context for Part 2 of our project.

<https://www.michiganradio.org/post/1943-race-riots-paved-way-detroit-s-civil-rights-movement>.

Part 1: James Baldwin and International Decolonialism

French Colonialism: Vietnam and Algeria



In 1948 when Baldwin first arrived in Paris, the French held colonial territories in Vietnam and Algeria.

During his residency in Paris, the Vietnamese were actively fighting against the French in the first Indochina War (1946-1954). This led to a standoff at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, where the Viet Minh resistance overwhelmed French forces. This led

to France's agreement to withdraw all military personnel and relinquish what had been colonial French Vietnam.

Pictured right: *Victorious Viet Minh troops after defeating the French.* <http://www.warhistoryonline.com/war-articles/dien-bien-phu-2.html>.



Shaken by the loss of one of their colonies and worried that their loss at Dien Bien Phu would weaken their hold over Algeria, France almost immediately became entangled in the Algerian War (1954-1962). When Baldwin arrived in Paris, the Algerian War had not yet begun but hostilities toward Algerians in Paris were rising.

Pictured right: *Two French soldiers search an Algerian civilian in the ancient Casbah in the capital, Algiers, 1962.* Credit: AFP/Getty Images.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02lwr9w>.



"Colonialism and imperialism have not paid their score when they withdraw their flags and their police forces from our territories. For centuries the capitalists have behaved in the under-developed world like nothing more than war criminals." – Frantz Fanon

Although France withdrew its forces from Vietnam, their policing of Algerians both in the colony and in Paris only increased. Within context of Fanon's quote here, France's colonial rule did not end because of its major loss of French Vietnam. Despite their loss of Vietnam, France still held Algeria.

Pictured right: *"French troops in Algiers in 1956. Credit Associated Press."*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/04/opinion/france-torture-algeria-war.html>



"The French were still hopelessly slugging it out in Indo-China when I first arrived in France, and I was living in Paris when Dien Bien Phu fell. The Algerian rug-sellers and peanut vendors on the streets of Paris then had obviously not the remotest connection with this most crucial of the French reverses; and yet the attitude of the police, which had always been menacing, began to be yet more snide and vindictive. This puzzled me at first, but it shouldn't have. This is the way people react to the loss of empire—for the loss of an empire also implies a radical revision of the individual identity—and I was to see this over and over again, not only in France. The Arabs were not a part of Indo-China, but they were part of an empire visibly and swiftly crumbling, and part of a history which was achieving, in the most literal and frightening sense, its dénouement—was revealing itself, that is, as being not at all the myth which the French had made of it—and the French authority to rule over them was being more hotly contested with every hour. The challenged authority, unable to justify itself and not dreaming indeed of even attempting to do so, simply increased its force" (Baldwin 367-68).

Pictured right: *French soldiers surround and intimidate an Algerian prisoner during "Operation Bigeard" in March 1956, after an armed rebellion in Souk-Ahras, South of Constantine region, Algeria, led to the killing of nine French soldiers.*

<https://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/prisoner-in-the-middle-of-french-soldiers-during-operation-news-photo/134872409>.



Baldwin continually emphasized that imperial authority, when confronted, responds with greater force, as it can no longer pretend to justify itself. After the Viet Minh defeated France and reclaimed Dien Bien Phu, Baldwin saw the attitude of the Parisian police become more openly hostile to Algerians. Even though these people had nothing to do with that defeat in Vietnam, the French police saw in the Algerians a challenge to their authority, linked to an imminent loss of empire.

Pictured right: *"One of the bitterest colonial wars of the twentieth century: a war of liberation led by the National Liberation Front broke out in French-administered Algeria in 1954. Independence from France did not come until 1962."*
<https://en.qantara.de/content/sixty-years-since-the-beginning-of-the-algerian-war-national-fronts>.



The colonialist countries, saw the violence of Dien Bien Phu and the collapse of empire, scrambled to nominally decolonize - to create referendums and constitutional frameworks, to make concessions and bribe the leaders of movements.

Baldwin's observation of the heightened hostility of the Parisian cops toward Algerians is also echoed in Fanon's words: "it modifies the attitude of the colonialists who become aware of manifold Dien Bien Phus" (70).

Pictured right: *"In 1961, when a group of Algerian protestors marched against a controversial government-imposed curfew, the police responded — by beating them to death, then dumping their bodies in the Seine. Photo by Daniele Darolle/Sygma via Getty Images."* <https://narratively.com/when-the-bridges-of-paris-ran-red-with-algerian-blood/>.



Fannon further writes that

"[A colonized people] discovers that violence is in the atmosphere, that it here and there bursts out, and here and there sweeps away the colonial regime—that same violence which fulfills for the native a role that is not simply informatory, but also operative. The great victory of the Vietnamese people at Dien Bien Phu is no longer, strictly speaking, a Vietnamese victory. Since July, 1954, the question which the colonized peoples have asked themselves has been, 'What must be done to bring about another Dien Bien Phu? How can we manage it?' Not a single colonized individual could ever again doubt the possibility of a Dien Bien Phu; the only problem was how best to use the forces at their disposal, how to organize them, and when to bring them into action. This encompassing violence does not work upon the colonized people only; it modifies the

attitude of the colonialists who become aware of manifold Dien Bien Phus...quick, quick, let's decolonize...for God's sake let's decolonize quick..." (70).

Pictured right: Citizens of Hanoi, Vietnam, at a victory parade in October of 1954, after peace talks at Geneva led to the withdrawal of French colonial forces from all of Indochina. The United States had supported the French during the war. <https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/rethinking-the-teaching-of-the-vietnam-war/>.



The Algerian fight for independence figures heavily in Baldwin's narration of his time in France. When he arrives in Paris the first time with no money, he "lived mainly among les miserables, and in Paris, les miserables are Algerian" (366). The "Arab cafes were warm and cheap...they could not, in the main, afford the French cafes, nor in the main, were they welcome there" (367). He witnessed numerous instances of police violence against Algerians and a heightened hostility in the colonialists.

Pictured right: Protestors in Algiers, December 1960. <https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/01/22/making->

peace-with-violence/.



During the years he spent in Paris leading up to the Algerian revolution (1954-1962), Algerians were murdered in the streets, anyone suspected of being Algerian was harassed, and “the police were on every street corner, sometimes armed with machine guns. Turks, Greeks, Spaniards, Jews, Italians, American blacks, and Frenchmen from Marseilles, or Nice, were all under constant harassment” (Baldwin 376).

Pictured right: *A message on a wall by the River Seine in Paris says, “Algerians were drowned here.” It is a reference to the crushing of a pro-independence demonstration and the massacre of protestors by French police in Paris on the night of Oct. 17, 1961. Police threw bodies into the Seine after the massacre, as some 200 people were killed.*

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/in-france-a-1961-massacre-looms-large-behind-a-controversial-new-law/2017/10/20/82a95e7c-b334-11e7-9b93-b97043e57a22_story.html

Redefining Decolonialism in an American Setting



While in France, Baldwin saw similarities between French colonialism and the treatment of African Americans in the United States.

About French colonialism, Baldwin wrote that the French were hurt that "their stewardship should be questioned, especially by those they ruled." He goes on to write that it is "strange to find oneself, in another language, in another country, listening to the same old song and hearing oneself condemned in the same old way," drawing comparisons between French colonialism and the same power structures he saw reflected in American institutional racism (368).



While in Paris, Baldwin wrote that he felt slightly distanced, "insulated" (375), from the Algerian conflict, because what was happening to them "did not appear to be happening to the blacks" (375); he saw himself as "operating, unconsciously, within the American framework, and, in that framework, since Arabs are paler than blacks, it is the blacks who would have suffered most" (375).

Pictured right: *Demonstrators from the Congress of Racial Equality in Washington, DC in 1963.*

<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/03/civil-rights-movement-bruce-ackerman/>.



By contextualizing the French attitude to its colonized subjects within the framework of his own experiences with American racism, Baldwin had already begun to see the similarities between international colonial power structures and those in America.

Pictured right: "Civil rights demonstrator being attacked by police dogs, May 3, 1963, Birmingham, Alabama. Bill Hudson/AP Images." <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Police-Brutality-in-the-United-States-2064580>.



Baldwin left Paris and returned to the United States in 1952, in the midst of the American civil rights movement and began to write about African Americans as colonized people—with white Americans functioning as colonizers within the United States. While *No Name in the Street* covers many significant figures and events of this time period, here we focus on Baldwin's writing about Malcolm X, the Black Panthers and Huey Newton, co-founder of The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, as Baldwin's writing about this episode in American history has clear connections with his previous experiences in France.

Pictured right: *Baldwin, 1952.*

<https://shortstorymagictricks.com/2018/07/31/exodus-by-james-baldwin/>.

Part 2: Baldwin and African American Decolonialism

Malcolm X, Huey Newton, and the Black Panthers

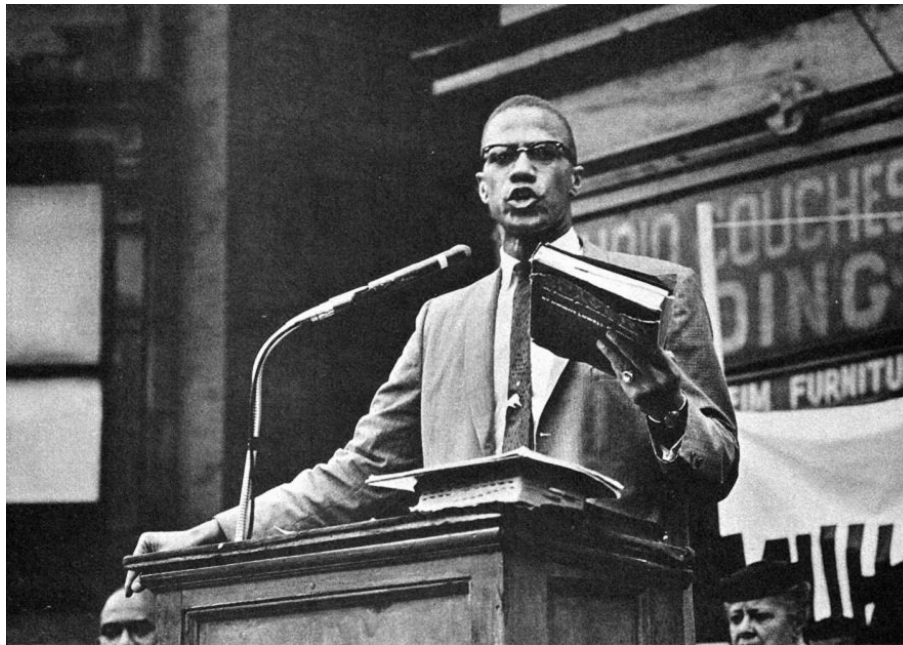


Baldwin opens the second chapter of *No Name in the Street* with his thoughts on Malcolm X.

Malcolm X, also known as Hajj Malik el-Shabazz, was an "African American leader and prominent figure in the Nation of Islam who articulated concepts of race pride and black nationalism in the early 1960s" (Mamiya).

Pictured left: *Malcolm X.*

<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/02/malcolm-x-assassination-legacy/>.



In his famous speech, "Ballot or the Bullet," given in Cleveland, Ohio on April 3, 1964, Malcolm summarized his perspective on the American racial hierarchy:

"No, I'm not an American. I'm one of the twenty-two million black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the twenty-two million black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy. So, I'm not standing here speaking to you as an American, or a patriot, or a flag-saluter, or a flag-waver—no, not I. I'm speaking as a victim of this American system. And I see America through the eyes of the victim. I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare" (Akhilbey).

Here, Malcolm X speaks about "victims of Americanism" in a way that positions America as the colonizer and the black community as victims of colonial oppression.

Pictured left: Malcolm X's "Ballot or the Bullet" Speech. See link for full speech. <https://face2faceafrica.com/article/the-1964->

ballot-or-the-bullet-speech-by-malcolm-x-is-the-7th-greatest-american-speech-of-the-20th-century-read.



Malcolm X was murdered in 1965 at a meeting of the Organization of Afro-American Unity by three members of the Nation of Islam. He had previously left the movement in March 1964 after becoming disenchanted with his mentor in the movement Elijah Muhammed (Ott).

Pictured left: *"In this Feb. 21, 1965 file photo, Human rights activist Malcolm X is tended to as he lies mortally wounded on the stage of the Audubon Ballroom in the Harlem section of New York after being shot multiple times. (AP Photo/WCBS-TV)AP". <https://www.pennlive.com/life/2020/02/malcolm-x-drew-his-best-crowd-then-died-in-a-hail-of-gunfire-55-years-ago.html>.*

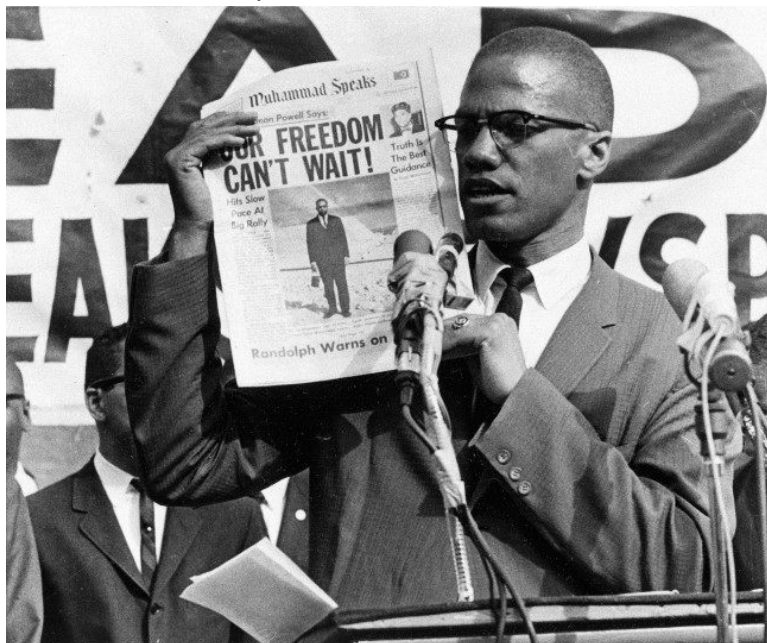


Baldwin writes about the significance of Malcolm X for black Americans:

"All of the Western nations have been caught in a lie, the lie of their pretended humanism; this means that their history has no moral justification, and that the West has no moral authority. Malcolm, yet more concretely than **Frantz Fanon**—since Malcolm operated in the Afro-American idiom, and referred to the Afro-American situation—made the nature of this lie, and its implications, relevant and articulate to the people whom he served. He made increasingly articulate the ways in which this lie, given the history and power of the Western nations, had become a global problem, menacing the lives of millions (404; emphasis added).

Pictured left: *Malcolm X.*

<https://newsone.com/3775690/malcolm-x-facts-life-history-assassination-nation-islam-black-muslims/>.



Baldwin continues, writing, "Nothing could have been more familiar to me than Malcolm's style in debate. I had heard it all my life. It was vehemently non-stop and Malcolm was young and looked younger; this caused his opponents to suppose that Malcolm was reckless. Nothing could have been less reckless, more calculated, even to those loopholes he so often left dangling. These were not loopholes at all, but hangman's knots, as whoever rushed for the loophole immediately discovered...The others were discussing the past or the future, or a country which may once have existed, or one which may yet be brought into existence—Malcolm was speaking of the bitter and unanswerable present" (411).

Pictured left: *Malcolm and "Our Freedom Can't Wait" headline.*
<https://1960sdaysofrage.wordpress.com/2018/05/31/standing-tall-malcolm-xs-speech-at-the-oxford-union-debate/>.



After the death of Malcolm X, the Black Panther Party for Self Defense was established in October of 1966 by cofounders Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale after the two men met at Merrit College in Oakland during the rising sentiment of Black Nationalism in the United States. Newton and Seale were avid readers of "Latin American revolutionary Che Guevara, Mao Zedong, the leader of Communist China, the sociologist E. Franklin Frazier," as well as Frantz Fanon and James Baldwin (*Collisson*).

Pictured left: *Black Panther Party national chairman Bobby Seale (left) and defense minister Huey P. Newton.*

[https://www.britannica.com/topic/Black-Panther-Party.](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Black-Panther-Party)



While the specific ideologies of the Black Panther Party were outlined in their "Ten-Point program" (Au), the majority of their activity was assigning armed surveillance to police in black communities and to black community outreach programs.

Pictured left: *Charles Bursey hands a plate of food to a child as part of the Black Panther Party's free breakfast program.*

<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/10/black-panther-party-fifty-year-anniversary-founding>.



Baldwin describes the immediate traction the

Black Panthers gained in the black community through their armed surveillance of the police, writing,

"That black people need protection *against* the police is indicated by the black community's reaction to the advent of the Panthers. Without community support, the Panthers would have been merely another insignificant street gang. It was the reaction of the black community which triggered the response of the police; these young men, claiming the right to bear arms, dressed deliberately in guerrilla fashion, standing nearby whenever a black man was accosted by a policeman to inform the black man of his rights and insisting on the right of black people to self defense, were immediately marked as 'trouble-makers' (451).

Pictured left: *Black Panthers in jackets and berets. Photo: David Fenton/Getty Images.*

<https://theintercept.com/2015/08/16/black-panthers-blacklivesmatter/>.



Baldwin contextualizes the need for the black community's "Self Defense" in the following passage:

"The white cop in the ghetto is as ignorant as he is frightened,

and his entire concept of police work is to cow the natives. He is not compelled to answer to these natives for anything he does; whatever he does, he knows that he will be protected by his brothers who will allow nothing to stain the honor of the force. When his working day is over, he goes home and sleeps soundly in a bed miles away—miles away from the niggers, for that is the way he really thinks of black people. And he is assured of the rightness of his course and the justice of his bigotry every time Nixon, or Agnew, or Mitchell—or the Governor of the State of California—open their mouths" (454).

In this passage, Baldwin is describing the role of white police officers as a tool of American colonialism, enacting the social hierarchies that place the black community in the role of a colonized people. This parallels Baldwin's description of French violence against Algerians after the French defeat in Dien Bien Phu.

Pictured left: *White police officers arresting black citizens, 1960s.* <https://blackpantherparty.org/police-brutality-in-the-1960s.html>.



Huey Newton developed a Marxist perspective, coming to believe that "the liberation of oppressed peoples depended upon their gaining control of their own communities"

(<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/black-panther-party/>).

This idea has clear ties to Karl Marx's *The Communist Manifesto*, but we can also draw comparisons to Fanon's decolonial ideas in *The Wretched of the Earth* that colonized peoples regain physical and psychological liberation through violence against their colonizers (Fanon).

Pictured left: *Black Panther Rally*.

<http://www.socialist.ca/node/3069>.



James Baldwin first met Huey P. Newton “in San Francisco, shortly before [Newton's] fateful encounter with Officers Frey and Heanes. This encounter took place at 5.A.M., in Oakland, on October 28, 1967 - on the same day, oddly enough, that Tony Maynard, halfway across the world, was also being arrested for murder” (458).

Here, Baldwin refers to Newton's arrest “following a Panther-police shootout that resulted in the death of an Oakland police officer” (*Black Past*). Newton was convicted of manslaughter (“Huey P. Newton Biography”).

Tony Maynard, whom Baldwin also references in this passage,

was Baldwin's former bodyguard who was arrested while living in Germany on charges of the murder of a marine in Greenwich Village, New York.

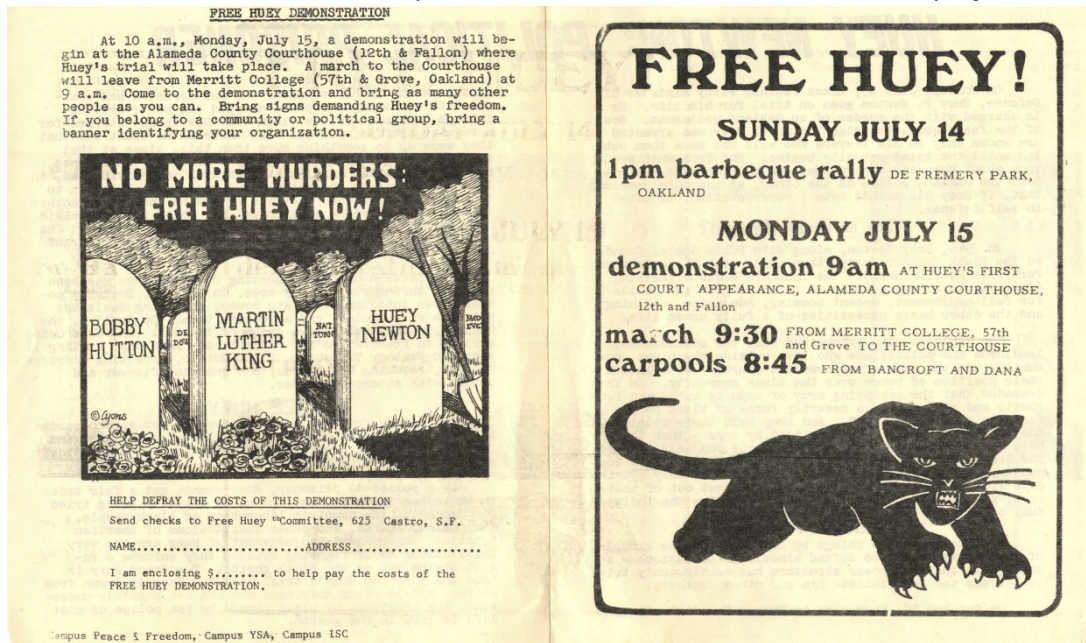
Pictured left: *Huey Newton (left) with James Baldwin.* <https://i.pinimg.com/736x/9f/f4/73/9ff47304fe63e9f945b9e20b92ff7968.jpg>.



Baldwin writes of the inevitability of Huey's arrest, claiming,

"It was inevitable that the fury would erupt, that a black man, openly, in the sight of all his fellows, should challenge the policeman's gun, and not only that, but the policeman's right to be in the ghetto at all, and that man happened to be Huey. It is not conceivable that the challenge thus thrown down by this rather stubby, scrubbed-looking, gingerbread-colored youth could have had such repercussions if he had not been articulating the rage and repudiating the humiliation of thousands, more, millions of men" (455).

Pictured left: *"Huey Newton, Black Panther Party Minister of Defense, ca. 1966."* <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/newton-huey-p-1942-1989/>.



Pictured left: "Free Huey" pamphlet.

<https://digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/student/exhibits/show/1960s/item/6576>.

"Free Huey" became the rallying cry for the black community movement to release Huey Newton after he was sentence to between "two and fifteen years" ("Huey P. Newton Biography").

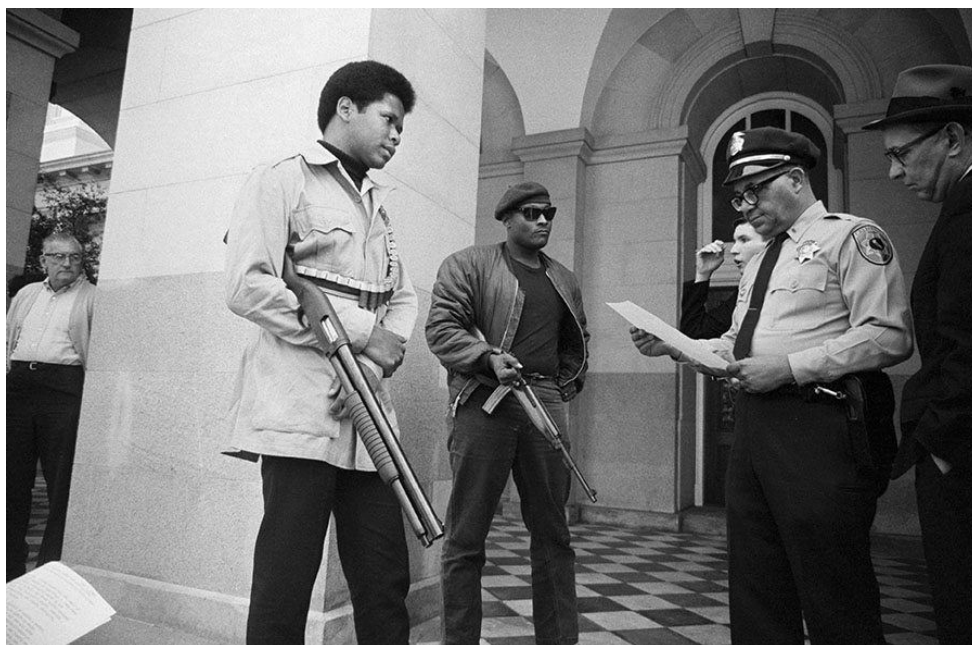


Baldwin explains the cultural phenomenon that the "Free

Huey" campaign became and describes how Newton existed as a living martyr for the black community:

"Huey, on that day, the day which prompted Bobby Seale to describe Huey as 'the baddest motherfucker in history,' restored to the men and women of the ghetto their honor. And, for this reason, the Panthers, far from being an illegal or a lawless organization, are a great force for peace and stability in the ghetto" (455).

Pictured left: *Black Panther's "People's Free Food Program."*
<https://atlantablackstar.com/2015/03/26/8-black-panther-party-programs-that-were-more-empowering-than-federal-government-programs/3/>.



"White America remains unable to believe that black America's grievances are real; they are unable to believe this because they cannot face what this fact says about themselves and their country; and the effect of this massive and hostile incomprehension is to increase the danger in

which all black people live here, especially the young" (455).

Pictured left: *"Two members of the Black Panther Party are met on the steps of the California State Capitol in Sacramento by Police Lt. Ernest Holloway, who informs them they will be allowed to keep their weapons as long as they cause no trouble and do not disturb the peace. May 2, 1967.*

Bettmann/Contributor/Getty Images."

<https://allthatsinteresting.com/black-panthers-standoff>.



"No one is more aware of this than the Black Panther leadership. This is why they are so anxious to create work and study programs in the ghetto—everything from hot lunches for school children to academic courses in high schools and colleges to the content, format, and distribution of the Black Panther newspapers. All of these are antidotes to the demoralization which is the scourge of the ghetto, are techniques of self-realization. This is also why they are taught to bear arms—not, like most white Americans, because they fear their neighbors, though indeed they have the most to fear, but in order, this time, to protect *their* lives, *their* women and children, *their* homes, rather than the life and property of

an Uncle Sam who has rarely been able to treat his black nephews with more than a vaguely benign contempt" (455-56).

Pictured left: *"The original [Black Panther Party's] People's Free Ambulance operated at least 1 ambulance on 24-hour emergency basis & from 8am-5pm on non-emergency basis, to & from hospitals/doctor's office in a modern ambulance by knowledgeable attendants."* (@BobbySealecom).

<https://twitter.com/bobbysealecom/status/984550834359775232>.



Baldwin places his writing of Malcolm X, Huey Newton, and the Black Panthers in the context of what he calls "American piety" (452).

He writes that, through the lens of American piety, Americans believe that "the anarchy and danger 'on the street' are the fault of the blacks...the police are honorable, and the courts are just" (452).

Pictured left: *"Members of the Black Panther Party, stripped, handcuffed, and arrested after Philadelphia police raided the Panther headquarters, August, 1970. Credit: Courtesy of Urban Archives, Temple University."*

<http://explorepahistory.com/displayimage.php?imgId=1-2-1710>.

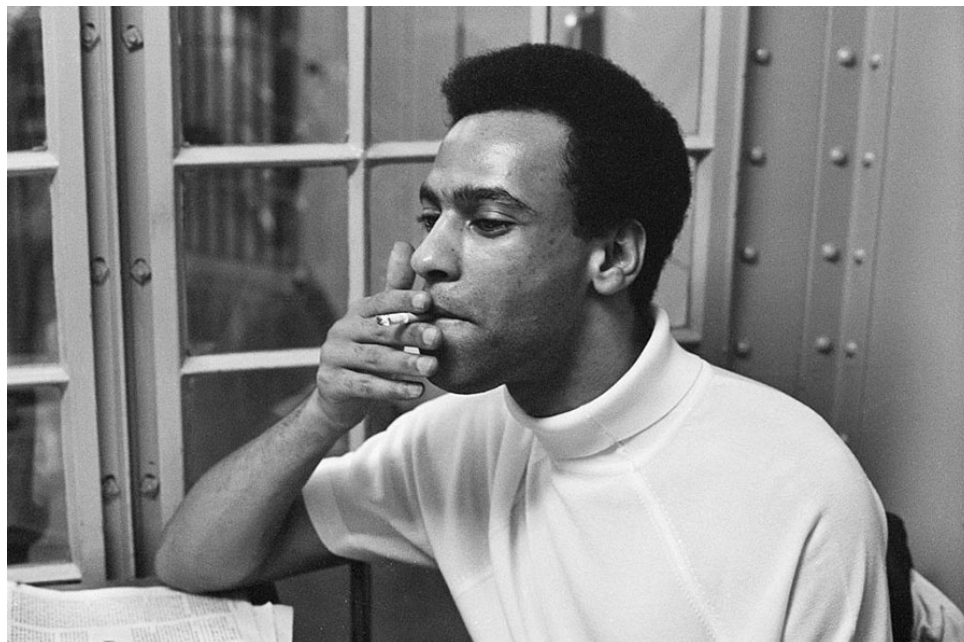


"It is no accident that Americans cling to this dream. It involves American self-love on some deep, disastrously adolescent level. And Americans are very carefully and deliberately conditioned to believe this fantasy: by their politicians, by the news they get and the way they read it, by the movies, and the television screen, and by every aspect of the popular culture...It means nothing, therefore, to say to so thoroughly insulated a people that the forces of crime and the forces of law and order work hand in hand in the ghetto, bleeding it day and night. It means nothing to say that, in the eyes of the black and the poor certainly, the principal distinction between a policeman and a criminal is to be found in their attire. A criminal can break into one's house without warning, at will, and harass or molest everyone in the house, and even commit murder, and so can a cop, and they do" (452).

Pictured left: *"The bed of Fred Hampton, after he was shot in the head, twice, at point-blank range." Fred Hampton was murdered in the "early morning hours of Dec. 4, 1969, during a Chicago police raid on a West Side apartment. Hampton was barely 21 years old but had already become the Illinois chief of the Black Panther Party...Most of the Panthers were asleep. Hampton and Mark Clark, a Panther on guard duty, were killed. Two men, a woman, and a 17-year-old girl were wounded," as*

well as one police officer (Warde).

<https://allthatsinteresting.com/black-panthers-standoff>.



Baldwin's idea of American piety inherently rests on white America's belief in the justification of their prejudices and actions toward the black community—a Western moral authority that Baldwin previously characterized as non-existent (404).

Pictured left: *"Huey Newton puffs on a cigarette in a holding cell while a jury deliberated his fate."*

<https://allthatsinteresting.com/black-panther-party#17>.

Conclusion



The final pages of *No Name in the Street* draw the most obvious comparison between Fanon's conceptualization of decolonialism through the violent overthrow of colonizers and Baldwin's understanding of decolonialism in an American setting.

Pictured left: *Baldwin*.

<https://westharlem.art/2019/01/07/james-baldwin-is-back-thank-god/>.



"Many white people appear to live in a state of carefully repressed terror in relation to blacks. There is something curious and paradoxical about this terror, which is involved not only with the common fear of death, but with a sense of its being considered utterly irrelevant whether one is breathing or not. I think that this has something to do with the fact that, whereas white men have killed black men for sport, or out of terror or out of the intolerable excess of terror called hatred, or out of the necessity of affirming their identity as white men, none of these motives appear necessarily to obtain for black men; it is not necessary for a black man to hate a white man, or to have any particular feelings about him at all, in order to realize that he must kill him" (471-72).

Pictured left: *"White counter-protestors make their views of the freedom struggle plain, 03/17-18/ 1965, Montgomery, AL; Glen Percy Collection."*

<https://www.loc.gov/folklife/civilrights/events/Montgomery65-gallery2.html>



"Yes, we have come, or are coming to this, and there is no point in flinching before the prospect of this exceedingly cool species of fratricide—which prospect white people, after all, have brought on themselves. Of course, whenever a black man discusses violence he is said to be 'advocating' it. This is very far indeed from my intention, if only because I have no desire whatever to see a generation perish in the streets. But the shape and extent of whatever violence may come is not in the hands of people like myself, but in the hands of the American people, who are at present among the most dishonorable and violent people in the world" (472).

Pictured left: *"An Alabama State Trooper swings his baton at the head of the then-25-year-old Congressman John Lewis on March 7, 1965. (Everett Collection Historical, Alamy Stock Photo). <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian->*

[institution/long-painful-history-police-brutality-in-the-us-180964098/](https://atlantablackstar.com/2017/02/15/time-stop-romanticizing-civil-rights-movement-get-real/).



"People who treat other people as less than human must not be surprised when the bread they have cast on the waters comes floating back to them, poisoned" (472).

Pictured left: *Civil rights era protest in Birmingham, Alabama.*
<https://atlantablackstar.com/2017/02/15/time-stop-romanticizing-civil-rights-movement-get-real/>.



In these lines, Baldwin identifies that Fanon's decolonial theory of violent uprising will not be enacted through hatred of the colonized (the black community) for the colonizer (white society). Instead, Baldwin speaks of the inevitability of violence; in order for the black community to emerge as fully equal in American society, they must respond to violent suppression with their own violent rejection of white systems of power. This sense of inevitability is further imparted by the final line: the bread cast upon the waters—the paternalistic efforts of white society to police the growth of the black community—will be met with resentment for years of colonial oppression.

Pictured left: *Civil rights activists are blocked by National Guardsmen brandishing bayonets while trying to stage a protest on Beale Street in Memphis, Tennessee.*

<https://wjct.org/2018/11/when-boys-cant-be-boys/civil-rights-activists-are-blocked-by-national-guardsmen-brandishing-bayonets-while-trying-to-stage-a-protest-on-beale-street-in-memphis-tennessee/>.

“His remembrance shall perish from the earth,
and he shall have **no name in the street**” (Job

18:17, KJV; *emphasis added*).

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