**PAPER ABSTRACT**

RECONCEPTUALIZING BLACK POWER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

(Working title)

Over the past ten years there has been an outgrowth of studies on Black Power struggles at college campuses across the United States. Collectively, these works have served to expand our understanding of Black student activism at the height of the Black Power Movement and demonstrated the centrality of these struggles to the transformation of predominantly white universities through securing important institutional reforms. Specifically, scholars have traced the key role played by Black student activists in forcing university administrators to alter recruitment processes, foster a safe and amicable environment for Black students, hire and retain faculty of color, and incorporate African and African-American history and culture into the curriculum. Indeed, it is in this area of institutional reform that the Black student activists of the 1960s and 1970s were most successful and established their lasting legacy.

However, by focusing narrowly on the institutional reforms achieved by Black student activists, scholars have often obscured their broader political investment in transforming relations between predominantly white University campuses and neighboring African American communities. In turn, the dynamic relationships that often existed between Black student activists and local Black Power leaders have also been erased. Using a combination of archival and newspaper sources, this paper will reexamine Black Power struggles at the University of Illinois during the late 1960s and early 1970s with a particular emphasis on the relationship between Black student activists and the historically African American North End community.

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June 2010