

[New Histories of Anti-Racist Activism in Chicago](#)

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With the perilous ascendance of Donald Trump to the presidency and the openings it has given to resurgent forms of white nationalism and racism in the U.S. it would be salient to continue thinking about how to combat these forces. Diverse movements for anti-racism in America once faced similar challenges, certainly with the conservative ascendance that saw Richard Nixon elected in 1968 and again in 1972. Beyond the important but well-known movements and leaders of civil rights and black power activism, however, anti-racist social movements also had a solid base in lesser studied institutions, organizations, and structures which gave anti-racism a foundation for growth across a broad cross-section of the population. This panel looks at various local examples of institutional anti-racism that worked to combat the rightward shift of American politics through the late 1960s and 1970s and suggests that the diversity of ideologies and modalities of such initiatives simultaneously revealed strengths. Using Chicago as a quintessential urban locale, this panel suggests that institutions as different from each other as government run war on poverty organizations which gave voice to issues of racism and sexism, progressive formations like Friendship House and the Catholic Interracial Council which combated the Cold War conservatism of the Catholic Church, and local Black Press businesses and institutions that gave voices to millions of black migrants from the South in a period of intense racism and reaction, are collective but understudied sites for anti-racist labors that allowed activists a diversity of channels to combat the rightward march in American politics into the 1970s.

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