

Race, Place, and Play

Robert Moses and the WPA Swimming Pools in New York City

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In the summer of 1940, boys and girls saw a colorful silkscreen poster as they lined up to enter the grand new public swimming pools built across New York City during the New Deal (Figure 1). Through clever use of image and text, John Wagner, the graphic artist, promoted the Learn to Swim Campaign, run by the Department of Parks for youngsters of all ages. Wagner worked for the poster division of the Federal Art Project in New York City, a branch of the Work Progress Administration (WPA) that employed more than three thousand artists in the city.¹ The parks department started the popular Learn to Swim program in 1934 and took advantage of WPA funds to expand the program and teach swimming to thousands of city children.²

Robert Moses, the parks commissioner, envisioned and worked in tandem with the mayor, Fiorello La Guardia, to win federal funds for the pool building project—the largest and the finest of its kind in the United States during the New Deal.³ Intent on democratizing access to recreation, the federal government spent 750 million dollars on community recreation facilities in the 1930s, including thousands of new and renovated swimming and wading pools. A bevy of emergency public employment programs, including the WPA, funded design and construction, with the government convinced that investing in public works would help bring the nation out of economic depression.⁴

In New York City, thanks to the WPA, eleven enormous pool complexes were up and running before Labor Day in

1936. Two were additions to recreation centers opened in the Progressive Era; the others were new, and their monumental brick bathhouses were quickly lauded as stellar works of modern architecture.⁵ Each complex also included three big, inground, outdoor pools—the largest for swimming, the smaller for diving and wading—built to exacting, up-to-date technical standards, so that water would be sanitary and swimming safe. Excitement grew during record-breaking heat, as the new pools opened one each week and New Yorkers thronged the dedication ceremonies, brilliantly staged and promoted in local newspapers. More than 1.79 million people swam in the new public pools in the summer of 1936; over 600,000 were children under fourteen, admitted at no charge on weekday mornings.⁶

More boys than girls swam in the pools, as Wagner suggested with the *Learn to Swim Campaign* poster, but his work has won notice for the portrayal of race, not gender relations.⁷ The juxtaposition of black and white children is widely interpreted as evidence that racial segregation prevailed in New York's new pools during the New Deal.⁸ Jeff Wiltse, a social historian, calls the figures cartoonlike and takes the intended message to be that the color line divided swimmers in New York as it did elsewhere during the 1930s.⁹

The color line did run through pools in racially segregated neighborhoods, but the singular reading of the poster misses an important point about the New York context. The Department of Parks, with Moses as commissioner, welcomed *both* black and white children to the instructional



Figure 1 John Wagner, *Learn to Swim Campaign*, New York City WPA Art Project, 22 July 1940

program and to city pools. In addition, and in defiance of racist stereotypes, the poster shows black and white youngsters as clean and healthy and benefiting equally from government programs intended to promote public health and citizenship.¹⁰ In other cities, whites succeeded in segregating public pools during the New Deal, preying on racist fears of body contact, dirt, disease, and adolescent sexuality.

Wagner's *Learn to Swim Campaign* poster shows children of different ages, races, and perhaps even sexes in the same space. Separated by age and race, children are lined up on a diving board, waiting for lessons. Young white boys and older black boys (and maybe a girl or two) try to maintain their balance as the board bends under their weight, and the youngest come close to tumbling into the water. The central figure may appear androgynous but is dressed as a male; poised and under control, he is about to dive into the water. Downplay-

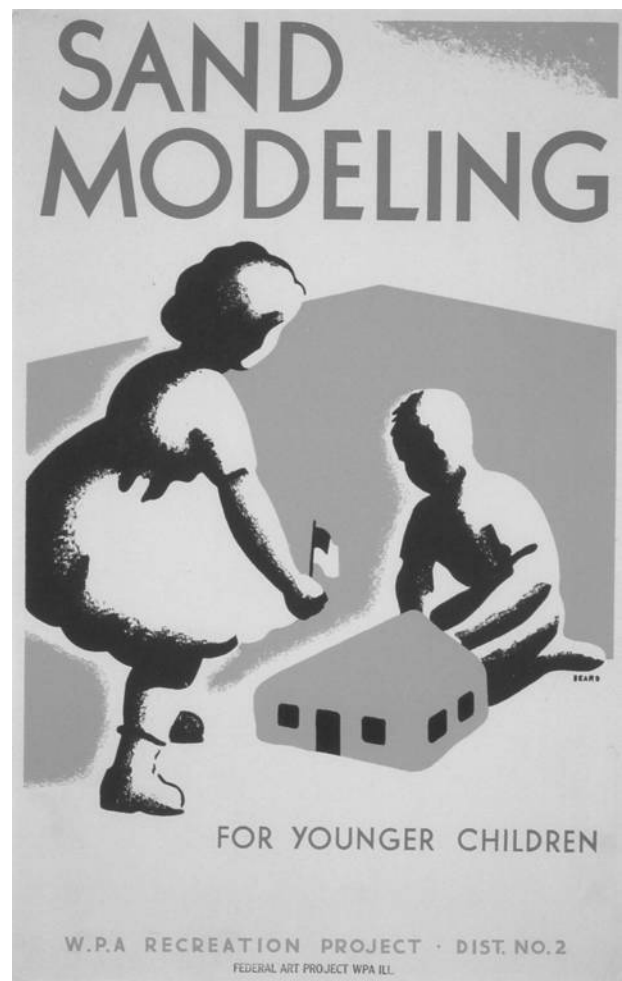


Figure 2 Beard, *Sand Modeling for Younger Children*—W.P.A. Recreation Project, Dist. No. 2, Federal Art Project, W.P.A., Ill., 1939. In this reproduction, the chiaroscuro translates graphically into black and white.

ing sexuality among kids cavorting in near nudity and emphasizing cleanliness and health, the poster alluded to the broad goals of the swim program. Astonishingly though, the central diver is rendered without an explicit race, as both black and white; he is also shown in a public swimming pool complicated but not fully divided by race. Other posters in the WPA poster collection in the Library of Congress usually show a white child or small group of white children on a playground, athletic field, or in a recreation or art center, built through work relief programs (Figure 2). The posters rarely show black kids or white and black kids playing in the same physical space, although on occasion a tanned body seems racially ambiguous, especially when chiaroscuro is used to depict figures at play.¹¹

The issue of segregation and social difference invites this analysis of Robert Moses and race, place, and play in the WPA

pools. A tempestuous, arrogant, and very effective bureaucrat, Moses received due credit for the pool building campaign, widely taken to be a political triumph. The WPA pools—distinguished works of architecture, built in record time by relief workers and packed with people—were tangible proof of the efficacy of reform liberalism, physical evidence of the government at work for all the people.¹² The man's passion for extending New Deal benefits to New Yorkers of color was less clear. Moses had no qualms about manipulating public policy to imprint his values, including antidemocratic ones, on liberal reform programs. In 1938 he eviscerated an amendment to the New York State Constitution that Martha Biondi has shown would have allowed the state government to battle racial discrimination in the private sector.¹³ Robert Caro underscores other ugly outcomes of Moses's public work, ascribing them to the commissioner's personal antipathy for people of color. This assessment leads to the serious charge that Moses not only tolerated race prejudice in the WPA swimming pools, but deliberately segregated them. Caro targets pools in Thomas Jefferson Park in East Harlem and Colonial (now Jackie Robinson) Park in Central Harlem, arguing the former was sited in a white and the latter in a black neighborhood, so each would be racially segregated. At Jefferson Park Pool, Caro asserts that decisions were taken about design and staffing to assure that only white people swam there.¹⁴

Moses was a racial conservative, but the sweeping charges do not hold up under close scrutiny of the physical city and evidence uncovered since the publication of my research in *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York*. In this article, I argue that framing the discussion of race in terms of individual prejudice has distracted attention from the more powerful political, spatial, and structural dynamics of racism, forces of which Moses was fully aware, and the actions some New Yorkers took to counteract them. As Biondi has argued, emphasizing personal prejudice obscures the relationship of the man to the trajectory of reform liberalism in American politics. Biondi insists liberalism was rendered tragic by compromise with racial segregation—tainted by its appearance during the Jim Crow era and the ensuing unholy alliance forged during the New Deal between southern segregationists and northern politicians. The result, public policy deeply ingrained with the effects of race prejudice, proved devastating for blacks and cities.¹⁵ However, the outcome was not set in stone in New York during the 1930s. After a race riot exploded in Harlem in 1935, Moses constructed a stellar modern facility for public recreation in Central Harlem that challenged the unequal treatment of black and white Americans, widespread during the New Deal.¹⁶

Like other white reformers of his generation, Moses

believed “separate but equal,” rendered law by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1896, was a practical political philosophy. During the New Deal, the embrace by the parks department of centralized planning, standardization, and other salient features of modern architecture and planning made “separate and equal” a tangible reality for children in the new pools.¹⁷

After discussing the need for these new play spaces in the 1930s, I will review the standard siting and design strategies developed by the parks department and applied at Jefferson Park Pool and Colonial Park Pool. This analysis will shake loose the Moses vision for recreation from the bird's-eye view of the city, favored by the commissioner and other advocates of centralized planning, and attach his proposals to evidence that is closer to the ground, even underneath it in some cases. In addition, I will show that the WPA pools at Betsy Head Park and McCarren Park in Brooklyn and Highbridge Park in Manhattan were racially integrated in the 1930s and 1940s, whereas in St. Louis, WPA dollars were also invested in public pools, but without the progressive outcomes of the New York approach to reform.¹⁸ Construction of a modern public swimming pool of the highest quality in a black neighborhood and tolerance of integrated swimming was unusual, to say the least, during the New Deal.

This article will also address the experience of children, seen in countless photographs as avid users of these great “new spaces of public informality.” Ken Worpole used the phrase to characterize the marvelous open-air pools built in Europe during the turbulent interwar years.¹⁹ He argues that modernist open-air pools expanded democratic citizenship in liberal societies, although fascist governments also erected open-air facilities for recreation, including for swimming. Modernism, coupled with an interest in health and wellbeing, could express the ideology of white racial superiority.²⁰ Nonetheless, in democratic societies modern public places, like open-air pools, helped reshape social conventions as working-class men and women enjoyed together clean water, sunlight, and fresh air. In particular, children in New York recognized the WPA pools as treasured resources, new places for them to gather in the public realm. Boys and girls also found themselves in the thick of conflicts that erupted in the pools and their congested communities, facing rapid demographic change and economic hardship during the Depression.²¹

Swimming Pools and Childhood during the New Deal

It is telling but not surprising to find prominent public works aimed at improving urban life for children and



Figure 3 Marquette Pool and Park, St. Louis, Mo., ca. 1915. Photograph by J. R. Eike, Thomas Kempland Collection

teenagers. Starting in the Progressive Era, liberal reformers—convinced immigrant and working class children ought to play in parks and playgrounds rather than on streets and tenement backyards—persuaded city governments to set aside public space for outdoor play.²² The state’s effort to control the play of urban children stemmed from worries about citizenship and public health as well as changes in the social construction of childhood—the high value placed on what Viviana Zelizer has called the emotionally priceless child.²³ The Great Depression expedited the construction of official landscapes for urban recreation, as the federal government accepted responsibility for the social welfare of children. The economic crisis hit children hard and set off fears of political unrest, as adults competed with young people for jobs and hundreds of thousands of boys and girls hit the road to look for work. Expectations had changed by the end of the decade, after most forms of child labor were abolished and finishing high school became the norm. Boys and girls were expected in theory to enjoy a childhood focused on education and play, rather than work. Practically speaking, the shift in cultural values meant that more schools, parks, and facilities for outdoor recreation, including swimming pools, were needed than ever before in cities like New York.²⁴

In 1933, the dawn of the New Deal, the parks department operated exactly two outdoor swimming pools in New York—a new pool in Faber Park on Staten Island and an outdated one in Betsy Head Memorial Park in Brooklyn, plagued by poorly chlorinated water. Although the idea of swimming as exercise had taken hold in American society,

New Yorkers did not swim in public pools of inventive design, like the ones in Europe, or of grandiose scale, as in other U.S. cities.²⁵ The notable examples included the enormous, outdoor swimming pools in St. Louis, which were added to Fairgrounds Park in 1913 and Marquette Park shortly afterward.

According to Wiltse, St. Louis set the standard for the pool building craze that swept through U.S. cities in the 1920s. The new pools were intended to bring the amenities of an ocean beach to city dwellers: they were huge (150,000 square feet in Fairgrounds Park), with large bathhouses, sandy beaches, and concrete decks (Figure 3). Tens of thousands of people flocked to them, in no small measure because men and women, boys and girls were allowed to swim together—if they were white. African Americans were excluded from Fairgrounds Park Pool. Wiltse argues that this social construction of space was a harbinger of changes to come. He asserts that racial segregation went hand in hand with gender and class integration in the 1920s and 1930s, as public swimming pools were built across the U.S.²⁶

Race is “a bizarre social invention, a public fiction masquerading as physical fact,” in the words of Matthew Guterl.²⁷ He and other scholars emphasize the need to historicize (to locate in time and place) changes in the social construction of race, with Guterl pointing to the interwar years in New York as a turning point. Extraordinary demographic change (the Great Migration, emigration from the Caribbean, and restriction of European immigration) contributed to the fixation on race as color, rather than also ethnicity, as had been common previously. Guterl stresses the

ironies of the growing obsession with whiteness and blackness in this period of intensified nativism—the division of race into simplistic, opposed categories—as the city became a more racially diverse, complicated place.²⁸

In New York City, the need for new sites for recreation was acute in black neighborhoods, with the Children's Aid Society (CAS) reporting that more black children lived in New York than in any other city in the world in 1930, including in Africa.²⁹ The millions of African Americans who moved to northern cities during the 1920s and 1930s settled in crowded neighborhoods like Central Harlem where parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, and recreation centers were scarce and swimming pools did not exist. Many facilities were also racially segregated—if not by law, then by de facto social practice. The deleterious effects on children were outlined in social surveys; the argument was made that the high rate of disease, illiteracy, and delinquency among black youth was due in some measure to the impoverished state of public recreation.³⁰ Similar claims were made about inadequate recreation in immigrant communities; purpose-built facilities for play were hard to find in East Harlem and Brownsville, but not to the degree that they were in Central Harlem. It was “almost barren,” the CAS reported in 1932.³¹

As recreation moved onto the agenda of the civil rights movement, demands for change included the construction of new facilities in black neighborhoods as well as the integration of existing sites. Swimming pools, known as places where cultural mores were relaxed and social boundaries were tested, were very desired (and very expensive) civic improvements; they were also sites where whites bitterly resisted integration and resorted to all sorts of tactics, including violent attacks on children, to stop it. As Charles S. Johnson, the noted black sociologist, wrote in 1930, “The most common point of racial friction in the recreation field has been in the use of the swimming pools.”³² In addition to virulent racism, anxieties about sexuality, masculinity, disease, and cleanliness, familiar in the troubled history of race relations in the U.S., ignited white hostility.³³

Water fueled white racism. The practice of bathing had expanded to include swimming for exercise, but water retained the longstanding symbolic link with purity. Swimming pools became places where those seen as impure or polluted would be excluded (even though water had to be sanitized in order to be pure).³⁴ When pressed to integrate, white operators protested pools would have to be emptied, scrubbed clean, and filled with fresh water after black children swam in them.³⁵ Antagonisms heightened as it became common for both sexes to swim together, and new swimming suit styles exposed male and female bodies. The fact

of exposure on the pool deck and the prospect of contact in the water intensified fears of “race mixing”—the euphemism used on both sides of the color line to describe (and disparage) interracial dating, marriage, and sex.³⁶

In New York, one consequence was more boys than girls swam in public pools, although single-sex male swimming concerned adults worried about “perversion” and moral “contamination” of working-class youth.³⁷ Historically mostly boys swam (naked, whether in rivers or pools), and the gender skew persisted in the New Deal, according to a survey of New York youth. Social workers reported the proportion of female swimmers decreased as girls approached womanhood.³⁸ Apprehension about race mixing and patriarchal definitions of honor prompted parents to try to limit the use of public spaces by older girls and young single women, especially in Italian and Puerto Rican families. Although parents did not always prevail in intergenerational conflict in immigrant families, childcare, housekeeping, and other domestic duties restricted the time girls had available for any recreation, including swimming.³⁹

During the Depression, pool operators faced considerable challenges in providing clean swimming water. In 1931, the *St. Louis Star* explained that inadequate staffing and obsolete equipment made it difficult to meet health department standards for cleanliness. With little else to do, unemployed people came to public pools for an inexpensive, if not free, way to keep occupied.⁴⁰ In New York, swimmers (including children) plunged into the rivers and other waterways surrounding the city, even though raw sewage was routinely dumped into them—a point emphasized in the Broadway play *Dead End* (1935).⁴¹ Children also waded in polluted water (Figure 4), turned on fire hydrant spray to cool off, and invented other activities to cope with summer heat; the boys and girls of the Dungere Club built a clubhouse underneath one commercial pool on the Upper West Side in the early 1930s.⁴² It was difficult to “compete with the thrill and excitement of so many forbidden pleasures—playing along the waterfront, hitching onto trucks, scrambling into vacant buildings,” the director of recreation for the Board of Education admitted in 1938.⁴³ Still, river swimming was dangerous—450 people drowned in the city in 1934—and unsanitary. In a prevaccine era, polio and typhoid fever were some of the diseases transmitted in dirty water.⁴⁴

Built by the WPA: Two New Swimming Pools in Harlem

Enter Robert Moses, the new parks commissioner. Appointed on 19 January 1934 by Mayor La Guardia, Moses reorganized the department into a citywide agency, with sep-



Figure 4 Children wading among refuse in the East River, New York City, 1935

arate design and construction divisions, and used work relief funds to hire new staff. This team worked at the Arsenal in Central Park and knew results had to be produced fast. By July, a plan was in hand to build twenty-three pools across the city: six in Manhattan, seven in Queens, six in Brooklyn, three in the Bronx, and one in Staten Island. As the commissioner told the *New York Times*, “it is an undeniable fact that adequate opportunities for summer bathing constitute a vital recreational need of the city. It is no exaggeration to say that the health, happiness, and efficiency and orderliness of a large number of the city’s residents, especially in the summer months, are tremendously affected by the presence or absence of adequate swimming and bathing facilities.”⁴⁵ A model design showed *Times* readers that the new facilities would be grandiose, modern, and full of safe places for play. In the end, the project scope was cut back, but the achievement was nonetheless astonishing.⁴⁶

Standardization and its corollary—centralized decision-making—were key, making it possible to design and build eleven magnificent complexes in two years. The term “standardization” refers to use of standard components and construction details, not building or site design, because each complex was a unique work of architecture, incorporating modernist and historical architectural motifs. To summarize: the Moses team developed a standard bathhouse plan—usually a large symmetrical building, with a

central entry open to the fresh air abutting separate locker rooms for men and women; a standard site plan, usually with three outdoor pools, enclosed by an elaborate wall, and at least one pool on axis with the bathhouse entry; standard construction details, using brick, concrete, and other modern materials that met federal requirements for durability and affordability; standard mechanical systems, including for water treatment; and a standard attitude toward location. To avoid delays and reduce costs, the pools were located on available open space, usually in parks from the Progressive Era.⁴⁷ Thomas Jefferson Park and Colonial Park were prime candidates: the first was located next to the East River in the crowded East Harlem community that was Mayor La Guardia’s home district; the second was built along a ridge at the western edge of Central Harlem. Each park was shabby and needed work, having been poorly maintained for decades.

The new pool and bathhouse in Jefferson Park opened with great fanfare on Saturday, 27 June—the second center to be completed in the hot summer of 1936 (Figure 5).⁴⁸ In 1930, 78 percent of East Harlem residents were foreign born, and although the park was located in a part of the city that had been known as “Little Italy” since the beginning of the century, waves of successive migration rendered this community ethnically complex.⁴⁹ Leonard Covello, principal of Benjamin Franklin High School (north of the park), recorded fifty different groups in East Harlem and observed firsthand the upheaval of the 1920s and 1930s as Jews, Germans, and Irish men and women made way for more Italian immigrants, blacks, and Puerto Ricans.⁵⁰

These demographic changes, coupled with economic adversity, sharpened the acute sense of ethnic and racial territory. Robert Orsi has argued that an intensified “concern with drawing and defending boundaries” framed daily life in East Harlem in the 1930s. He has shown that ethnic and racial identities were not fixed in this neighborhood; they were subject to change, as were the physical boundaries used to define them. However, during the Depression southern Italians, Puerto Ricans, and southern blacks in East Harlem became caught up in a “desperate mapping of American identities” based on gradations of skin color. Lightness counted in constructing privilege, as did access to and control of urban amenities.⁵¹ According to Orsi, Lexington Avenue marked the edge of Italian and black Harlem in the 1930s. “If the boundary was crossed, it was done intentionally,” with the transgressor fully aware that conflict would erupt when the border was crossed.⁵²

The new swimming pool was located in the part of East Harlem claimed by Italian immigrants and defended as white territory before the facility was built. The pool was



Figure 5 Stanley Brogren,
Thomas Jefferson Park Pool and
Bathhouse, East Harlem, New
York City, 26 June 1936

later made notorious by the report in *The Power Broker* that, in order to ensure racial segregation, Moses not only selected this site but also ordered the water unheated. According to Caro's source, Corporation Counsel Paul Windels, the commissioner of parks wanted to dissuade African Americans and Puerto Ricans from using the pool and believed blacks especially disliked swimming in cold water. Caro described Moses's solution, shared in confidence with the attorney. "While heating plants at the other swimming pools kept the water at a comfortable seventy degrees, at the Thomas Jefferson Pool, the water was left unheated." The charge, seconded by a source not identified by Caro, has been interpreted to mean either that the mechanical equipment was not used (the exact date is not specified) or that mechanical equipment was not provided to heat water for swimmers.⁵³

I do not dispute white control of Jefferson Park Pool buttressed race privilege in East Harlem. However, the former interpretation of the nasty story about water temperature has not been confirmed by other sources, and the latter is refuted by the design of the pool. The design was based on a standard solution and standardized design was key to New Deal success. To begin with siting: the location in Jefferson Park is a clear example of the integration of new

pools into a reform landscape of an earlier time aimed at improving urban life for youngsters. The small public park, about fifteen acres, opened in 1905, between East 111th and 114th streets, First Avenue, and the East River. Tenements, factories, and other structures were cleared to make way for lawns, oval promenades (used as running tracks by boys and girls), gymnasiums, public baths, a park pavilion, and after 1911, farm gardens near the river.⁵⁴

By the 1930s, advocates for children recognized that they preferred to play in city streets rather than the park. Covello highlighted the need for more play space in a community hard hit by the Depression. "Unsanitary dwellings, congested housing, lack of play space, unsightly streets, low economic returns for the wage earner, exploitation of the worker," he wrote in 1936, "have contributed to the deterioration of the East Harlem neighborhood into what is known as [a] 'tough' district."⁵⁵ Dorothy Reed, affiliated with the Boys Club on East 111th Street, underscored the impact of gender relations on spaces used for play. "The streets are the playgrounds of most of the boys and the younger girls," she wrote. "There are no public pools and the baths . . . draw on the boy population."⁵⁶ Not one of the girls Reed interviewed was allowed by her parents to swim in a bathhouse pool. The resulting intergenerational



Figure 6 Jefferson Park Pool and Bathhouse, perspective view, 21 June 1936

clashes, inevitable in Reed's view, highlighted conflicts between "old-world" traditions and modern "American customs" in Italian immigrant families.

The new design of Jefferson Park offered white boys and girls from the immigrant neighborhood equal access to outdoor recreation, at least in theory. The WPA project included the new pool complex, baseball diamonds, other athletic fields, playgrounds, and bocce courts—an "ethnic" concession provided at the mayor's request.⁵⁷ A variety of sites, purpose-built for active play, were expected to counter the use of the street by immigrant children and help them become healthy, productive citizens. The design, especially of the pool complex, also accommodated the New Deal vision of modern childhood, a childhood focused on play and education rather than work.

Stanley Brogen, the architect in charge, placed the new pool and bathhouse in the center of the park on axis with the existing Beaux-Arts recreation pavilion (Figure 6). Otherwise, the hard-edged modernism and exaggerated scale of the new complex made clear the older vision of park architecture was history. The large new building showed the WPA pool to be a place where swimmers came for exercise (Figure 7). In the Progressive Era, a bathhouse promoted cleanliness among the working classes, who did not have

access to baths at home, as Andrea Renner argues in the preceding article, "A Nation That Bathes Together: New York City's Progressive Era Public Baths." Since the idea of swimming as exercise had taken hold by the New Deal, swimmers were expected to be clean before entering the water. A modern outdoor swimming pool could be larger than one inside a traditional bathhouse because the water did not need to be changed as frequently; the modern swimming pool also needed to be larger than one in a traditional bathhouse so swimmers could exercise.⁵⁸

Thronged with thousands on opening day, the pool won praise from Lewis Mumford as an example of "sound vernacular modern architecture," although he had no patience for classicizing details meant to honor Thomas Jefferson, for whom the park was named. Other critics lauded the use of "simple materials simply disposed."⁵⁹ The symmetrical building, framed in steel and clad in brick and concrete, faced First Avenue. Children could walk in directly from the main thoroughfare: they stepped up into the entry courtyard, enclosed with a colonnade and open to the fresh air.

The plan of Jefferson (and every other WPA pool in the city) efficiently processed swimmers from the street into the pool enclosure. The design thus helped to ensure the health, happiness, and orderliness of a large number of city



Figure 7 Jefferson Park Pool and Bathhouse, 1 July 1936

residents (as Moses required). Two L-shaped bathhouses, one for women and girls, the other for men and boys, wrapped around the diving pool (Figure 8). Large signs, incised with elegant letters, directed each sex to the correct locker room, with changing rooms, showers, and bathrooms. The linear order of the plan may have recalled that of an old-fashioned bathhouse, but the new buildings contained big, modern, well-ventilated rooms that delivered both sexes and all ages to the outdoor pool precinct, where they swam, played, and enjoyed the place together. The pools at Jefferson could hold 1,450 people at one time. Terraces, trees, and benches encouraged relaxation and observation of other swimmers, divers off the high board, children playing in the water, and sunbathers on the pool deck. The informal social interaction helped create the spectacle that made these places so popular.⁶⁰

The monumental clarity of the aboveground world of this and the other WPA pools was rivaled by the complex-

ity of the underground world (Figure 9). A system of filter beds, pipes, and other equipment assured water would be clean, sanitary, and heated at all sites, including Jefferson. In East Harlem, excess heat from the diesel motor, used to pump water, was recycled to heat water in the swimming and diving pools (Figure 10).⁶¹ Clean water was usually part of the WPA vision for swimming, but heating water in outdoor pools, used in the summer, was not common in the 1930s. Typically pools in Progressive Era bathhouses had been filled with warm water, but cold water had become acceptable in outdoor pools by the 1930s, since the purpose of swimming was no longer to get clean. However, Moses insisted that the amenity, warm water, be added to the New York pools.

Joseph Hayes, a swimming instructor at Astoria Pool in the late 1930s, recalled his appreciation of this aspect of the pool design, when interviewed by John Mattera, an employee of the parks department.

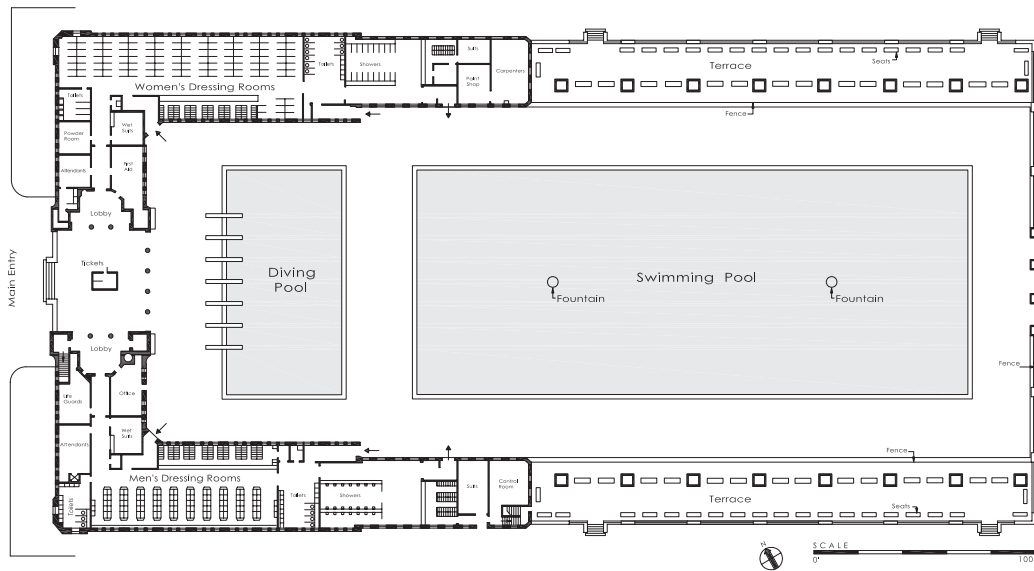


Figure 8 Jefferson Park Pool and Bathhouse, site plan, 1936

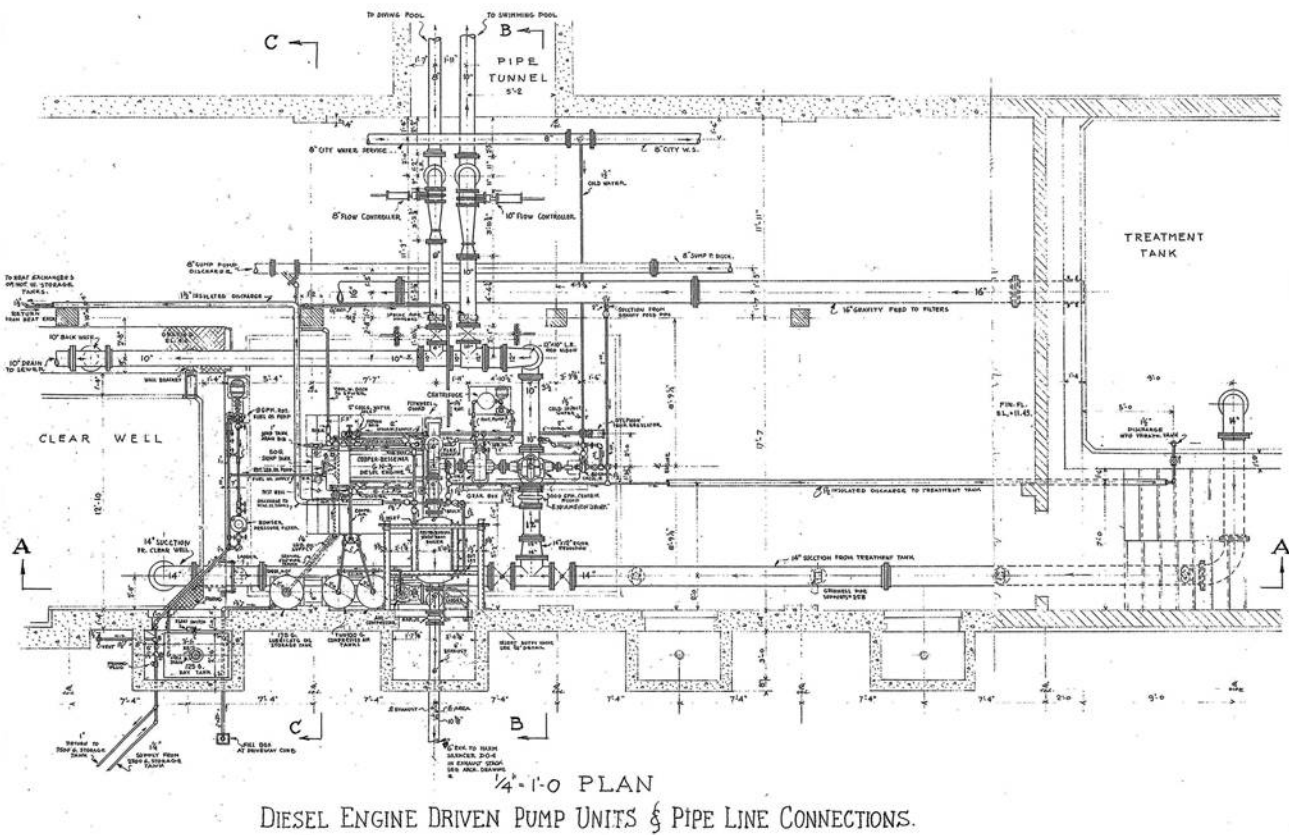


Figure 9 Jefferson Park Pool and Bathhouse, plan of the filter house, detail showing the diesel engine driven pump units and pipe line connections to the pool, 13 March 1936



Figure 10 Pump room, Astoria Park Pool and Bathhouse, Queens, New York City, view of the pipes that deliver water to and from the raised filter beds (on the right); the heating system has been dismantled. Photographed in 2006

Mattera: How was the water?

Hayes: Warm . . . they took care of us.

Mattera: Was the water ever cold?

Hayes: No. . . .

Mattera: How did they keep the water from being too cold?

Hayes: They heated it up.

Mattera: Where?

Hayes: Below, below the streets there . . . underneath where the regular swimmers were, they had stuff to heat it up so it would be warm for us.

Mattera: Who controlled the heat?

Hayes: Well we had . . . some people there that worked for the parks department that knew how to put that stuff up.⁶²

Colonial Park Pool

The same strategies were applied at Colonial Park Pool, although massing and style were handled differently than at Jefferson Pool. On 8 August 1936, twenty-five thousand cheering Harlem residents attended the festive opening, one of the last that summer. Even then, only half of the monumental, fortresslike bathhouse was finished; the opening had been expedited to counter charges of racial bias in the city's public works program. Speaking at the opening, La Guardia promised that while he was mayor, the community would receive equal treatment. He offered the pool as evidence that the "knockers," who censured his administra-

tion for treating Harlem unfairly, were wrong. Moses followed, stating that the pool had been built by and for the people of Harlem.⁶³

The lack of recreation facilities was well known when Moses announced in 1934 that a pool would be built in this part of the city.⁶⁴ The designated site, Mount Morris Park, now Marcus Garvey Park, sat at the southeastern edge of the neighborhood, known to African Americans as the black Mecca of the United States, but referred to as "dark" or "colored" Harlem by whites. Moses changed the site to Colonial Park after the riot of 19 March 1935, which was prompted by a rumor that the police had beaten to death a black teenager for stealing an inexpensive pocketknife from a white-run store. The story proved false, but police brutality and discrimination were endemic in the community, hit harder than any other in the city by the Depression.⁶⁵ The commission appointed by the mayor to investigate the causes of the riot issued a devastating report with descriptions of race prejudice in all aspects of daily life in Harlem, including childhood and recreation. Southern white teachers in Harlem schools, who objected to integration, took students on outings to Jim Crow resorts, where blacks were barred from swimming pools. Children played on city streets, not only because they wanted to, but also because there were not enough playgrounds for them to do otherwise. The commission insisted that "every effort be made to secure additional playgrounds" and enough personnel be



Figure 11 Colonial Park Pool and Bathhouse, Central Harlem, New York City, view of construction, 13 May 1936

hired to supervise them. “Since it appears that relief funds have been spent for much less important things, we respectfully urge immediate filling of this far more important human need.”⁶⁶

By the time the mayor’s commission completed its report, an important step had already been taken. On the evening of 9 August 1935, *La Guardia* and Moses came uptown to visit a dance in Colonial Park, sponsored by the parks department. They announced a new pool and recreation center would be built in the park, “entirely with local Negro labor,” hired with WPA funds.⁶⁷ Colonial Park, a thin strip of land, extended for ten city blocks—from West 145th Street to West 155th Street—along the rocky escarpment between Bradhurst and Edgecombe avenues. Little had been done to improve the park since it opened in 1911; it was only equipped with a small playground, restroom, stairs, and few other amenities in the early 1930s.⁶⁸ The black cultural and political elites, who lived in Sugar Hill, above the park, looked down on a public space that suffered from decades of neglect.⁶⁹

Colonial Park was in terrible condition in 1936, in far worse shape than Jefferson Park. In addition to the precipitous slope, an underground stream complicated reconstruction during the New Deal, turning the site into a muddy mess.⁷⁰ At least some WPA laborers were African American, and they rebuilt the park, adding new playgrounds, a baseball diamond, other athletic fields, and a

band shell and dance floor along with the new pool and bathhouse (Figures 11–13). Aymar Embury II, the favorite architect of the parks commissioner, took charge and produced a stellar design for the bathhouse and pool enclosure, coordinated architecturally with other buildings in the park. Much bigger than the analogue at Jefferson Park, the two-story brick bathhouse recalled medieval and Roman architecture, with arched windows, buttresses and towers, and a vaulted, multileveled interior lobby. The enclosed entry faced and engaged the street, drawing swimmers into the complex where they found modern locker rooms, one for each sex. The pools, which accommodated 4,100 swimmers, were equipped with a similar mechanical system as in the other Moses pools, providing the same result: warm pool water. Colonial Pool, like others, needed some repairs in the late 1930s; they were made as quickly here as they were at other sites and paid for by WPA dollars.⁷¹

In Colonial Park, Moses also built a “granolithic” dance floor and masonry band shell, intended for outdoor concerts and dances in Central Harlem. The press release announcing the pool opening stated, “The addition of these activities within the heart of the colored section of Manhattan is in keeping with the parks department’s policy to increase adult recreation facilities wherever possible.”⁷² Informal concerts had been held in the park since early in the century, prompting the department to build “a music stand” for performances in 1913; it was replaced with a tem-



Figure 12 Progress on Colonial Park Pool, image showing the racially integrated workforce, 15 April 1937



Figure 13 Aymar Embury II, Colonial Park Pool, 15 July 1937

porary band shell in 1935 and the permanent structure, mentioned above, two years later.⁷³ By the 1930s, it had become common for cities to sponsor cultural events in urban parks, and Moses allocated relief funds for these purposes in Central Park, Prospect Park, and small parks, like Colonial Park.⁷⁴ Dances attracted as many as fifteen thousand people who spilled onto Bradhurst Avenue on hot summer evenings, and on more than one occasion, Bill Robinson, the tap dancer and singer who lived in Sugar Hill, walked down the hill to perform in the park. Moses also allocated work-relief funds to hire African American musicians to play in the Colonial Dance Orchestra—a thirteen-piece jazz band; and Robinson, Roland Hayes, and African American athletes participated in the opening day celebration at Colonial Park Pool.⁷⁵

Caro argues that the choice of performers pandered to racial stereotypes, but I disagree. Robinson was a popular local celebrity who, with local activists more radical than he (W. E. B. Du Bois, Thurgood Marshall, Paul Robeson), endorsed a cultural politics of black (“race”) pride. Outdoor concerts were a part of social life in this neighborhood, before it became an African American community, and music and dance continued to play important roles in defining culture, business, and politics in Harlem as it became the black capital of the U.S.⁷⁶ Certainly, La Guardia realized the significance of this place to his political fortunes. He made it a point to stop at the park during election campaigns (twenty thousand people greeted him in 1941) and pick up a baton during concerts.⁷⁷

What was the impact on children? As at Jefferson Park, the design for the new pool at Colonial Park offered boys and girls in Central Harlem a prime civic amenity. In that way, the WPA pool was an example of a democratizing space, as Worpole defines the term for the 1930s—an extraordinary work of modern architecture where design eased embedded social distinctions, but did not and could not erase all inequalities.⁷⁸ At this and other public pools, boys and girls experienced firsthand the successes and the failures of American democracy, especially of a racially segregated society. The impact of race privilege and race prejudice on a child’s life should never be minimized, but it is not surprising that for the most part black people swam in Colonial Pool and white people swam in Jefferson Pool, given the neighborhoods where they were built (Figures 14, 15). In her haunting memoir *The Skin Between Us*, Kym Ragusa makes a similar point in discussing the death of her grandmothers, one African American from Central Harlem, one Italian American from East Harlem. She writes: “the neighborhoods where they had each lived in Harlem [were] a few blocks away from each other, yet worlds apart.”⁷⁹

But the question remains: did Moses build two pools in Harlem because he wanted to imprint a racist vision of public space on its neighborhoods? He explained the decision otherwise—as a pragmatic solution of a political conservative to what he called “racial problems.” His one direct discussion of race and the swimming pools occurred at a lecture at Harvard in 1939, later published as *Theory and Practice of Politics*.

In New York City, as part of the recreation program of the present administration, the Park Department planned and, with the assistance of relief labor, built a number of great neighborhood recreation play centers, each with a huge swimming pool, which could be converted into an outdoor gymnasium in winter. One of these pools was located in a predominantly Italian district. On the boundary of this district is a group of Porto [sic] Ricans and north of them lies the black belt of Harlem. Immediately on the opening of the new pool it became evident that the local Italian population would not tolerate the so-called Spanish element in the pool. Obviously this was against the spirit and the letter of the State Constitution and the Civil Rights Law, yet what could be done about it? Policing could not solve the problem because all the police that could be made regularly available could do nothing about it, since the most flagrant acts were committed outside of the park area. Shortly after this pool opened another one in the negro [sic] section was completed. The Porto Ricans finally decided to go there. The Harlem negroes were resentful of any white intrusion. Our problem was ended in a practical way and the theory of the Bill of Rights remained intact.⁸⁰

Moses, a racial conservative, recognized the political benefits of architectural standardization, making “separate and equal” tangible. As Peter Eisenstadt has pointed out, “Moses didn’t really care who went to any pool, but did not feel that it was his responsibility to change local mores. . . . If whites, blacks, and Latinos did not want to swim together, it was Moses’s responsibility to make sure the separate facilities were equal.”⁸¹ The separate facilities were equal—the practical solution of a racial conservative to violent race prejudice, endemic in American society and exacerbated by the hardship of the Great Depression. Whites routinely beat up blacks and Puerto Ricans in East Harlem when they tried to swim at Jefferson Pool; on occasion whites swam at Colonial Pool, although others felt unwelcome.⁸² Moses knew about these situations, referred to in his Harvard speech. Clearly he recognized racial and ethnic categories were in flux in the 1930s: the line was hardening between black and white, as the city became more racially diverse, complicated place.



Figure 14 African American swimmers at Colonial Park Pool, 16 August 1937

This discussion could stop here, with separate, equal, and segregated pools in Harlem, but that would leave analysis of the topic incomplete. In the 1930s and 1940s some children did swim in racially integrated public pools, built by Moses at Highbridge Park in Manhattan and McCarren and Betsy Head parks in Brooklyn.⁸³

Integrated Swimming at the Betsy Head Recreation Center

The most interesting example of integrated swimming is Betsy Head Recreation Center in Brownsville—another example of the decision to invest WPA dollars in a dilapidated park in a community hard hit by the Depression and in the midst of social change. When the park opened in the Progressive Era, Brownsville was a white, Jewish, working-class neighborhood. By the mid-1930s, African Americans also called this community home.⁸⁴ The park, equipped

with a bathhouse and a pool in 1914, had been singled out in the Regional Plan as in need of improvement and subsequently was described by Moses as in disgraceful condition. The pool was “unsanitary,” he wrote in 1940, “and had an unattractive, inadequate, and impractical bathhouse which had outlived its usefulness.”⁸⁵

By 1936, the parks department began what became a series of improvements. To begin, the bathhouse was modernized and the pool enlarged and reconstructed.⁸⁶ No one from the mayor’s office or the parks department came to the opening on 7 August 1936, probably because the project was incomplete.⁸⁷ Brownsville was also well known for left-wing politics (represented by a socialist in the state assembly), and during the Depression, contentious political meetings spilled into public spaces on summer evenings, affectionately described by Alfred Kazin in *A Walker in the City* and less sympathetically in the *New York Times*. In 1935, 150 people, “Reds,” heckled a public official at a rally on Independence



Figure 15 White swimmers and lifeguard at Jefferson Park Pool, 1936. Photograph by Bernard Hoffman

Day. The “disturbance” turned into a fistfight, quelled by local police.⁸⁸ At the 1936 pool opening, the captain of the local police precinct shrugged off the official snub, even though the absence of elected officials was startling. Children were everywhere, brought by a “grapevine system of communication”; 800 lined up at the turnstile at the bathhouse entry an hour before the pool opened.⁸⁹

Although the parks department promised to replace quickly the bathhouse and build new wading and diving pools, no changes were made until 1937, when a fire reduced the site to ruins.⁹⁰ That made it possible to erect a brand-new recreation center, designed by John Matthews Hatton in an explicitly modernist idiom (Figures 16, 17). A daring cantilevered canopy clad in aluminum and supported by eight parabolic arches covered the roof-deck stadium of the sleek new bathhouse. The new bathhouse, with three pools accommodating up to 5,500 swimmers, opened in 1939. This event happened shortly after Moses presented a

vision for integrating the park and the pool with other neighborhood improvements.

In 1938, critical of the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the parks commissioner directed architects to design a comprehensive plan for integrating housing and recreation in several neighborhoods, including Brownsville. This endeavor has been described as a power grab by Moses, intent on winning control of NYCHA (recipient of new sources of federal money). The charge may be true, but the plan is interesting because Moses offered recreation centers (including pools) as kernels for community building. He argued, “There is no such thing as a sound recreation policy for this city which is not based on close coordination with slum clearance, low-rent housing, and indeed housing or rehousing of every kind.”⁹¹ The mayor thwarted the takeover of NYCHA, and most of the proposed Brownsville plan was not built, although several blocks became part of Brownsville Houses, completed after World War II. In 1941 Moses pointed out the addition of public housing would exacerbate, not solve, the need for more recreation space in Brownsville. “Even at the present time Betsy Head Park is hardly large enough to meet the needs of the neighborhood,” he stated in 1941, acknowledging the press on space for play. As Wendell Pritchett has pointed out, blacks and whites in Brownsville competed to control recreational space that did not meet the needs of either community in the 1930s and 1940s.⁹²

As Moses asked architects to rethink the physical place of pools in community building, some Jewish residents of Brownsville joined African Americans to support racial integration in the new swimming pool. Until recently, I believed unwritten rules ensured racial segregation in the pool; Christopher Legree mentioned them when I met him at Betsy Head Park. His grandparents, who migrated from the Deep South, told him African Americans could swim in the pool only in the late afternoon, after white swimmers had vacated the premises. I have found no written records indicating employees enforced these rules, but other reports second the account of exclusion of blacks from Betsy Head Park. A film of the opening day also shows the pool inhabited only by white people, as does a 1941 article from *Architectural Record*, illustrated with photographs by Samuel Gottscho. The editors of *Architectural Record* used them to celebrate many socially progressive aspects of the building, described by them as a “city play center for all-year use.”⁹³

However, not all the Gottscho photographs were published in *Architectural Record*. The photographer visited the pool on 14 July 1939, not in 1941, and took forty pictures—many more than could be included in the magazine. The excluded images give a different portrait of space and soci-



Figure 16 John Matthews
Hatton, Betsy Head Play Center,
Brownsville, Brooklyn, New York
City, 1938. Photographed in 2005

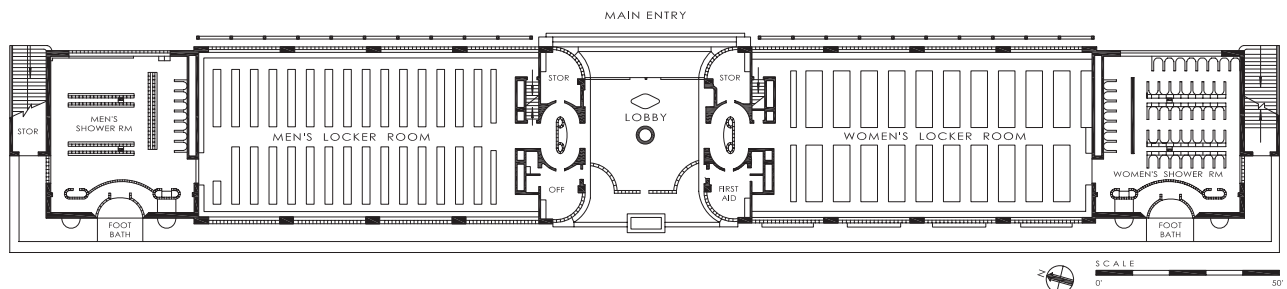


Figure 17 Betsy Head Play Center, 1938, plan as published in 1941

ety in the Brownsville pool than offered by the evidence cited above. They convey the generational divide, typical in immigrant and migrant communities; they also indicate the progressive politics Pritchett reports survived, albeit only for a time and only among some people as southern blacks moved into a left-wing Jewish neighborhood.⁹⁴

The unpublished photos show the Brownsville pool to be the social center of this diverse community where swimming, racial integration, and experimentation with gender norms and sexuality were not mutually exclusive. Gottscho shows the pool to be not only a place where children played, but an area of courtship, spectacle, and display (Figure 18), where the sons and daughters of immigrants tried out (and on) new Americanized selves. Young women and their immigrant mothers and grandmothers are shown inside and

outside the pool enclosure—the first clothed in new fashionable bathing suits (Figure 19), the latter in more conservative dress, but close to and part of the pool community. Oral histories, for instance of Tony Maniscalco, a lifeguard at the pool in the late 1940s, second the importance of the park and especially the pool to teenagers and young adults looking to meet outside the view of prying parental eyes.⁹⁵

The unpublished photos also show black and white boys and girls using the pool. They are separated by sex at the bathhouse entry, but not by race; in fact, they seem to be relatively indifferent to this issue (Figures 20, 21). Black and white children also shared locker rooms, the pool deck, and in all likelihood the water. Their familiarity with one another is supported by other stories of racial integration at this park, especially in team sports for boys, organized by the



Figure 18 Samuel Gottscho, *General view, from northwest across pool*, Betsy Head Play Center, 14 July 1939



Figure 19 Gottscho, *Onlookers*, Betsy Head Play Center, 14 July 1939



Figure 20 Gottscho, *Entrance section, boys waiting*, Betsy Head Play Center, 14 July 1939



Figure 21 Gottscho, *Detail of girls' line*, Betsy Head Play Center, 14 July 1939



Figure 22 Gottscho, *Colored sun bathers*, Betsy Head Play Center, 14 July 1939

Brownsville Boys Club (BBC). As Pritchett has shown, the animosity shown by outsiders to the integrated softball team forged solidarity among boys on the team and persuaded the BBC to sponsor interracial teams through the 1940s.⁹⁶ Yet, while the pool was racially integrated, physical proximity did not necessarily create social unity, as Gottscho’s photograph of separate groups of black and white boys suggests (Figure 22).⁹⁷

Other photos show that the parks department not only condoned racial tolerance, but also supported it by integrating the lifeguard staff at Betsy Head Park Pool (Figure 23). Moses endorsed the policy in principle, writing in 1938, “There are numerous negroes [sic] who passed our course . . . who are now employed as lifeguards at the beaches or at the pools.”⁹⁸ Is this situation an example of “flagging”? Caro used the term to describe the practice of hiring white lifeguards at Jefferson Pool (see Figure 15), reportedly at Moses’s insistence and intended to dissuade blacks from using that pool.⁹⁹ Perhaps the reverse happened at Betsy Head—a tacit acknowledgement of a different social situation, one that also existed in the pools in McCarren and Highbridge parks. The film footage in the parks department archive shows unequivocally that black adults



Figure 23 Tony Maniscalco and lifeguard colleagues at Betsy Head Park Pool, late 1940s



Figure 24 Maplewood Swimming Pool, St. Louis County, Mo., July 1938

mingled with white children and teenagers at these pools in the late 1930s and early 1940s.¹⁰⁰

Separate and Not Equal in St. Louis

In other cities—Baltimore; Washington D.C.; Youngstown, Ohio; and St. Louis—the prospect of racial integration in public swimming pools sparked violent protest by whites. With respect to St. Louis, it is clear that the WPA pools in the city and the county were separate and not equal, and racially segregated by law, not only de facto spatial practice.

Two white-only municipal pools were built in St. Louis County, using WPA funds.¹⁰¹ One was erected in Maplewood, built between 1936 and 1938 and paid for with WPA dollars and bond issue funds. Sited directly behind the City Hall, the expansive outdoor pool was served by a stone bathhouse and a modern water treatment system (Figure 24).¹⁰² According to Tom Grellner, former Maplewood Parks and Recreation director, “The Maplewood Pool was 50 meters by 20 meters and 12 feet deep, with three diving boards. It had a gravity sand and gravel filter system and a cycle rate of eight hours; and it used gas chlorine for disinfecting.”¹⁰³ In the city proper, a modest infusion of cash from the WPA helped to build a recreation center in Tandy Park; it had a small indoor pool, not a big outdoor one. Another WPA pool, sited in East St. Louis, never opened, due to racial tension.¹⁰⁴

Some, but not much, federal money was allocated to improve the big outdoor pools built in Marquette and Fairgrounds parks during the second decade of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁵ In the late 1940s, African Americans pressed for access to them, winning it in Marquette Park but not in Fairgrounds Park, near what was becoming a black neighborhood. In June 1949, the director of the Department of Public Welfare in St. Louis announced the municipal pools would be desegregated and, on the morning of 21 June, a NAACP official and a Catholic priest escorted a small group of black boys into the pool, past a much larger crowd of jeering, white teenagers (Figure 25). By the evening, whites were attacking blacks throughout the neighborhood with baseball bats, knives, and lead pipes. The riot lasted for two days, notwithstanding the presence of one hundred police officers—lawlessness in the face of the law.¹⁰⁶

The story made national news, with *Life* magazine giving full play to the brutality of white teenagers and also endorsing the mayor’s solution: he closed the Fairgrounds pool and reinstated racial segregation at other sites. The caption of a photograph in the magazine read, “Negro kicked by white rioters lies on the ground. Even 400 policemen were unable to keep up with the riot; every time they succeeded in quelling one disturbance, a hoodlum would yell, ‘There’s a nigger’ and it would start all over again. Police feared consequences of mass arrests, booked only



Figure 25 White and black swimmers at Fairgrounds Park Pool, St. Louis, Mo., 21 June 1949

eight persons, several of them injured.”¹⁰⁷ One year later the city complied with a federal court order and integrated the public pools. However, there was a bitter twist: the mayor declared that the pools would be open to boys and girls on alternate days, to alleviate what Joseph Heathcott calls “white fears of sexual mixing of the races.”¹⁰⁸

Conclusion

There are many stories to tell about the WPA swimming pools in New York City—the great new spaces of public informality built by the Department of Parks during the New Deal. These and other spaces for public recreation figured prominently in the vision that Moses held for the modern city and that was embraced by modern architects, eager for change.¹⁰⁹ Boys and girls also welcomed the new pools and hundreds of thousands of children swam in them, as they opened once a week during the hot summer of the 1936. In East Harlem, Central Harlem, Brownsville, and other neighborhoods hard pressed by economic adversity and undergoing demographic change, children, teenagers, and young adults flocked to these stellar works of public architecture. Exemplars of the New Deal vision of modern childhood, the Moses pools offered youngsters of different races, all ages, and both sexes equal access to outdoor recreation.

The construction of new pools as places worthy of civic

pride was possible because architects embraced a central insight of modernism, that standardization is key to high-quality public building. Public officials also recognized the benefits of long-term investment in civic architecture.¹¹⁰ Each pool was designed and built to extraordinarily high standards regardless of location, and racially integrated depending on site. The commitment to community building encouraged social interaction across gender, race, and class lines and challenged the unequal treatment of black and other Americans of color typical in the New Deal.

Was this pragmatism unique to New York? Did tolerance evaporate in these pools as children aged, as they became young men and women and the prospect of white and black bodies mingling on the pool deck and in the water became sexually charged? Did tolerance lapse as the evening hours approached and teenagers and young adults joined children in the pool? The answer is not known for these pools during the New Deal, although it is clear that the swimming pools built by Moses remained treasured recreational resources as support for racial integration waned in the neighborhoods discussed in this essay.¹¹¹ During the 1950s, fistfights broke out between young men on pool decks and in locker rooms at Highbridge Park Pool, especially when ethnic and racial divides were crossed in teenage dating. Even more disturbing was the death of Michael Farmer, killed just outside the pool enclosure as teenage

gangs fought over turf in Washington Heights. Other violent confrontations happened between whites and blacks at McCarren Park Pool, and between Puerto Ricans and Italians at Jefferson Park Pool.¹¹² A telling description by the main character, Carlitos Brigante, in *Carlito's Way* is evidence of the appeal of the pools and thus their place in ethnic and racial conflict in 1950s New York:

Lemme tell you about them rumbles. The wops said no spics could go east of Park Avenue. But there was only one swimming pool and that was Jefferson on 112th Street off the East River. Like, man, you had to wade through Park, Lexington, Third, Second, First, Pleasant. . . . We took a beating—their turf, too many guys. . . . We was tryin' to melt into the pot, but they wouldn't even let us in the swimming pool.¹¹³

As Elena Martínez and Marci Reaven have shown, Puerto Rican boys and girls did make their way into the pool into East Harlem, where Moses's architectural innovations stood them in good stead, especially at night, when the pool was closed. Kids climbed over the fence to join friends, and the sheer size of the place helped them elude the police. As had been the case in the 1930s, teenagers used the pools for courtship as well as for active play. "If you were a good swimmer," Carlos Diaz recalled, "you were able to get the pretty girls. . . . You'd go over to the girls, 'Let me teach you how to swim. . . .'"¹¹⁴

Youngsters in eastern Queens were not as fortunate as those in East Harlem. The sponsors of Rochdale Village, an integrated housing project in Queens, failed to persuade residents that a swimming pool would benefit the community. In the early 1960s, insiders (many of them Jews) did not want outsiders to use the facility, fearing it would become too boisterous; outsiders (many of them blacks) feared exclusion. The pool was never built.¹¹⁵

In closing, I underscore two points. The first and most obvious is that Caro's charges do not hold up under historical scrutiny of the physical city. The biographer's focus on personality comes at great cost: it distracts from the spatial and structural dynamics of racism.¹¹⁶ It is important to set the record straight on Moses, and it is also important to recognize that racism is a bigger problem, more powerful than any one individual, even a person as powerful as Moses. The cold-water story, if true, is reprehensible, but the flip side of it is the suggestion that heating the water would have mitigated race prejudice at Jefferson Park Pool. Water temperature was more or less a trivial matter in the face of routine violence used to halt racial integration of swimming pools on the streets of New York City and across America.

The second point is the need to recognize that the history of modern architecture contains stories that help us

imagine a more democratic future. Skeptics may voice doubts about the New Deal vision of urban recreation and modern childhood, especially the intent to link space, play, and citizenship. They argue play is better left alone, because play mirrors reality; it reflects the state of society and the government. Other conclusions may be drawn from probing race, place, and play in the WPA pools.

No space is intrinsically free, but modern architecture can be a key mechanism for shaping a better social world. During the New Deal, when so many social categories were in flux, some kids took a chance at the new pools.¹¹⁷ Historical actors in their own right, black and white boys and girls swam together in neighborhoods where progressive New Yorkers worked to make racial integration a matter of fact in daily life, not only an abstract principle. In magnificent new public places, envisioned by a conservative park commissioner, children cut across gender, age, and racial lines in progressive ways, showing adults willing to listen that democratic citizenship could grow through their play during the WPA.

Notes

This essay has benefited from close readings by Hilary Ballon, Ning de Coninck-Smith, Achva Benzinberg Stein, and two anonymous readers for *JSAH*, as well as comments offered at presentations at the Queens Museum, Connecticut College, the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University, the Society for the History of Childhood and Youth, the City College Architecture Center, the Society for American City and Regional Planning History, the University Seminar on the City at Columbia University, and the Princeton University School of Architecture. Thanks also to Robert Caldwell, Peter Eisenstadt, Camille Hall, Katie Han, Joseph Heathcott, Kenneth Jackson, Paula Lupkin, John Mattera, Timothy Mennell, Eric Sandweiss, Robert Snyder, Abigail A. Van Slyck, and Carol Willis. I am deeply indebted to Jamie Schmidt in St. Louis and Mireille Moga and Seth Roye in New York for research assistance; Christopher Legree for discussing Betsy Head Park Pool with me; Robert Greenfield for sharing insights about Washington Heights during the 1950s, specifically Highbridge Pool; and Gene Sparling, as always, for critical commentary and unstinting support. I also express my appreciation to the University Seminars at Columbia University for their help in publication and the Research Foundation of CUNY for a PSC-CUNY 39 Research Grant. My thanks to Robert L. Belknap and to all who helped with illustrations: Mireille Moga at City College, Christina Benson, John Krawchuk, and Steven Rizick at the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, Mark Lewis at the Library of Congress, Deborah E. Cribbs and Charles E. Brown at the St. Louis Mercantile Library, Gerald Chatanow, and Thomas Kemppland.

1. Wagner's name is indicated on the lower right hand corner of the poster. For the New York City branch of the Federal Art Project, see Audrey McMahon, "A General View of the WPA Federal Art Project in New York City and State," in *The New Deal Art Projects: An Anthology of Memoirs*, ed. Francis V. O'Connor (Washington, D.C., 1972), 51–76; Richard Floethe, "Posters," in *Art for the Millions: Essays from the 1930s by Artists and Admin-*

istrators of the WPA Federal Art Project, ed. Francis V. O'Connor (Greenwich, Conn., 1973), 177–78; and Christopher DeNoon, ed., *Posters of the WPA* (Los Angeles, 1987).

2. The Learn to Swim program started in 1934 and took place in commercial as well as public pools. By 1940, 30,000 people had participated in the program. “650 Children ‘Graduated’ After Pool Tests as City Ends its Learn-to-Swim Campaign,” *New York Times*, 1 Aug. 1934, 19; Victor Jenkins, “Learn-to-Swim Campaign Opened for City Children,” *New York Times*, sec. 2, 11 June 1939, 8; and New York City Dept. of Parks, *Six Years of Park Progress* (New York, 1940), 12. For the spread of organized swim instruction in the 1920s, see Abigail A. Van Slyck, *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890–1960* (Minneapolis, 2006), 82–84.

3. Shortly after the WPA was launched in 1935, Mayor La Guardia convinced Harry Hopkins, the director, to create a separate funding unit for New York City—in effect treating the city as the forty-ninth state. See Judith Anne Davidson, “The Federal Government and the Democratization of Public Recreational Sport: New York City, 1933–43” (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts, 1983), 160; Thomas Kessner, *Fiorello H. La Guardia* (New York, 1989), 339; and Edward C. Lindeman, “Recreation and the Good Life,” *Recreation* 29 (Dec. 1935), 431–36. For the quality and extent of the New York program, see Anthony J. Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933–40* (New York, 1989), 204; “Nation-wide Survey of WPA Pool and Beach Development,” *Swimming Pool Data & Reference Annual* 5 (1937), 52–56; and “2,419 Swimming and Wading Pools Built by the WPA-PWA,” *American City* 53 (Apr. 1938), 83. The pool and beach development in New York City stands out as an exceptional achievement, although the lists cited are not comprehensive.

4. For New Deal work relief programs, see William E. Leuchtenburg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932–1940* (New York, 1963); and Badger, *The New Deal*, 191–244. For the physical legacy, see Robert D. Leighninger Jr., *Long-Range Public Investment: The Forgotten Legacy of the New Deal* (Columbia, S.C., 2007); and Nick Taylor, *American-Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA: When FDR Put the Nation to Work* (New York, 2008). For effects on recreation nationally, see Steven A. Riess, “Sports,” in *Encyclopedia of the Great Depression*, ed. Robert S. McElvaine (New York, 2004), 929; and Kriste Lindenmeyer, *The Greatest Generation Grows Up: American Childhood in the 1930s* (Chicago, 2005), 230, 279. For recreation in New York City, see Davidson, “Federal Government and the Democratization of Public Recreational Sport”; and Barbara Blumberg, *The New Deal and the Unemployed: The View from New York City* (Lewisburg, Penn., 1979).

5. The eleven WPA swimming pools opened in this order in Hamilton Fish Park, Thomas Jefferson Park, Astoria Park, Tompkinsville Park, Highbridge Park, Sunset Park, Crotona Park, McCarren Park, Betsy Head Park, Colonial Park, and Red Hook Park. Another pool, in Faber Park on Staten Island, was also renovated in 1936, but minimally since it was relatively new (opened in 1932). Subsequently, New Deal dollars were used to add outdoor swimming pools to four bathhouses built in Manhattan during the Progressive Era, renovate three barge pools, also in Manhattan, and build a pool in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. See Marta Gutman, “Equipping the Public Realm: Rethinking Robert Moses and Recreation,” in *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York*, ed. Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson (New York, 2007), 72–85; Marta Gutman, “Pools,” in Ballon and Jackson, *Robert Moses and the Modern City*, 135–45, 151–57; Benjamin Luke Marcus, “McCarren Pool,” in Ballon and Jackson, *Robert Moses and the Modern City*, 146–50; and New York City Dept. of Parks, *Six Years of Park Progress*, 20.

6. In 1936, it cost ten cents to swim in the pool, for adults at all times and

children, after the free period lapsed. The fees were controversial, although the city charged more money to use the public pools before La Guardia took office. “Mayor Orders Bathing Rate Cut,” *New York Times*, 7 July 1933, 11; “Park Pools Turned into Skating Rinks,” *New York Times*, 21 Sept. 1936, 25; and New York City Dept. of Parks, *Six Years of Park Progress*, 21. All told, the bathhouses could accommodate at once 49,000 swimmers. “Paternal for Parks,” *Architectural Forum* 65, no. 6 (1936), 505.

7. For the expression of gender anxieties in works of art paid for by New Deal work relief programs, see Barbara Melosh, *Engendering Culture: Manhood and Womanhood in New Deal Public Art and Theater* (Washington, D.C., 1991); and Melosh, “Manly Work: Public Art and Masculinity in Depression America,” in *Gender and American History Since 1890*, ed. Melosh (New York, 1993), 155–81.

8. The point is emphasized in the catalog of the Library of Congress; one subject heading is “Segregation—New York (State)—New York—1930–1940.” The online teaching aid asks, “How does the ‘Learn to Swim Campaign’ poster reflect racial segregation of the community? Why might the illustrator have depicted this segregation?” Library of Congress, “The Learning Page: Collection Connections, By the People, For the People: Posters from the WPA, 1936–1943,” (26 Sept. 2002), <http://international.loc.gov/learn/collections/poster/thinking.html> (accessed 16 Jan. 2008).

9. Jeff Wiltse, *Contested Waters: A Social History of Swimming Pools in America* (Chapel Hill, 2007), 121–23. For race and sport, see John Bloom and Michael Nevin Willard, eds., *Sports Matters: Race, Recreation, and Culture* (New York, 2002); and Patrick B. Miller and David K. Wiggins, eds., *Sport and the Color Line: Black Athletes and Race Relations in Twentieth-Century America* (New York, 2004).

10. For the symbolic importance of cleanliness in New Deal photography, see Lawrence W. Levine, “The Historian and the Icon: Photography and the History of the American People in the 1930s and 1940s,” in *The Unpredictable Past: Explorations in American Cultural History* (New York, 1993), 269. The orchestration of play practices for the purposes of socialization dated to the Progressive Era. See Elizabeth A. Gagen, “Play the Part: Performing Gender in America’s Playgrounds,” in *Children’s Geographies: Playing, Living, Learning*, ed. Sarah L. Holloway and Gill Valentine (London, 2000), 213–29.

11. For color reproductions of the posters illustrating this article, see <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaposters/wpahome.html>. About 2,000 posters survive of the 35,000 designed during the WPA; 908 are posted online in the catalog of the Library of Congress. For discussion of the collection, see Francis V. O’Connor, “WPA Posters: Murals in Miniature,” in DeNoon, *Posters of the WPA*, 7. Of the 289 posters reproduced in *Posters of the WPA*, 3 suggest interracial relations (figs. 102, 225, 250); others depict African Americans, especially posters advertising the Negro Theatre Unit of the Federal Theatre Project. The *Learn to Swim Campaign* poster is not reproduced in DeNoon’s book although other examples of Wagner’s work are included.

12. My understanding of the term “reform liberalism” is indebted to the discussion in Alan Brinkley, *The End of Reform: New Deal Liberalism in Recession and War* (New York, 1996), 8–11. The editors of *Fortune* showered praise on the bridges, beaches, parks, parkways, and other public facilities built in the New York metropolitan area under Moses’s direction, calling the public landscape a “conspicuous example of the social dividend” pledged by Franklin D. Roosevelt for the New Deal. “Robert (Or-I’ll-Resign) Moses,” *Fortune* 17, no. 6 (1938), 72, 131.

13. The amended clause read, “No person shall be denied the equal protection of the laws of this state or any subdivision thereof. No person shall, because of race, color, creed or religion, be subjected to any discrimination,

in his civil rights, by any other person or by any firm, corporation, or institution, or by the state or an agency or subdivision of the state.” The insertion of the italicized phrase rendered the amendment ineffective, due to the limited definitions of civil rights in state law. Scholars disagree about the effectiveness of Moses’s parliamentary tactics, but he believed he had eviscerated the civil rights clause and was proud to have done so. See Martha Biondi, “Robert Moses, Race, and the Limits of an Activist State,” in Ballon and Jackson, *Robert Moses and the Modern City*, 116–17; Robert Moses, “What’s the Matter with New York?” *New York Times Magazine*, sec. 6 (1 Aug. 1943), 8–9, 28–29; and Robert Moses, *Theory and Practice in Politics: The Godkin Lectures, 1939* (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), 15–16. I am very grateful to Peter Eisenstadt for helping to clarify this point.

14. Robert A. Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* (New York, 1974), 512–14. The charges of intentional racism continue to mar the reputation of the pools, shaping scholarly discourse as well as the public sense of their value as cultural resources. Caro’s argument is accepted by Wiltse, *Contested Waters*, 140; Moses’s racist objectives were mentioned in reviews of the 2007 exhibitions in New York City and cited in a public hearing of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, when several WPA pools were considered for designation as historic landmarks. See Paul Goldberger, “The Sky Line: Eminent Dominion, Rethinking the Legacy of Robert Moses,” *New Yorker* 82 (5 Feb. 2007), 83–85; Michael Powell, “A Tale of Two Cities,” *New York Times*, sec. 14, 6 May 2007, 1, 12; Michael Sorkin, “Critique: Rehabilitating Robert Moses,” *Architectural Record* 195 (Mar. 2007), 55–56; and Nadezhda Williams, “Report: D-Day at the LPC,” *Historic District Councils Newsstand* (31 Jan. 2007), <http://hdvoice.blogspot.com/2007/01/d-day-report.html> (accessed 7 May 2007).

15. Biondi, “Robert Moses, Race, and the Limits of an Activist State,” 117. For the effect on fair housing of unequal treatment of African Americans during the New Deal, see Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Postwar New York City* (Cambridge, Mass., 2003); Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York, 1985); and Douglas S. Massey and Nancy Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993).

16. For the 1935 Harlem riot, see Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, “Or Does It Explode?”: *Black Harlem in the Great Depression* (New York, 1997); and Robert M. Fogelson and Richard E. Rubenstein, eds., *The Complete Report of Mayor LaGuardia’s Commission on the Harlem Riot of March 19, 1935* (New York, 1969). For Roosevelt’s indifference to black youth, see Richard A. Reiman, *The New Deal and American Youth: Ideas and Ideals in a Depression Decade* (Athens, 1992).

17. For Moses as a high modernist, see Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York, 1988), 290–312; and James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, 1998), 8.

18. The phrase “New York approach” is offered in tribute to the late Joel Schwartz who coined it to describe the pragmatic liberalism characteristic of New York politics in the 1950s. Joel Schwartz, *The New York Approach: Robert Moses, Urban Liberals, and Redevelopment of the Inner City* (Columbus, 1993). For discussion of this idea, see Hilary Ballon, “Robert Moses and Urban Renewal: The Title I Program,” in Ballon and Jackson, *Robert Moses and the Modern City*, 94–115; and Timothy Mennel, “Everything Must Go: A Novel of Robert Moses’s New York” (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2007), 1037–38.

19. Ken Worpole, *Here Comes the Sun: Architecture and Public Space in Twentieth-Century European Culture* (London, 2000), 113–16.

20. *Ibid.*, 14–15. Also see Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Three New Deals: Reflections on Roosevelt’s America, Mussolini’s Italy, and Hitler’s Germany, 1933–1939*

(New York, 2006); and Stefano de Martino and Alex Wall, eds., *Cities of Childhood: Italian Colonies of the 1930s* (London, 1988).

21. For the high value of public pools to New York City youth, see Eric Schneider, *Vampires, Dragons, and Egyptian Kings: Youth Gangs in Postwar New York* (Princeton, 1999), 15, 23, 79–83. For personal accounts, see Robert Greenfield, informal conversation with Marta Gutman, New York, N.Y., 21 Mar. 2007; and Edwin Torres, *Carlito’s Way: Rise to Power* (New York, 1975), 4, 6. For maps documenting congestion in neighborhoods where the pools were built, see Katie Han, “Water, Water Everywhere: A Social History of New York’s Floating Baths and Robert Moses’ Swimming Pools” (2007, unpublished).

22. For Progressive reform and park and playground design, see Galen Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982), 61–99; Dominick Cavallo, *Muscles and Morals: Organized Playgrounds and Urban Reform, 1880–1920* (Philadelphia, 1981); and Steven Mintz, *Huck’s Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004), 173, 179. For case studies, see Rachel E. Iannacone, “Open Space for the Underclass: New York’s Small Parks (1880–1915)” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2005); Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar, *The Park and the People: A History of Central Park* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1992), 143–48; and Marie Ray Warsh, “‘The Truest Reform Work’: The Children’s School Farm, New York City, 1902–1931,” (master’s thesis, Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture, 2007).

23. For the state’s interest in the “right to childhood,” see Hugh Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society since 1500*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2005), 160–63; and Viviana A. Zelizer, *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children* (New York, 1985).

24. Lindenmeyer, *Greatest Generation Grows Up*, 49, 75–77, 94, 120, 185–190 (see n. 4); Mintz, *Huck’s Raft*, 234–36. For the needs of New York City children, see Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, “City Children to Have New Play Fields,” *New York Times*, sec. 8, 6 May 1934, 2.

25. Swimming as exercise had already been integrated into other concepts of bathing, understood first in the U.S. as a source of rejuvenation, then as a means to become clean. See Van Slyck, *A Manufactured Wilderness*, 158–59 (see n. 2). Siegfried Giedion draws the distinction between rejuvenation and cleanliness in *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History* (New York, 1948), 628–712. For bathing and consciousness of the skin as an organism requiring care, see Richard L. Bushman and Claudia L. Bushman, “The Early History of Cleanliness in America,” *Journal of American History* 74, no. 4 (1988), 1223; for bathing and health, see Jacqueline S. Wilkie, “Submerged Sensuality: Technology and Perceptions of Bathing,” *Journal of Social History* 19, no. 4 (1986), 649–64; David Glassberg, “The Design of Reform: The Public Bath Movement in America,” *American Studies* 20, no. 2 (1979), 5–21; Marilyn Thornton Williams, *Washing “The Great Unwashed”: Public Baths in Urban America, 1840–1920* (Columbus, 1991); and Andrea Renner, “A Nation that Bathes Together: New York City’s Progressive Era Public Baths,” *JSAH* 67, no. 4 (2008).

26. See Wiltse, *Contested Waters*, 79–86 (see n. 9); and Howard S. Miller, “The Politics of Public Bathing in Progressive St. Louis,” *Gateway Heritage: Quarterly Journal of the Missouri Historical Society* 10 (Fall 1989), 19.

27. Matthew Pratt Guterl, *The Color of Race in America, 1900–1940* (Cambridge, Mass., 2001), 3. Also see Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998); David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of American Working Class* (New York, 1991); and George M. Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton, 2002).

28. Guterl, *Color of Race*, 7, 10–12. See also Ann Douglas, *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s* (New York, 1995), 5, 13; and John Higham,

Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925, 2nd ed. (New Brunswick, N.J., 1992).

29. Owen R. Lovejoy, *The Negro Children of New York* (New York, 1932), 5. The claim, based on figures from the 1930 census, is probably accurate, according to experts in twentieth-century African urban history. The census reported 75,123 black children under the age of fifteen lived in New York City; 60,402 under twenty lived in Manhattan; and 96,243 in the five boroughs. I am grateful to Rebecca Ginsburg for sharing her expertise on this matter with me.

30. Charles Spurgeon Johnson, *The Negro in American Civilization: A Study of Negro Life and Race Relations in the Light of Social Research* (New York, 1930), 299–310; Forrester B. Washington, “Recreational Facilities for the Negro,” *The American Negro*, special issue of *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 140 (Nov. 1928), 272–82; and Lovejoy, *Negro Children*, 5. See also James Frederick Murphy, “Egalitarianism and Separatism: A History of Approaches in the Provision of Public Recreation and Leisure Services for Blacks, 1906–1972” (PhD diss., Oregon State University, 1972).

31. For an overview, see Lee Franklin Hanmer, *Public Recreation: A Study of Parks, Playgrounds, and Other Outdoor Recreation Facilities*, vol. 5, *Regional Survey of New York and Its Environs*, ed. Thomas Adams, et al. (New York, 1928), 167–76. For the needs of children in Harlem, see “Recreation in Harlem,” *Survey* 68, no. 12 (1932), 8. For Harlem’s unique place in the physical city, see Claude McKay, *Harlem: Negro Metropolis* (1940; New York, 1968), 21–22. For Italian immigrants in East Harlem, see Leonard Covello, “A High School and Its Immigrant Community: A Challenge and an Opportunity,” *Schools that Serve the Community*, special issue of *Journal of Educational Sociology* 9, no. 6 (1936), 331–46; Dorothy Reed, *Leisure Time of Girls in a “Little Italy”: A Comparative Study* (Portland, Ore., 1932). For recollections of Brownsville, see Alfred Kazin, *Walker in the City* (New York, 1951); Gerald Chatanow and Bernard D. Schwartz, *Another Time, Another Place: A Neighborhood Remembered* (New York, 2000); and Carole Bell Ford, *The Girls: Jewish Women of Brownsville Brooklyn, 1940–1995* (Albany, N.Y., 2000).

32. Johnson, *Negro in American Civilization*, 300. See also Richard Robbins, *Sidelines Activist: Charles S. Johnson and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Jackson, Miss., 1996).

33. For racial stereotypes with respect to sexuality and masculinity, see Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago, 1995).

34. For the general point, see Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (1966; New York, 1992), 36; and Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command*. See also Gagen, “Play the Part,” 224 (see n. 10). I am indebted to Achva Benzinberg Stein and Abigail A. Van Slyck for helping sharpen the argument in this paragraph.

35. For racial discrimination in pools and beaches, see Biondi, *To Stand and Fight*, 82–84 (see n. 15); Joseph Heathcott, “Black Archipelago: Politics and Civic Life in the Jim Crow City,” *Journal of Social History* 38, no. 3 (2005), 726–27; Wiltse, *Contested Waters*, 122–53; Victoria W. Wolcott, “Recreation and Race in the Postwar City: Buffalo’s 1956 Crystal Beach Riot,” *Journal of American History* 93, no. 1 (2006), 63–90; and Sharon Zukin, “From Coney Island to Las Vegas in the Urban Imaginary: Discursive Practices of Growth and Decline,” *Urban Affairs Review* 33, no. 5 (1998), 627–54.

36. For the sexual charge of new styles of women’s bathing suits, see Catherine Horwood, “‘Girls Who Arouse Dangerous Passions’: Women and Bathing, 1900–39,” *Women’s History Review* 9, no. 4 (2000), 653–73; Wiltse, *Contested Waters*, 109–20; and Joan Jacobs Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of Girls* (New York, 1997), 97–100.

37. Jeffrey Turner, “On Boyhood and Public Swimming; Sidney Kingsley’s

Dead End and Representations of Underclass Street Kids in American Cultural Production,” in *The American Child: A Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. Caroline F. Levander and Carol J. Singley (New Brunswick, N.J.), 210.

38. Nettie Pauline McGill and Ellen Nathalie Matthews, *The Youth of New York City* (New York, 1940), 228–29. In Italian immigrant communities, the resistance of mothers to the Americanization of menstrual habits may have been a contributing factor; see Brumberg, *Body Project*, 44–45.

Swimmers	Total	Under 18 years	18 to 20 years	21 to 24 years
Men	24.8%	27.8%	26.3%	21.5%
Women	17.0%	22.0%	17.9%	13.5%

4, 246 men and 4, 639 women were interviewed.

39. See McGill and Matthews, *The Youth of New York City*, 223, 225, 228–29; and Reed, *Leisure Time of Girls*, 31, 52.

40. “17,000 Bathers Use 30 Pools in City Daily,” *St. Louis Star*, 20 July 1931, newspaper clipping in Tin Room files, St. Louis Public Library.

41. Directed by the playwright Sidney Kingsley and designed by Norman Bel Geddes, the opening scene of *Dead End* showed working-class boys in tattered clothes playing at the edge of a wharf in the East River—that is, in water known to be full of sewage. Turner, “On Boyhood and Public Swimming,” 214.

42. Detectives closed the club after neighbors complained about noise. “13 Children Seized in Raid on Shack,” *New York Times*, 20 Jan. 1932, 10. For river swimming, see David Nasaw, *Children of the City: At Work and at Play* (Garden City, N.Y., 1985), 17, 35; and Robert Anthony Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880–1950* (New Haven, 1985), 41.

43. Mark A. McCloskey, “For City Children at Play, Variety Is the Spice of Life,” *New York Times*, sec. 2, 9 Apr. 1939, 8. See also Lindenmeyer, *Greatest Generation Grows Up*, 189 (see n. 4).

44. New York City Dept. of Parks, *Six Years of Park Progress*, 21 (see n. 2). In 1939 *Architectural Record* emphasized the importance of water treatment to public health, reporting the dramatic decrease in the national death rate from typhoid fever (35.8 per 100,000 in 1900; 2.1 per 100,000 in 1937) was due to cleaner water. See “Trends in Sanitation,” *Architectural Record* 86, no. 5 (1939), 65. For overviews, see Nancy Tomes, *The Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998); and Alan M. Kraut, *Silent Travelers: Germs, Genes, and the ‘Immigrant Menace’* (Baltimore, Md., 1994).

45. “23 Bathing Pools Planned by Moses,” *New York Times*, 23 July 1934, 17; and Robert Moses, “Press Release: Public Swimming Facilities in New York City, July 23, 1934,” New York City Dept. of Parks, in the Parks Library at the Arsenal, Central Park, New York City.

46. For the model design, see figure C-2 in Ballon and Jackson, *Robert Moses and the Modern City* (see n. 5). The department received many requests for information about pool design and construction. The New York Municipal Archive (box 102,436, folders 013–014) includes letters of inquiry written in 1939 by city officials in Rutherford, N.J.; Cleveland, Ohio; Stamford, Conn.; Houston, Tex.; and Verdun, Quebec (Canada).

47. These points are discussed in detail in Gutman, “Equipping the Public Realm” (see n. 5). See also “Pattern for Parks,” 490–510 (see n. 6).

48. “Mayor Dedicates Big Harlem Pool,” *New York Times*, sec. 2, 28 June 1936, 1–2; New York City Dept. of Parks, “Press Release: Thomas Jefferson Swimming Pool,” 25 June 1936, in the Parks Library at the Arsenal, Central Park, New York City. For a detailed history of Thomas Jefferson Pool, see Gutman’s discussion in Ballon and Jackson, *Robert Moses and the Modern City*, 78, 80, 81, 139–40.

49. For the designation "Little Italy," see "Another Cosmopolitan Colony Has Planted Itself in Eastern Harlem: New York's New East Side," *New York Times Magazine*, pt. 3 (9 Oct. 1904), 8; and G. Tuoti, "Italian Colonies and their Growth," *New York Times Magazine*, pt. 7 (25 Apr. 1909), 3.
50. Covello, "A High School and Its Immigrant Community," 332–33 (see n. 31); WPA Federal Writers' Project, *The Italians of New York* (New York, 1938); and WPA Federal Writers' Project, *The WPA Guide to New York City: The Federal Writers' Guide to 1930s New York* (New York, 1982), 269. Also see Robert Anthony Orsi, "The Religious Boundaries of an Inbetween People: Street Feste and the Problem of the Dark-Skinned Other in Italian Harlem, 1920–1990," *American Quarterly* 44, no. 3 (1992), 323; Schneider, *Vampires, Dragons, and Egyptian Kings*, 94–96 (see n. 21); Francesco Cordasco and Rocco G. Galatioto, "Ethnic Displacement in the Interstitial Community: The East Harlem Experience," *Phylon* 31, no. 3 (1970), 302–12; and Ronald H. Bayor, "The Neighborhood Invasion Pattern," in *Neighborhoods in Urban America*, ed. Bayor (Port Washington, N.Y., 1982), 86–102.
51. Orsi, "Religious Boundaries of an Inbetween People," 318, 323; and Orsi, *Madonna of 115th Street*. For ethnic and racial diversity in Harlem, see Greenberg, "Or Does It Explode?" 14–18 (see n. 16); Gilbert Osofsky, *Harlem: The Making of a Ghetto, Negro New York 1890–1930*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1971), 127–35; and McKay, *Harlem* (see n. 31).
52. Orsi, *Madonna of 115th Street*, 17.
53. Caro, *Power Broker*, 514, 1207 (see n. 14).
54. The city also owned a recreation pier at East 112th Street. "Thomas Jefferson Park," *New York Times*, 12 July 1902, 14; "Jefferson Park Opens with a Field Day," *New York Times*, 8 Oct. 1905, 6; Iannacone, "Open Space for the Underclass," 155–58 (see n. 22); and Warsh, "'The Truest Reform Work,'" 98–100 (see n. 22).
55. Covello, "A High School and Its Immigrant Community," 337. Also see Orsi, *Madonna of 115th Street*, 42–43; and Hanmer, *Public Recreation*, 168–69 (see n. 31).
56. Reed, *Leisure Time of Girls*, 31 (see n. 31). The Boys Club of New York, founded to aid children on the Lower East Side, opened an East Harlem branch in 1927. The club was one of several social service agencies in East Harlem.
57. Davidson, "Federal Government and the Democratization of Public Recreational Sport," 180 (see n. 3); "Mayor Seeks Park Space for Bocce, Italian Game," *New York Times*, 16 Feb. 1934, 1; and "New York Recognizes Bocce," *New York Times Magazine*, sec. 6 (22 Apr. 1934), 22.
58. I am indebted to Abigail A. Van Slyck for helping me sharpen the argument in this paragraph. Also see Van Slyck, *A Manufactured Wilderness*, 158–59 (see n. 2); and Renner, "A Nation that Bathes Together" (see n. 25).
59. Lewis Mumford, "The Sky Line: Parks and Playgrounds—New Buildings for Old," *New Yorker* 12 (24 Oct. 1936), in *Sidewalk Critic: Lewis Mumford's Writings on New York*, ed. Robert Wojtowicz (New York, 2000), 170; and "Pattern for Parks," 507 (see n. 6).
60. "Mayor Dedicates Big Harlem Pool" (see n. 48); and New York City Dept. of Parks, "Press Release: Thomas Jefferson Swimming Pool" (see n. 48).
61. See the mechanical drawings of Jefferson Park Pool, ME 47-400 PL, 15 July 1935; ME 47-404PL, 13 Mar. 1936, Map Room, Olmsted Center, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, New York.
62. The extract from the oral interview is courtesy of John Mattera, former parks librarian. The interview is located in the Parks Library at the Arsenal, Central Park, New York City. Also see John Mattera, "'Talking Turkey' with a 93-year-old Ex-Parkie," *Daily Plant* 21, no. 4532 (30 Nov. 2006), http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_newsroom/daily_plants/daily_plant_main.php?id=19989 (accessed 3 May 2007).
63. "25,000 at Opening of Harlem Pool," *New York Times*, sec. 2, 9 Aug. 1936, 6; and "New Swimming Pool Will Open Tomorrow," *New York Times*, 7 Aug. 1936, 15. Also see Davidson, "Federal Government and the Democratization of Public Recreational Sport," 181, 200; New York City Dept. of Parks, "Press Release: Colonial Swimming Pool," 7 Aug. 1936, in Parks Library at the Arsenal, Central Park, New York City; and Gutman's discussion in Ballon and Jackson, *Robert Moses and the Modern City*, 78, 80, 82, 83, 153–54 (see n. 5).
64. See Hanmer, *Public Recreation*, 170; Moses, "Press Release: Public Swimming Facilities in New York City," 3 (see n. 45); Bromley, "City Children to Have New Play Fields" (see n. 24); and sources cited above, n. 31.
65. Greenberg, "Or Does It Explode?" (see n. 16); Badger, *The New Deal*, 205 (see n. 3); and Fogelson and Rubenstein, *Complete Report of Mayor LaGuardia's Commission on the Harlem Riot* (see n. 16). See also Davidson, "Federal Government and the Democratization of Public Recreational Sport," 200; Rosenzweig and Blackmar, *The Park and the People*, 461 (see n. 22); and Kenneth T. Jackson, "Robert Moses and the Planned Environment: A Re-evaluation," in *Robert Moses: Single-Minded Genius*, ed. Joann P. Krieg (Interlocken, N.Y., 1989), 26. For a fictional account, see Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (New York, 1952). For a map detailing ethnicity and race in Harlem in 1935, see Rose C. Feld, "Harlem Riot Attributed to Many Economic Ills," *New York Times*, sec. 4, 24 Mar. 1935, 11.
66. Fogelson and Rubenstein, *Complete Report of Mayor LaGuardia's Commission on the Harlem Riot*, 84, 88, 131; and Alain Locke, "Harlem: Dark Weather Vane," *Survey Graphic* 25 (Aug. 1936), 457–62, 493–95.
67. "Harlem Gets News of Big Play Centre," *New York Times*, 9 Aug. 1935, 36. The plan to build Harlem River Houses was disclosed at this meeting. Also see Greenberg, "Or Does It Explode?" 4–5, 85–86; Badger, *The New Deal*, 205; and Locke, "Harlem: Dark Weather Vane," 457–62.
68. "Children Take Part in New Park Opening," *New York Times*, 13 Aug. 1911, 8; New York City Dept. of Parks and Recreation, "Jackie Robinson Park" (Feb. 1997), http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_your_park/historical_signs.html (accessed 27 Sept. 2005); and Robert Caldwell, "Colonial Park: The Early Years" (2007; unpublished).
69. The celebrities included Bill Robinson, the tap dancer and singer; his neighbors included other musicians, among them Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington; the writer Ralph Ellison; and Walter White, Thurgood Marshall, W. E. B. Dubois, and Paul Robeson. For Sugar Hill, see Andrew Dolkart and Gretchen S. Sorin, *Touring Historic Harlem: Four Walks in Northern Manhattan* (New York, 1970), 91, 112–13; WPA Federal Writers' Project, *WPA Guide to New York City*, 265 (see n. 50); and Caldwell, "Colonial Park: The Early Years."
70. For site conditions, see "Harlem Gets News of Big Play Centre"; New York City Dept. of Parks, "Press Release: Colonial Swimming Pool"; and Francis Cormier, "Some New York City Parks and Parkways: Recreational Developments Made Since 1934," *Landscape Architecture* 29 (Apr. 1939), 133.
71. For mechanical systems, see the mechanical drawing of Colonial Park Pool, ME 14 425 PL, revised 9 July 1936 (first issued 27 May 1936), Map Room, Olmsted Center (see n. 61). The drawing shows a heater to warm water to a comfortable temperature, a different engineering solution than at Jefferson, where waste heat was captured to the same end. The New York Municipal Archive contains memos from 1938 (box 102,410, folder 072) and 1939 (box 102,438, folder 014) describing repairs to Colonial Park Pool and Bathhouse.
72. New York City Dept. of Parks, "Press Release: Colonial Swimming Pool," 1.
73. For early concerts, see Caldwell, "Colonial Park: The Early Years," 8; New York City Dept. of Parks and Recreation, *Annual Report* (New York,

1910), 22; and New York City Dept. of Parks and Recreation, *Annual Report* (New York, 1912), 54.

74. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was the first play to be performed with white actors playing leading roles in blackface (a photograph of Mayor La Guardia congratulating the actors of the portable theater was published on 15 July 1934 in the *New York Times*). In tribute to the mayor, the first dramatic performance (on the portable theater) took place at Jefferson Park where 5,000 watched the drama from 8:30 p.m. to midnight. Although restless to begin with, the audience, almost entirely Italian American and including hundreds of children, settled down, offering warm support to the lead character and loudly hissing the brutality of a slave auction. "First Park Show Attended by 5,000," *New York Times*, 6 July 1934, 15; "Park Drama Series Opens Tomorrow," *New York Times*, 4 July 1934, 18; and "Portable Theatre Sets Itinerary," *New York Times*, 9 July 1934, 18. The *Times* theater critic had little use for the play; see Ben Crisler, "A Cabin in the Park," *New York Times*, sec. 9, 5 Aug. 1934, 1.

75. Lindenmeyer, *Greatest Generation Grows Up*, 192–93 (see n. 4); and Osofsky, *Harlem*, illus. between 148–49 (see n. 51). For park concerts and orchestras, see "Concerts in Parks to Begin in June," *New York Times*, 24 May 1934, 28. For the popularity of Harlem dances, see Mildred Adams, "New York Rediscovered Summer Nights," *New York Times Magazine*, sec. 7 (28 July 1935), 13, 16; "15,000 Dance in Street," *New York Times*, 17 July 1935, 21; "Harlem Gets News of Big Play Centre"; "25,000 at Opening of Harlem Pool" (see n. 63); and "Dance in Harlem Street," *New York Times*, 12 July 1935, 8.

76. Caro, *Power Broker*, 457 (see n. 14). See David Suisman, "Co-workers in the Kingdom of Culture: Black Swan Records and Political Economy of American Music," *Journal of American History* 90 (Mar. 2004), 1295–313.

77. "Huge Rallies End La Guardia Race," *New York Times*, 4 Nov. 1941, 1; "Mayor Winds Up at 'Lucky Corner'," *New York Times*, 4 Nov. 1941, 19; and "Mayor Takes Baton at Closing Concert," *New York Times*, 30 Aug. 1940, 16.

78. Worpole, *Here Comes the Sun*, 9–24 (see n. 19).

79. Kym Ragusa, *The Skin Between Us: A Memoir of Race, Beauty, and Belonging* (New York, 2006), 19. For public buildings as sites that embody the contradictions of American democracy, see Mary P. Ryan, "'A Laudable Pride in the Whole of Us': City Halls and Civic Materialism," *American Historical Review* 105, no. 3 (2000), 1131–70.

80. Moses, *Theory and Practice in Politics*, 17–18 (see n. 13). This statement should not be viewed through rose-colored glasses: Moses explained the need to defend the civil liberties of swimmers directly after he described the way in which he eviscerated civil rights protection for fair housing at the New York State Constitutional Convention of 1938, described in the beginning of this essay.

81. Peter Eisenstadt, email correspondence with Marta Gutman, 10 Feb. 2007.

82. For Puerto Ricans swimming at Jefferson Park Pool and whites at Colonial Park Pool, see respectively Elena Martínez and Marci Reaven, "Thomas Jefferson Park Pool," in *Hidden New York: A Guide to Places That Matter*, ed. Reaven and Steve Zeitlin (New Brunswick, N.J., 2006), 102–5; and New York City Dept. of Parks and Recreation, "Oral History of Norman O. Davis," interview by John Mattera (New York, 29 Mar. 2006), located in the Parks Library at the Arsenal, Central Park, New York City.

83. This claim is based on oral history, 16 mm film footage, and photographs. For racial integration at McCarren and Highbridge pools, see New York City Dept. of Parks, "Views of New York," (New York, 1938–1949), VHS tape 4. The 16 mm footage has been transferred to videotape, located at the Parks Library at the Arsenal, Central Park, New York City. Also see Marcus, "McCarren Pool," 148 (see n. 5); Greenfield, conversation with

Gutman (see n. 21); Amanda Aronczyk and Emily Botein, "Everything About a Pool. . ." in *The Next Big Thing*, ed. Dean Olsher, New York Public Radio WNYC, 4 July 2003; and letters to the editor written in response to Kathryn Shattuck, "Come On In: It's the Big Chill of '36," *New York Times*, sec. E, 14 Aug. 2006, 1, 7.

84. For Brownsville see, Wendell Pritchett, *Brownsville, Brooklyn: Blacks, Jews, and the Changing Face of the Ghetto* (Chicago, 2002); and Elizabeth Reich Rawson, "Brownsville," in *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, ed. Kenneth T. Jackson (New Haven, 1995), 163. For the history of Betsy Head Memorial Playground and Park, see Gutman's discussion in Ballon and Jackson, *Robert Moses and the Modern City*, 80, 82, 151–52 (see n. 5).

85. New York City Dept. of Parks, *Six Years of Park Progress*, 20 (see n. 2). Also see Hanmer, *Public Recreation*, 171–73 (see n. 31).

86. Major changes were made: the old pool (50 by 150 feet) was enlarged and turned into a bigger, modern pool of Olympic size (165 by 330 feet), with up-to-date systems for recirculating, purifying, and filtering water. Lockers were removed from the bathhouse and the interior was altered to accommodate 4,660 swimmers. Other planned improvements included diving and wading pools (50 by 100 feet each), a new playground, a running track, and a soccer field; they were in construction when the pool opened on 7 Aug. 1936. New York City Dept. of Parks, "Press Release: Betsy Head Swimming Pool," 5 Aug. 1936, in the Parks Library at the Arsenal, Central Park, New York City.

87. "City Pool is Opened Without Ceremonies," *New York Times*, 8 Aug. 1936, 15.

88. Kazin, *Walker in the City*, 140–46 (see n. 31); and "Alderman Hart Fells Red Heckler in Fight with 150 Radicals at Fourth Celebration," *New York Times*, 5 July 1935, 4.

89. "City Pool is Opened Without Ceremonies."

90. "Fire in Park Building," *New York Times*, 18 Aug. 1937, 11.

91. Robert Moses, *Housing and Recreation* (New York, 1938), 2. For discussion of the pamphlet and attempted takeover of NYCHA, see Caro, *Power Broker*, 610–12 (see n. 14); and Kessner, *Fiorello H. La Guardia*, 451–53 (see n. 3).

92. Moses, as cited in Pritchett, *Brownsville, Brooklyn*, 57, 58. See also Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Type and Social Change in the Metropolis* (New York, 1990), 262–63, 272–73; and Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space: Crime Prevention through Urban Design* (New York, 1972).

93. Pritchett, *Brownsville, Brooklyn*, 92; "City Play Center for All-Year Use," *Architectural Record* 90 (Sept. 1941), 84–87; Christopher Legree, informal conversation with Marta Gutman, Brooklyn, N.Y., 28 May 2005; New York City Dept. of Parks, "Views of New York," VHS tape 4 (see n. 82). The Gottscho photographs are on file in the Library of Congress and available online through the American Memory collection (Architecture and Interior Design for 20th Century America, Photographs by Samuel Gottscho and William Schleisner, 1935–1955), <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/gottscho/>.

94. Pritchett, *Brownsville, Brooklyn*, 91–97.

95. Maniscalco remembered the underground service tunnel around the pool to have been "a good place for lovemaking during a short break." It also offered him a convenient escape route from "local toughs," and he would bring a sleeping bag and stay overnight, if he needed to "avoid trouble." Chatanow and Schwartz, *Another Time, Another Place*, 192–94 (see n. 31). See also Lindenmeyer, *Greatest Generation Grows Up*, 194–98 (see n. 4).

96. Pritchett, *Brownsville, Brooklyn*, 95–96. In this pre-Title 9 period, the parks department sponsored team sports for girls at Betsy Head Park when public high schools routinely refused to do so. Ford, *The Girls*, 69–70 (see n. 31).

97. Other accounts of the pools describe patterns of social separation. Orsi underscores this point in his analysis of East Harlem, as does Robert Greenfield, who swam in Highbridge Park Pool as a child in the 1950s. The photograph of a group of black boys sunning on the pool deck in Brownsville is reminiscent of social groups Greenfield remembers at Highbridge Pool during his childhood, when it was used by Irish American children like himself, Puerto Ricans, and blacks. They were not nearly as friendly with each other as the Gottscho photographs suggest the children at Betsy Head Park Pool to be. Greenfield, conversation with Gutman (see n. 21); Orsi, "Religious Boundaries of an Inbetween People," 335–40 (see n. 50); and for comparison, see Zukin, "From Coney Island to Las Vegas," 642 (see n. 35).

98. Robert Moses to Martin H. Barad, 1938, folder 038, roll 17, Municipal Archive of New York. My thanks to Timothy Mennel for forwarding the reference. Peter Eisenstadt told me Moses also protested discrimination against an African American quartet that won a parks department competition. See "Negro Singers Out, Smith, Moses Quit," *New York Times*, 3 July 1941, 21.

99. Caro, *Power Broker*, 514.

100. See primary sources cited above, n. 82.

101. For racial segregation in public bathing places in St. Louis during the Progressive Era, see Miller, "Politics of Public Bathing," 19 (see n. 26); and Wiltse, *Contested Waters*, 79–86 (see n. 9). The other WPA pool was in Clayton, Mo. See Terry Dickson, *Clayton: A History* (St. Louis, 1976), 209–13.

102. Marianna Riley, "Plan to Improve Swimming Pool Concerns Maplewood Resident," *St. Louis-Post Dispatch*, West Post sec., 11 Nov. 1999, 1. Also see Marianna Riley, "Work on New Swimming Pool Stirs Memories in Maplewood," *St. Louis-Post Dispatch*, West Post sec., 23 Aug. 2001, 1.

103. Cited in Jamie Schmidt, email message to Marta Gutman, 5 Feb. 2007.

104. "Tandy Negro Center Ceremonies Today," *St. Louis-Dispatch*, 15 May 1938, newspaper clipping in Tin Room files, St. Louis Public Library; and as described in Schmidt, email to Gutman.

105. For allocation of WPA funds, see discussion in "\$173,000 W.P.A. Grant for Work in Parks," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 19 Apr. 1939, newspaper clipping in Tin Room files, St. Louis Public Library; W. C. Murphy, Report of Secretary," in *Annual Report of the Division of Parks and Recreation* (St. Louis, 1938), 19; and George D. Reichert, "Report of the Superintendent of Construction," in *Annual Report of the Division of Parks and Recreation* (St. Louis, 1938), 14–18. Other clippings in the St. Louis Public Library Tin Room files, "WPA Projects" and "Swimming Pools," indicate that problems with water contamination persisted in city pools through the mid-1950s.

106. For racial integration at Marquette but not Fairgrounds Park, see Victoria W. Wolcott, "Swimming Pools and Racial Conflict in Postwar America," presented at *12th National Conference of the Society for the History of American City and Regional Planning History* (Portland, Maine, 2007). The numbers estimated to have been involved in the Fairgrounds Park riot vary, from 3 to 40 black kids to 150 to 200 white teenagers. Heathcott, "Black Archipelago," 726–27 (see n. 35); and Wiltse, *Contested Waters*, 166–77. A federal court decision bolstered the attempt to integrate; in the summer of 1949 Judge W. Calvin Chestnut ruled that barring blacks from public golf courses in Baltimore violated the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. See "The Fairgrounds Park Riot," <http://tlc.umsl.edu/dighistory/play-fairground.cfm> (accessed 21 Feb. 2007).

107. "Race Riot in St. Louis," *Life* 27 (4 July 1949), 30, 31. For local coverage, see "Race Quarrels," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 22 June 1949; "The Swimming Pools," *St. Louis Argus*, 25 June 1949; and "Pools and Playgrounds Opened to Both Races," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, June 22, 1949 (posted online in "The Fairgrounds Park Riot"). See also "Darst Abolishes Segregation at Two City Pools," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 15 Apr. 1950; "U.S. Judge Orders City to Open All Open-Air Swim Pools to Negroes," *St. Louis*

Post-Dispatch, 17 July 1950; and other articles in the Missouri Historical Society newspaper clipping file. Webster Groves closed its public pool to avoid desegregation; others were turned into private clubs. See "Webster to Keep Pool Closed rather Than Admit Negroes," *Star-Times*, 8 Feb. 1957; and "County Swimming Pools Private Clubs," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 10 July 1964, in Missouri Historical Society newspaper clipping file.

108. Heathcott, "Black Archipelago," 727. See also Wiltse, *Contested Waters*, 178–79; George Schermer, "Report on the Fairgrounds Park Incident, 1949," manuscript, Margaret and Irvin Dagen History of St. Louis CORE Collection, 1941–2000, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri-St. Louis and State Historical Society of Missouri, box 1, folder 3; Miscellaneous clippings and correspondence, 1950, "League of Women Voters St. Louis Chapter, Segregation in St. Louis Playgrounds and Swimming Pools," Western Historical Manuscript Collection, box 56, folder 743.

109. At the March 2007 Moses symposium held at the Queens Museum, Columbia University, and The Museum of the City of New York, it was pointed out that *Can Our Cities Survive* is illustrated with a dramatic aerial photograph of a piece of the Moses-made landscape—the Triborough Bridge, Randall's Island, and Jefferson Park Pool. The image highlighted the differences between the old and new, modern city. The emphasis on American solutions is extraordinary for a book with the subtitle: "An ABC of urban problems, their analysis, their solutions; based on the proposals formulated by the C.I.A.M., International Congresses for Modern Architecture, Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne." José Luis Sert, *Can Our Cities Survive? An ABC of Urban Problems, Their Analysis, Their Solutions* (Cambridge, Mass., 1942).

110. The value of long-term investment in physical infrastructure is emphasized in Leighninger, *Long-Range Public Investment* (see n. 4); and Taylor, *American-Made* (see n. 4).

111. Wolcott, "Swimming Pools and Racial Conflict in Postwar America," notes that the records of the NAACP include many allegations of race bias at New York City pools.

112. For Highbridge Park Pool, see Schneider, *Vampires, Dragons, and Egyptian Kings*, 23, 79, 81 (see n. 21); Greenfield, conversation with Gutman (see n. 21); Robert Snyder, "The Death of Michael Farmer: Murder, Media, and Community in Fifties New York" (2007, unpublished); and Snyder, "The Neighborhood Changed: The Irish of Washington Heights and Inwood Since 1945," in *The New York Irish*, ed. Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher (Baltimore, 1996), 339–60. For McCarren Park Pool, see Benjamin Luke Marcus, "Last One In: Community, Conflict, and the Preservation of McCarren Park Pool" (master's thesis, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Columbia University, 2006), 76–82; and Aronczyk and Botein, "Everything About a Pool . . ." (see n. 83). For Jefferson Park Pool, see Torres, *Carlito's Way*, 4–6 (see n. 21); and Martínez and Reaven, "Thomas Jefferson Park Pool," 102–5 (see n. 82).

113. Torres, *Carlito's Way*, 4–6.

114. Cited in Martínez and Reaven, "Thomas Jefferson Park Pool," 104.

115. Peter Eisenstadt, "Rochdale Village and the Rise and Fall of Integrated Housing in New York City," (2005, unpublished); and the discussion in Eisenstadt's unpublished book manuscript, "Rochdale Village: Robert Moses, 6,000 Families, and New York City's Great Experiment in Integrated Housing."

116. At the March 2007 Moses symposium in New York City, Jameson Doig made a similar point about personality. See also Biondi, "Robert Moses, Race, and the Limits of an Activist State," 117 (see n. 13).

117. For a contemporary comparison, see Javier C. Hernandez, "At Busy South Bronx Pool, an Unlikely Team Keeps the Peace," *New York Times*, sec. 2, July 21, 2008, B1, B2.

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Figure 3. Thomas Kempland Collection; photograph by J. R. Eike

Figure 4. Photo originally from the Balch Institute Collections, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Leonard Covello Papers, Philadelphia; rpt. in Robert Anthony Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880–1950* (New Haven, 1985), 41

Figures 5–7, 9, 11–14. Courtesy of New York City Department of Parks and Recreation: Fig. 5, 8298_M47_6-26-1936; Fig. 6, 8212_M47_6-21-1936; Fig. 7, 8434_M47_7-1-1936; Fig. 9, ME-47 404PL; Fig. 11, 2703_5-13-1936; Fig. 12, 11354_4_15_1937; Fig. 13, 12084_Colonial Park_7-15-1937; Fig. 14, 12480_Colonial Park_8-16-1937

Figure 8. Mireille Moga, based on a plan published in *American Architect and Architecture* 149 (Nov. 1936), 26

Figures 10, 16. Marta Gutman

Figure 15. Bernard Hoffman, *Architectural Forum* 65 no. 6 (1936), 490

Figure 17. Mireille Moga, based on a plan published in *Architectural Record*, 90 (Sept. 1941), 84

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Figure 23. Gerald Chatanow and Bernard D. Schwartz, *Another Time, Another Place: A Neighborhood Remembered* (New York, 2000), 280; courtesy of Gerald Chatanow

Figure 24. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, West Post sec., 23 Aug. 2001, 1

Figure 25. St. Louis Globe-Democrat Archives, St. Louis Mercantile Library, University of Missouri-St. Louis