NO LITTLE PLANS: MAKING AND BREAKING

THE 1992 CHICAGO WORLD'S FAIR

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation analyzes the failed 1992 Chicago World's Fair through several lenses in order to explore four separate but connected processes: planning and designing a large urban fair, protesting that fair, and creating an archive. In doing so, I highlight the fact that all events are historically contingent, undermining the idea that events are the result of inexorable historical processes. The case of the 1992 Chicago Fair provides an opportunity to glimpse a historical process suspended in time: there is not a satisfying conclusion to a fair that didn't happen, but there are both memories and a sizable archive.

The planning and design chapters focus on how the fair planners made decisions, and on how they worked both with and against city and state governments as well as the Bureau of International Expositions. Using newspapers and documents culled from several archives as well as the official depository for fair materials, the Chicago History Museum, this narrative reveals the many missteps of the fair planners, and points to several specific factors that contributed to the fair's failure. The protest chapter adds to the growing analysis of protest movements in the 1980s, and situates the protestors' strategies in the social and political contexts of Chicago. The last chapter looks at the archive of the archivist. Archivist Evelyn Wilbanks' personal papers regarding the fair are also housed at the Chicago History Museum, and reading them leads to an investigation of the place of the archivist in the production of history.

INTRODUCTION

The Chicago 1992 World's Fair didn't happen.

There have been, however, over 100 large world's fairs (as these international expositions are usually called in the United States) that have happened since the London Crystal Palace Exposition in 1851, and many more minor ones.[1] Each of these large fairs has been studied (some more than others), and professional and amateur historians and cultural critics have produced seemingly countless books, articles, and monographs about them. From these texts, one can glean the many things that a world's fair is: a celebration to which the whole world is invited, a showcase for cutting edge technologies and art, a venue in which to re-affirm national values, a money-making scheme for the host city. The Bureau of International Expositions (BIE) doesn't define what a fair *is* as much as it describes what a fair *does*.

> An Expo is a global event that aims at educating the public, promoting progress and fostering cooperation. It is the world's largest meeting place, bringing together countries, the private sector, the civil society and the general public around interactive exhibitions, live shows, workshops, conferences, and much more.[2]

BIE General Director Vicente Gonzalez Loscertales adds to the BIE's definition that, "[a]t its most successful, an expo projects a vision for the future of mankind." The choice of theme must

> be of global interest…be a major issue for the future of civilization, be a top priority for national governments and on the policy agendas of key international organization…be future-oriented and project a powerful fascination for exchange, dialogue and cooperation…[and] should relate to

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[1] John E. Findling and Kimberly D. Pelle, *Encyclopedia of World's Fairs and Expositions, (*Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc.), 2008.
[2] "What is an Expo?" *www.bie-paris.org.*

> citizens in the daily lives and their most vital concerns…[It] is exercise in global diplomacy.[3]

The purpose of a fair, then, is very broad.

After a boom in fair planning in the late nineteenth century, (there were 29 large Expositions from 1880-1900), and as part of the trend after World War I towards international organizations like the League of Nations, the BIE was created in 1928 to govern the frequency and quality of international expositions. Historical fairs (which I am defining as fairs held before 1990) can be divided into three general categories: European colonial fairs; the twentieth century European fairs; and American fairs.

Nineteenth and twentieth century European colonial fairs were most often designed to uplift and civilize the colonies. Great Britain hosted fairs in Canada, Australia, Scotland, New Zealand, India, South Africa, and Jamaica, while France hosted fairs in Saigon, Hanoi, and Algeria. Fairs in imperial centers included exhibits of those colonies' products and industries designed to emphasize their importance to the empire. At the same time, exhibits and displays of colonized cultures affirmed the imperial nation's cultural and racial superiority.[4]

The first American fair was in Philadelphia in 1876, in celebration of the American centennial. As the first large US fair held after the tumult of the Civil War, it set the standard for the rest of the American fairs of the nineteenth century. An act of Congress mandated that the Smithsonian Institution be involved in the exhibition (the relationship was tied to a loan), and that relationship shaped American fairs for the next

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[3] Vincente Loscertales, introduction to *Encyclopedia of World's Fairs and Expositions,* eds. Findling and Pelle (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2008), 2.
[4] See, for example: Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel, and Eric Deroo, eds., *Human Zoos: Science and Spectacle in the Age of Colonial Empires*, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009).

four decades.[5] Following the success of Philadelphia – the fair turned a profit – US cities hosted large and small fairs. Unlike their European counterparts, fairs in the United States were commemorative, celebrating centennials of significant moments in the relatively young nation's past. Also unlike European fairs, American fairs were public-private affairs whose exhibits were often sponsored by corporations.

The public-private nature of American fairs complicated the planning process, because each corporation had an interest in advertising and making a profit. The competing desires of corporations and local and national governments have shaped American fairs in several ways, perhaps most significantly in the way those desires complicate funding such large events. The twentieth century fairs frequently sparked controversy among fair planners, local governments, and citizens, who all had different opinions about how to raise and allocate funds for fair infrastructure and capital improvements.

Additionally, American fairs tend to be more conservative in design. While all fairs and expos showcase art, architecture, and technology, American corporations concerned with profits are less likely to take risks that might alienate the ticket-buying public. Lastly, historical American fairs tend to have more entertainment than their European, Asian, or Latin American counterparts. Reconstructed festivals, concerts, performances, amusements, and restaurants make far more money than exhibits about, say, farm equipment, food production, or manufacturing. Although European fairs incorporated more entertaining options for their visitors after the success of the Midway

[5] Robert Rydell, *The Book of the Fairs: Materials About World's Fairs, 1834-1916, in the Smithsonian Institution Libraries,* (Washington, D.C.: American Library Association, March 1992).

Plaisance at 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, American fair planners remain experts at providing amusing diversions. It is no accident that, in the rest of the world, the events are called expositions or exhibitions: the word implies well organized educational displays. American fairs are designed as trade fairs, where products are sold, and for fun.

There were fifteen American fairs before World War I: Atlanta 1881, Boston 1883, Louisville 1883-1887, New Orleans 1884-1885, Chicago 1893, San Francisco 1894, Atlanta 1895, Omaha 1898, Buffalo 1901, Charleston 1901-1902, St. Louis 1904, Portland 1905, Seattle 1909, San Francisco 1915, and San Diego 1915-1916. In general, these fairs sought to demonstrate American superiority in industry and culture, and white superiority in an increasingly global world. The largest imperialist American fairs – Chicago 1893 and St. Louis 1904 – included exhibits of "primitive" people from far flung places like the Dahomey Empire in Africa and the Philippines alongside Native Americans. The fairs of the twentieth century, especially the 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition in San Francisco, re-affirmed American progress and colonial aspirations in Latin America and the Philippines.

The United States' interwar and depression-era fairs (Chicago 1933-1934, San Diego 1935-1936, New York 1939-1940, and San Francisco 1939-1940) were markedly different in approach and style. These fairs presented utopian futures, "beacons of light and hope in a world mired in grim economic news and sad tidings of wars already underway and about to come."[6] In contrast to previous fairs, whose aesthetics often

[6] Robert Rydell, introduction to *Designing Tomorrow: America's Fairs of the 1930s,* ed. Robert Rydell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 1.

mimicked older styles, these fairs embraced modernity in all its forms.[7] Ideologically, the interwar fairs were distinctly American; as the rest of the world – and much of the United States – witnessed the rise of the anti-capitalist left, these fairs showed visitors how to be comfortable with mass manufactured goods and taught them to regard those goods and the large corporations that produced them as beneficial to modern society.[8] Furthermore, the design and production of goods was linked to the design and production of people: these fair planners envisioned a future shaped by eugenics. The World of Tomorrow presented the "ultimate expression of new corporate modernity for mass consumption – the Modern made simple, marvelous, and total."[9]

Cold War American fairs include Seattle 1962, New York 1964-1965, San Antonio 1968, Spokane 1974, Knoxville 1982, and New Orleans 1984. Montreal's Expo 1967 was also attended by many Americans, and several of the planners of the 1992 Chicago World's Fair remembered their visits fondly. Except for the New York fair, which was not officially sanctioned by the BIE, American fairs were smaller in scale than their predecessors. The largest fairs of the era were on European soil, and the United States planned and participated in dozens of small fairs and exhibitions throughout the European continent and in the Soviet Union. In *Cold War Confrontations: US Exhibitions and Their Role in the Cultural Cold War*, former United States Information Agency (USIA) director of design Jack Masey argues that Cold War fairs "provided key

[7] According to architect Louis Sullivan – the Chicagoan who invented the skyscraper – Chicago's classical White City set American architecture back more than a decade.
[8] Lisa D. Schrenk. "Industry Applies: Corporate Marketing at A Century of Progress" in *Designing Tomorrow Designing Tomorrow: America's Fairs of the 1930s,* ed. Robert Rydell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).
[9] Terry Smith quoted in Bennett, "Pop Goes the Future: Cultural Representations of the 1939-1940 New York World's Fair." in *Designing Tomorrow Designing Tomorrow: America's Fairs of the 1930s,* ed. Robert Rydell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

opportunities for confrontation between the Free West and the Communist East…[These events] created a formal stage for ideological disputes…"[10] American exhibits at these fairs were designed to display economic and cultural superiority. Perhaps epitomized by the Nixon/Khrushchev kitchen debate at the American National Exhibition at Sokolniki Park in Moscow in 1959, the Marshall Plan, in addition to promoting economic recovery, "had a cultural component…[and] Marshall Planners functioned as evangelists on behalf of the American way of life. Their mission was to make Western Europe resemble the United States," and they utilized every form of propaganda to do so.[11]

The US withdrew its membership from the BIE in 2001 after several fair flops and non-payment of dues. Most recently, the 1984 Louisiana World Exposition in New Orleans declared bankruptcy even before it closed; it, along with the financial troubles of the Knoxville 1982 fair and Chicago's failure to get a fair off the ground, confirmed to the American government that fairs were a bad investment. However, there is an active community in the United States to reinstate that membership (yearly dues are around $100,000), and US cities continue to plan for future fairs. Minneapolis, Miami, Houston, and Los Angeles all have active campaigns to garner support for future fairs, and architects, urban planners, and boosters continue to see World's Fairs as vehicles to change the social landscape. Seville, Taejon, Lisbon, Hanover, Aichi, Zaragoza, Shanghai, and Milan hosted fairs in the 1990s and early 2000s. Astana, Kazakhstan will host an energy-themes fair in 2017, and Dubai will host the next universal class expo in

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[10] Jack Masey and Conway Lloyd Morgan. *Cold War Confrontations: US Exhibitions and Their Cultural Role in the Cold War*, (Lars Muller Publishers, 2008), 6.
[11] Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated and Transformed American Culture Since World War II*, (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 54-55.

2020. In this country, it is easy to think that fairs no longer exist, but fairs and expositions were a regular fixture in American cultures through the 1980s, and remain important international events in the twenty-first century.

There is more than one way to 'read' a fair, and the historiography of fair scholarship echoes the larger movements in history and cultural studies. More recent scholarship about fairs explores their role in nation-building, winning support for imperial policies, and for shaping the way visitors thought about the dynamics of race, class, and gender. Printed primary materials about fairs fall into eight categories: government reports, management reports and publications, architectural drawings, exhibition catalogues and visitors' guides, commemorative publications, promotional materials, transcripts of lectures and presentations, and personal reminiscences. Contemporary scholars also read physical spaces and objects to understand how the fairs functioned as symbols of progress and modernity. There are several good encyclopedias about fairs; the most recent, and the one referenced in this dissertation, is *Encyclopedia of World's Fairs and Expositions*, published in 2008 and edited by John E. Findling and Kimberly Pelle. This text provides academic overviews of over 100 fairs from 1851 to 2010, and includes an expansive bibliography on each.

There are surprisingly few comprehensive histories of fairs, and many of them are inspired by nostalgia rather than analysis and are little more than well-illustrated narratives. Kenneth Luckhurst's 1951 *The Story of Exhibitions*, for example, seeks to capture for the general reader "something of the romance of exhibitions." Thus Robert Rydell, in his thorough summary of the Smithsonian's holdings about fairs and

historiography, notes that many early fair histories "lacked perspective and tended to gloss over problems…and are best regarded as primary rather than secondary sources."[12]

After World War II, scholars began to regard fairs with a more critical eye. Historian Merle Curti first proposed that "increasing American participation in world fairs reflected the expansion of American patriotism and enterprise" in his influential 1950 essay, "America at the World Fairs, 1851-1893." He argued that fairs in the latter half of the nineteenth century "provided a measuring rod for the relative status of American European technology," and "provided a mirror for the changing attitudes of the rest of the world toward American civilization."[13] Curti's thesis remains germane, if superficial and distinctly of its time, and provides a springboard for later twentieth century fair scholarship that investigates America's changing relationship with the world. General studies of fairs as well as monographs tend to look at single fairs or groups of fairs to investigate a particular aspect of culture: race, for example, or technology. World fairs provide a unique opportunity to study the intersections of ideas just as American Studies seeks to provide an opportunity to study culture with intersecting lenses. Indeed, nearly all scholarly studies of fairs produced in the second half of the twentieth century were influenced by the burgeoning field of American Studies.

The first American Studies scholars conceived of a grand American narrative, composed of, according to Henry Nash Smith in 1957, "a collaboration among men working from within existing academic disciplines but attempting to widen the

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[12] Rydell, *Book of the Fairs*.
[13] Merle Curti, "America at the World Fairs, 1851-1893," *The American Historical Review* 55 no 4 (July, 1950): 833-856.

boundaries imposed by empirical methods of inquiry."[14] Their laudable goal was to study American culture (which Nash Smith defined as, "the way in which subjective experience is organized"[15]) from an interdisciplinary perspective. Academics like Nash Smith found the methodologies of history, literary analysis, or the social sciences restrictive, and rightly so. Each discipline uses its own vocabulary that determines how one sees the world. For example, the sciences require a non-participant observer that can formulate an "objective" view, while the literary critic is often confined to the text at hand and the parcel of accompanying classic theoretical texts. Each discipline uses a particular language to create a narrative that purports to be true, but such narratives, restricted as they are by disciplinary methods, are incomplete. Thus, American Studies scholars used languages of multiple disciplines to create a fuller understanding of the world around them. They did, however, have their own blind spots: at a time of larger political uncertainty, these men attempted to form a cohesive, mythic narrative of America.

The inter-war and post-World War II generations of American Studies scholars' desire for a national myth was, however, exclusionary. Curti's ideological standpoint is entirely in line with the exceptionalist thinking of American historians of his generation. He concludes:

> the final upshot [of America's success at European World's Fairs] was a victory for those who maintained that it was no longer sufficient for America to meet foreign criticism by verbal defenses, that it was no longer

[14] Henry Nash Smith, "Can American studies develop a method" in *Locating American Studies: The Evolution of a Discipline*, ed. Lucy Maddox (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 1-12.
[15] Ibid.

> enough just to sit back and watch, but that now the time had come actively to advertise American power and greatness to the world.[16]

His conclusion participates in placing America in a narrative of progress. Just as he argues that America's new place as a global leader in technology and education was mirrored at the great nineteenth century fairs, his argument mirrors the mid-twentieth century's obsession with American superiority.

Fair scholars and leaders in American Studies enmeshed in the cultural changes of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s sought to break down the myth-symbol school. Alan Trachtenberg, in *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*, re-framed the 1893 fair with an eye to "ironic scrutiny," looking at what the fair "fails to say" and "what it keeps hidden."[17] He argued that the spectacle of the fair was the "authority of the state on display."[18] One year later, in 1984, Robert Rydell posited that American fairs from 1876 to 1916 contributed to an "ideological process" spearheaded by intellectual, business, and political leaders to establish "their vision of progress as racial dominance and economic growth."[19] In *Culture as History* (1985), Walter Susman argued that fairs in the 1920s and 1930s "can be understood as an effort to resolve the cultural contradictions in consumer capitalism."[20] In the 1990s, James Gilbert focused his scholarship on images of utopia (in *Perfect Cities: Chicago's Utopias of 1893*) and has delved into archives to discover how fairgoers created meanings at the 1904 St. Louis

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[16] Curti, 833.
[17] Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*, (New York: Hall and Wang, 1982), 209.
[18] Ibid., 231.
[19] Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).
[20] Walter Susman, Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the 20th Century, (Washington D. C.: Smithsonian Books, 1985):

Exposition (in *Whose Fair? Experience, Memory, and the History of the Great St. Louis Exposition*). In the twenty-first century, historians of art, culture, government, race, gender, and science and technology, have provided lenses through which to view historical fairs. Those lenses can clarify cultural moments that emerge from an awareness of multiple, and previously unheard or unrecognized, narratives.

In addition to the ample material culture produced by world fairs – souvenirs generated by them have found their way all over the world – the themes and ideas presented at the fairs have a lasting influence on our shared culture. Visitors in 1893 saw a belly dancer , sometimes called Little Egypt, perform the hootchie kootchie; fairgoers to St. Louis enjoyed their first ice cream cones in 1904; and people saw a new world driven by automobiles at General Motor's exhibit Futurama in 1939 in New York. The conferences that inevitably accompany fairs have provided venues for philosophers, politicians, scientists, religious leaders, and artists to showcase new ideas.

But the way that most people directly experience past fairs in their daily lives is through the imprint fairs have left on the environments of their host cities. The Eiffel Tower was constructed for the Paris Exposition Universelle Internationale in 1889, and remains a symbol of the city. San Francisco now has the Palace of Fine Arts, Brussels has the Atominium, Seattle has the Space Needle, and Montreal (like many other host cities) has large public parks.

In Chicago, historically significant places are popular tourist attractions, and the history of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and 1933 Century of Progress loom large in the city's collective identity. Two of the four stars on the city's flag

commemorate them (the other two are for the Battle of Fort Dearborn and the Great Fire of 1871). The city flag is displayed more prominently than in many other American cities, and is reproduced on every available tchotchke. Physical spaces represented by the stars are clearly marked as tourist attractions and are listed in guidebooks and pamphlets. Fort Dearborn once stood on the Chicago River on the current site of the south side of the DuSable Bridge (the Michigan Avenue Bridge); there are plaques and a relief sculpture commemorating the battle, and the old tender house is now a museum. There is a plaque outside of the Chicago Firefighter's School, which stands on the place where Mrs. O'Leary's barn, home of the cow that allegedly started the Great Fire, once stood. One can walk the street past the University of Chicago that served as the Midway Plaisance for the 1893 fair and which is now a parkway that ends at Jackson Park and the Museum of Science and Industry. It is the only major building from the White City that survives.

Walking through the city, one finds that its history is embedded in its streets and structures. The landscape is a living archive, and with each step, locals and visitors alike retread the stories told by the buildings and signs. A particular historical narrative is normalized in commemorative public spaces; therefore, the landscaped archive maintains a status quo.

Landscapes – whether manmade or natural – are often unacknowledged parts of daily life. Pierce Lewis, in "The Monument and the Bungalow," posits that people can learn to read landscapes in the way that they can learn to read texts. He, like many others who study landscape, draws from the work of J.B. Jackson, who argues that the ordinary landscape is "a document that tells a story…about the people who created the landscape

and the cultural context in which that landscape was embedded."[21] In other words, "landscape is history made visible."[22]

In his essay describing the axiomatic fundamentals of reading landscapes, Lewis expands on the idea that urban landscapes should be read in their entirety. While cities are recognized for their most "important" buildings (for example, the Sears Tower or John Hancock Center in Chicago), and those "important" buildings are well-studied, Lewis argues that the gas station across the street or architecturally insignificant building next door are equally important.[23] Lewis' assertion that architects' and city planners' "grand schemes" alienate average people foreshadows the enmity between Chicago's important architect (Bruce Graham) and the people who occupied the places he wanted to "improve." Separating the "important" building from the "less important" buildings and spaces, Lewis argues, implies that "important" places are historical, while everyplace else is outside of history.[24]

Don Mitchell, in his re-assessment of Lewis' landscape axioms, asserts that landscapes are ideological: a landscape is "a repository of memory, both individual and collective. It is a site of and for identity."[25] Furthermore, historical markers, like the ones mentioned above, "reduce historical experience from environmental flux to the kind of

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[21] Pierce Lewis, "The Monument and the Bungalow," *The Geographical Review* 88, no. 4, (October 1998) 507.
[22] J.B. Jackson quoted in Lewis, 508.
[23] Pierce Lewis, "Axioms for Reading the Landscape," in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes,* ed. D.W. Meinig, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 25.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Don Mitchell, "New Axioms for Reading the Landscape: Paying Attention to Political Economy and Social Justice," in *Political Economies of Landscape Change*, J.L. Wescoat and D.M. Johnston, eds., (New York: Springer, 2008), 29.

order found in history books."[26] In Chicago, for example, the faux street sign for the Midway Plaisance encourages visitors to Jackson Park to remember history even as it reduces history to a simple sign. (Figure 1)

Kathryn J. Oberdeck, a professor at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, provides a model for investigating unbuilt places in her 2005 essay "Archives of the Unbuilt Environment: Documents and Discourses of Imagined Space in Twentieth-Century Kohler, Wisconsin."[27] In it, she analyses planning documents of spaces that were never realized in order to ask how they, "contribute to the history of a spatial imaginary that includes but also extends beyond the specific activities of planning professionals and the powerful elites who commission their services."[28] Building upon the work of scholars who contend that particular groups often look to material places both to formulate identity and to create narratives of an inevitable history, she argues that, "[s]patial visions imagined for a specific place but never built disrupt this materiality…unveiling a process whereby place and its implied identities are constructed through a process of alternative imagined geographies."[29] Viewing the plans for unbuilt spaces allows the historian to see the moment of historical contingency before the fact of materiality produced a sense of inevitability.

One of the main points of disagreement between Kohler, its city planners, and the people of the town of Kohler was the design and potential uses of public spaces; nearly

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[26] David Lowenthal, "Age and Artifact: Dilemmas of Appreciation," in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes,* ed. D.W. Meinig, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 111.
[27] Kathryn J. Oberdeck, "Archives of the Unbuilt Environment: Documents and Discourses of Imagined Space in Twentieth-Century Kohler, Wisconsin," in *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History*, ed. Antoinette Burton, (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2005).
[28] Ibid., 252.
[29] Ibid., 253.

eighty years later, the potential Chicago World's Fair also sparked questions about the relationships between public and private spaces, and public and private development.

There are no buildings, boulevards, or museums dedicated to the 1992 World's Fair, because none were ever built. But there are memories. The story of the 1992 World's Fair is held in several collections in the archive at the Chicago History Museum, and can also be read in contemporaneous newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stories. The broad strokes of the narrative are simple enough: in 1979 and 1980, a group of architects and businessmen began to talk about a fair in 1992 to celebrate the Quincentennary of Columbus' landing, and the centenary Chicago's greatest fair, the Columbian Exposition. They soon formed a committee, and began in earnest to raise funds and plan. They garnered support from city, state and federal government, and they successfully pitched their idea to the BIE. Everything was going smoothly until a group of protestors began to criticize the fair, and the tide turned. Protestors accused the fair planners of cronyism and greed, and argued that the plan was an underhanded way to gentrify economically oppressed neighborhoods while lining the planners' pockets. Within a few years, the fair plans collapsed, and the only physical remnants of it are sheaves of papers.

On the surface, the process of investigating this fair in the archives was not all that different than investigating any other event. As any other historian, I contacted the institutions whose collections I wanted to use, used a finding aid to request particular boxes and folders, and waited while the documents were retrieved from a dark, cool storage. I then spent long days sitting in rather uncomfortable chairs taking notes and

photographing documents to organize and consult later. I looked at newspaper archives, both microfilmed and digitized, to piece together narratives. The process is as much art as science: much is dependent upon where the reader stands in relation to the world she is reading, and, in the process of creating narratives out of facts and figures, she has to fill gaps.

Histories are not neutral, nor are the archives from which they are drawn. Haitian historian Michel-Rolph Trouillot's *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* suggests that we approach the past not through the facts that we know, like those found in the archive and re-iterated throughout culture, but through silences. Because "[t]he production of historical narrative involves the uneven contribution of competing groups and individuals who have unequal access to the means for such production," every historical narrative is embedded in a hegemonic discourse.[30] Trouillot's argument encompasses more than the rather cliché observation that history is written by the victors; rather, "power is constitutive of the story."[31] The very acts of recording, researching, writing, and reading history – acts that are available to only a privileged part of the population – create and re-create existing power structures.

In Trouillot's theoretical formulation,

> Silences enter the process of historical production at four crucial moments: the moment of fact creation (the making of *sources*); the moment of fact assembly (the making of *archives*); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of *narrative*); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of *history* in the final instance).[32]

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[30] Michele-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Productions of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995) 2.
[31] Trouillot, 28.
[32] Trouillot, 26.

It seems easy to reveal the power structures of some older sources – for example, one can clearly see where power enters historical production in, say, a slave bill of sale. Trouillot's intent, however, is to encourage investigation of the more subtle interactions of power and history. Trouillot's text incorporates three examples to demonstrate three different methodologies of deconstructing silences. In the first, he uses only information already in the archive to "reposition…evidence to generate a new narrative" about a now forgotten slave turned colonel in the Haitian Revolution. In the second, he investigates how "uneven power in the production of sources, archives, and narratives" silenced the history of the Haitian Revolution in the Western canon. He makes "the silences speak for themselves…by juxtaposing the climate of the times, the writings of historians on the revolution itself, and narratives of world history…" Lastly, he investigates the "abundant" sources on the theme of the discovery of America. He argues that, as of 1992, "there was a global agreement on the significance of Columbus's first trip," bolstered through public celebrations.

> Within this wide open corpus, silences are produced not so much by an absence of facts or interpretations as through conflicting appropriations of Columbus's persona. Here, I do not suggest a new reading of the same story…Rather, I show how the alleged agreement about Columbus actually masks a history of conflicts…[resulting in] a narrative about the competing appropriations of discovery.[33]

The question of the 'ownership' of Columbus's story were an important part of the planning of the 1992 World's Fair. In the coming chapters I will discuss how the fair planners justified linking their fair with a celebration of Columbus, how competing cities

[33] Trouillot, 27-28.

(especially Miami) argued that the link was tenuous at best, and the reactions of both Native and Latino Americans to the theme.

Trouillot requires historians to be self-aware and reflective of their role in historical production, which is no easy task. Is it enough to be aware of my own agency in creating historical narrative, and to acknowledge the privilege and power that accompanies it? In 1970, Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser proposed that schools, along with churches and families, participate in reproducing and reinforcing existing power structures. These types of social and cultural institutions are Ideological State Apparatuses. Subsequent philosophers have built upon that suggestion, and further investigated the university as a site of power production. How can historians – educators by nature and often professionals ensconced in the university system – not reproduce an Ideological State Apparatus?[34]

The specific discourse of a non-event does not exist, and is therefore less easily replicated; existing historiographical discourses are unsatisfying because they presuppose a complete narrative structure with a beginning, middle, and end. I struggle, though, to find a way to fully acknowledge and overcome Foucault's – and Trouillot's – larger criticisms that the very writing of history – any history – replicates established historiographical (power) structures. My recourse, then, is to acknowledge my own place as a producer of knowledge and thus producer of power structure and hope that I can participate in creating counter-memories that re-align power relationships.

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[34] Louis Althusser, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, (*Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster, Monthly Review Press, 1971), https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm

Through his investigation into the structures that work to maintain power relationships, Foucault suggests that creating counter-history and counter-memories can undermine those structures. Foucault, however, focuses on micro-narratives, and emphasizes counter-memory's fragmentary nature. Yael Zerubavel instead contends that,

> Countermemory if not necessarily limited to the construction of a past event; it can be part of a different commemorative framework forming an alternative overview of the past that stands in opposition to the hegemonic one. In fact, even when countermemory challenges the commemoration of a single event, it is considered highly subversive precisely because the implications of this challenge tend to go beyond the memory of that particular event, targeting the master commemorative narrative…[35]

This paper is, in part, a counter history of a non-event.

There are very few models for investigating non-events. In addition to Oberdeck's example of Kohler, Wisconsin, historian Scott Gabriel Knowles looked at the failed 1976 Philadelphia World Fair in "Philadelphia Planning and the Debacle of 1976."[36] Knowles looks to the fair to develop two points: first, "to gain critical insight into the dominant conflicts shaping the modern city." Secondly, Knowles sees the failed fair as emblematic of the simultaneous decline of the master urban planner (and by extension, "New Deal/Great Society urban planning liberalism), and, "the rise of consensus-seeking planning model driven by the maturation of urban community-based protest movements." He also argues that world's fairs have "rarely inspired large scale urban renewal…in predictable, linear ways."[37] Knowles offers a partial model for the work in

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[35] Yael Zerubavel , from *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition*. In *The Collective Memory Reader*. Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, Daniel Levy, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 241.
[36] Scott Gabriel Knowles, ed. *Imagining Philadelphia: Edmund Bacon and the Future of the City."* "Philadelphia Planning and the Debacle of 1976." (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 2009.
[37] Ibid., 80, 81.

this paper. There are several similarities between the Philadelphia and Chicago fair: each city had hosted an imperial fair and a interwar fair; each city had been experiencing industrial decline and had lost population; each city struggled with escalating racial and class unrest that led to violence; each city had fair planners with cohesive visions of the future city – Edmund Bacon in Philadelphia, and Bruce Graham and Tom Ayers in Chicago.

There are, of course, several important differences: the world of the early 1980s was in some ways more global that the world of the late 1960s. The 1980s planners emphasized the importance of technology as much as design, and, perhaps most importantly, the designers of the 1976 fair consciously constructed their plans as a way to, "transform [Philadelphia] into a model of humane urbanism"[38] through urban renewal, while the Chicago 1992 fair planners expressly denied that humane renewal was a motivating factor.

Parts of my analysis of Chicago mirror Knowles' analysis of Philadelphia. Each study looks to a shifting political culture to explain citizen opposition to the fairs, and each study acknowledges that unbuilt environments reveal as much about a historical moment as those structures that exist. There are, however, several differences: while Knowles grounds his study in the uses of urban planning, I ground my study in the uses of archives and historical silences.

Chapter One, "Past is Prologue: Planning the Fair," uses archives at the Chicago History Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Harold Washington Public Library, and the University of Illinois – Chicago, along with the historical *Chicago Tribune* to

[38] Ibid., 79.

investigate the fair planning process, with special attention to how the fair planners situated themselves as historical agents. Chapter Two, "Designing the Age of Discovery" delves into the proposed designs for the fair as well as other city plans. I close-read design catalogues and reflect on how different proposals for the fair site reflect different ideas of how cities should be designed. I argue that the fair plans ultimately recreated imperialist narratives from the great nineteenth century fairs. I conclude with a discussion of gentrification as a form of colonization, and hint at some of the criticisms lodged against the fair planners by community activist groups. Chapter Three, "Protesting the Fair," takes up the arguments of the fair protestors, and uses the same archives as the previous two chapters. I contextualize the protests within a shifting political and urban landscape, and argue against the popular conception of the 1980s as a decade lacking protest movements. Chapter Four, "Evelyn Wilbanks and the Power of the Archive," discusses the power of the archives, and looks to the personal archive of Evelyn Wilbanks, the official fair archivist at the Chicago History Society. I situate Wilbanks in the ongoing conversation among historians and cultural theorists about the meaning of the archive. I argue that Wilbanks' personal archive highlights her role in the production of history, and reflect on how my own archive experience formed how I create a historical narrative.

Figure 1: The Midway Plaisance in Jackson Park (photos by author)

PAST IS PROLOGUE: PLANNING THE FAIR

The earliest earnest planning for a Fair for 1992 began in 1979, when a group of architects from the American Institute of Architects, Chicago, began to meet regularly to discuss possible themes and designs for an event that celebrated the quincentennial of Columbus' landing in the Americas and the centennial of the landmark 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. Several people lay claim to being the first to come up with the idea for a fair: Charles Brubaker, vice president of the architecture and design firm Perkins+Will, first published his idea for a 1992 fair in a 1977 newspaper article about the future of Chicago.[1] Thomas Ayers, later the chairman of the planning committee, was introduced to the fair idea in "77 or 78" by his longtime friend and architect Harry Weese,[2] who, along with many others, claimed to have been discussing the idea of a fair in Chicago since the plans for a Philadelphia World's Fair in 1976 stalled.

In a letter dated May 28, 1979, Gertrude Lempp Kerbis (Chicago architect and Fellow of the AIA) invited Bertrand Goldberg to a meeting on June 9 to "consider the 1992 world Columbian exposition celebration in Chicago." In short order, a preliminary Steering Committee was formed. In an August 1979 letter to Goldberg, architect Helmut Jahn summarized the efforts of the committee. It identified five main points to address: international character (the event would celebrate the end of the physical discovery of the new world); celebration; rebuilding (Chicago would be a model for rebuilding the city, incorporating physical and social planning, new transportation, and new ways of

[1] Charles Brubaker, interview by Evelyn Wilbanks, September 13, 1983, transcript, Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.
[2] Thomas Ayers, interview by Evelyn Wilbanks, August 25, 1983, transcript, Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.

communicating); appropriateness (the issues confronting Chicago in 1979 may not be the issues confronting it in 1992, and the theme would have to account for what would be appropriate in 1992); and exchange. Perhaps most importantly, the AIA committee noted that past fairs emphasized hardware, while this fair must emphasize human issues and aesthetics.[3] The leaders of this casual steering committee had a wealth of experience in design: many of them were from the firm Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill, which had designed the most iconic buildings in Chicago. Both Louis Skidmore and Nathaniel Owings had played major roles in designing the Chicago's 1933/34 Century of Progress Exposition. Several participants, including Harry Weese, continued to work with the World's Fair Corporation and Authority throughout the design process until it was officially abandoned in 1986, while others, like Bertrand Goldberg, contributed designs that were rejected by the Authority.[4]

The authors of the AIA planning documents (unearthed in the Goldberg archive at the Art Institute of Chicago) draw from history, and point to different historical eras of world's fair, including the Centennial era, the neoclassical era, the Art Nouveau era, and the Art Deco era. The document provides a list of fairs within each era and "residual images" from each fair including the Crystal Palace of 1851, the Eiffel tower of 1889, Chicago's White City of 1893, Guimard's Metro stations in 1900, and the Space Needle and pop art in 1962 and 1964. They emphasized the importance in creating a residual

[3] Helmut Jahn, letter to C.F. Murphy Associates, August 4, 1979, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

[4] Goldberg is perhaps best well known for the Chicago landmark building Marina City, which combined residential, business, and commercial properties into two distinctive petaled buildings on the Chicago River. His official biography on bertrandgoldberg.org includes "Floating World's Fair" in his abridged chronology.

image for Chicago 1992, and, although they could not yet offer an image, they were far more concerned with the ideas than the practical issues that must be addressed in planning such an event. They often evoked Daniel H. Burnham, arguably Chicago's most important architect, expressing a desire a complete his 1909 plan.[5] Resurrecting the city's motto, "Urbs in Horto" (City in a Garden), the committee concluded their initial summary report with yet another rousing Burnham quote: "Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that will stagger us…It is time to renew our 'I will' spirit.'[6] In addition to assuring the planners' place in history, the fair would build on the many ideas about Chicago: the city that works, the city of big shoulders, the City Beautiful.

Ultimately, though, any ideas they had about theme remained untested, as their version of the Fair never got past the basic planning stages. What these documents reveal, however, is an example of a very philosophical and design oriented approach to fair planning. While the planning committee changed substantially from 1979 to 1980, transitioning from a group of architects to a group of business and civic movers and shakers, the core reasons for the fair remained the same. Planners sought to create a design that would have an impact. They hoped to design a space that would improve the function and beauty of the city while assuring their own place in its history.

As the plan progressed in the early 1980s, tension grew between optimistic designers who were part of the city's economic and intellectual elite and the more

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[5] American Institute of Architects Meeting Minutes, February 11, 1980, Bertrand Goldberg Papers, Art Institute of Chicago.
[6] American Institute of Architects Chicago, "A Chicago 1992 World's Columbian Exposition," undated, Bertrand Goldberg Papers, Art Institute of Chicago.

pragmatic needs of a citizenry struggling socially and economically. As "Protesting the Fair" reveals, these tensions would explode in charges of cronyism and greed. This chapter investigates the fair planning from the perspective of the planners, outlining both administrative and design processes, and lays the groundwork for understanding the remarkable resistance to the fair that ultimately led to its failure.

Private Citizens Doing Public Good: The Chairmen of the Boards Gather Data

After an initial flurry of meetings and conversations, ideas about a future Chicago fair remained abstract. Further stirrings of a fair resurfaced in 1980, when Harry Weese met with Thomas Ayers and other business leaders (also present at that initial breakfast meeting in the Tribune Tower were Art Shultz of the Advertising firm Foote, Cone, & Belding) to discuss how to "improve the image of Chicago."[7] At the time, Ayers was retiring as chairman of Commonwealth Edison and had no staff but was ready to "put an arm on [his friends]" to pursue the idea of a 1992 Fair. The language Ayers uses in a 1983 interview with Chicago History Society archivist Evelyn Wilbanks is interesting: many things are in the passive voice. For example, he didn't volunteer to head up fair research, nor was he asked; rather, the idea of a fair "was raised," and "it was suggested, why didn't I look into this idea." City planner Ira Bach used similar language in his recollection, noting in an interview that, "a world's fair committee was formed."[8] For action-oriented planning circles, the recurrent use of passive voice begs some questions

[7] Thomas Ayers interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, August 25, 1983, transcript, Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.
[8] Ibid.

about whether this language was evidence of humility or a habit of business and political cultures, used to minimize responsibility for possible failure.

A November 30, 1981 profile of Ayers in the 'Tempo' section of the *Chicago Tribune* highlights his modesty, quoting him saying, "I don't have any power." According to the article, when Ayers asked the businesses of a newly formed Chicago 1992World's Fair Steering Committee for $25,000 each, "…the groups responded with their checkbooks, but not because of undue pressure from Ayers. He usually needs to ask only once."[9] This seems the very definition of power. And he certainly knew the 'right people' to ask, including utility and newspaper men, and powerful architects and city planners.[10] Ayers was a philanthropist as well as captain of industry: according to Warren Bacon of Inland Steel and a fellow member of Chicago United's task for on education, he was, "at the top of [the] pecking order."[11] Perhaps most importantly, Mayor Richard J Daley made Ayers a mediator between the city and Martin Luther King's protestors in the summer of 1966, and worked as an advocate for open housing and civil rights. In the 1980s he was still chairmen of the Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities. In 1982, he was named "Chicagoan of the Year" by the Chicago Press Club and received the Community Services Award by the Chicago chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.[12] At the time, he was president of the World's Fair Corp., served on the Chicago Economic Development Commission, the Chicago Convention

[9] Marianne Taylor "Pitching Chicago is Tom Ayers' Joy," *Chicago Tribune,* November 30, 1981.
[10] Those asked included: Ira Bach, G. Brown, King Cole, D. Hackl, J. Holabird, W. Netsch, R. Picking, D. Schroeder, P. Thomas, W. Brubaker, J. Butler, K. Groggs, G. Kerbis, M. Murphy, R. Piper, M. Thominet, H. Weese, B. Goldberg.
[11] Marianne Taylor, "Pitching Chicago is Tom Ayers' Joy," *Chicago Tribune,* November 30, 1981.
[12] "Civic Award Goes to Ayers," *Chicago Tribune,* May 19, 1982.

and Tourism Bureau, Chicago Community Trust, was chairman of the Dearborn Park Corporation, and was chairman of the boards of trustees for Northwestern University and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.[13]

By February 11 of 1981, an official Steering Committee was formed, and regularly scheduled meetings commenced. Although the minutes for the February meeting are unavailable, minutes from the meeting of April 1 comment upon an interesting statement from King Cole, the 'father' of the 1974 Spokane world's fair and consultant to subsequent fairs in Vancouver and Knoxville. The minutes report that,

> Persons…interested in the rewards of the process of creating an international exposition are a 'visiting influence' on the effort. This should be interpreted to mean narrow self-interest in some specific element of an expo…It does not refer to more general rewards associated with civic, business and professional accomplishments involved with an exposition.[14]

The committee was more than cognizant of the appearance of conflicts of interest that would plague them several years later, when protesters contended that the Fair Committee would use public funds to further their own financial interests. According to Cole, however, the general rewards of a job well done (even if that job has a positive impact on private business) are an expected outcome of fair planning. The line between self-interest and public interest is fuzzy, and one that remains unclear even with the hindsight of history.

The committee took a cue from Cole's advice to the AIA committee, and played their cards close to the vest. According to the minutes, "[i]t was argued that it would be more expeditious to limit the involvement in the planning process to a few significant

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[13] "'92 Fair Corp. Chief Honored." *Chicago Tribune*, December 17, 1982.
[14] Minutes of World's Fair Corporation Steering Committee Meeting, April 1, 1980, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

members of the Chicago business community…a private rather than public affair at this time. Successful past World's Fairs…began through quiet meetings with powerful leaders."[15] Cole references the failed 1976 Philadelphia fair, noting that "…in Philadelphia…community involvement demanded residual benefits in excess of what the Federal government would consider funding, and their plans collapsed. The local community must assume the risk of a World's Fair."[16] However, he added that, "it is not wise to ask for support for something before it is well defined."[17] The Steering Committee thus began their planning without much input from the general public. What critics later saw as the egotistic self-interest of powerful men, the Steering Committee saw as the most practical way to get a big job done.

Do such events have to be based in altruism to be successful or effective? Should the people who spend so much time and money planning such events not expect some sort of reward for their efforts other than civic pride? The answers to those questions vary considerably depending upon the person answering as well as historical distance. The Steering Committee looked to Chicago's pride in the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and 1933-34 Century of Progress Exposition as evidence for support for their future fair. And the city was (and is) proud of those Fairs: each is represented by a star on the flag, and the sites of both fairs are memorialized with very little regard to their more problematic elements.[18]

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[15] Minutes of World's Fair Corporation Meeting, December 10, 1980, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[16] Minutes of World's Fair Corporation Meeting, February 11, 1980, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Both fairs' exhibits affirmed racist and sexist ideas of the time.

Other problems that ultimately shut down the fair were identified in these early meetings: the minutes note that involving political leadership of the city is of utmost importance, especially with respect to gaining approval from the Bureau of International Expositions (BIE), the international body charged with approving sites for international expositions. “Failure to do so,” the minutes record, “may result in a situation like the one in New Orleans where a recently elected black mayor expressed doubts to that BIE investigating committee that his city ought to host an expo.” New Orleans Mayor Dutch Morial (elected 1978), like Maynard Jackson in Atlanta (elected 1973) and Wilson Goode in Philadelphia (elected 1984), came into office during a period of nationwide economic decline. They brought with them individual careers in civil rights and community organizing. These men reflected the general tenor of part of the country, and their respective city’s struggles – particularly black people’s struggles – through the political crises of the 1970’s.

The World’s Fair Steering Committee members, however, were safely ensconced in their roles as paternalistic protectors of the Chicago’s businesses, reputation, and the Daley political machine. There was no way to know that Jane Byrne would be so stunningly defeated in 1983 by Harold Washington, the city’s first black mayor. And there was no way to know that that event would change how the people of Chicago reacted to the Daley style of governance. Community groups were energized and inspired by the new Mayor, and worked tirelessly to shift focus from large city projects to neighborhood-level changes. The Committee assumed the support of Chicago, and focused their initial efforts at winning over federal officials rather than local ones.

In those early days of committee meetings, there was a frank discussion of Chicago's public image: recent press had focused on its history of disorderliness (i.e., the 1968 Democratic National Convention that erupted into violence), crime (Al Capone-style organized crime as well as disorganized crime), and loss of vitality. Mayor Michael Bilandic won a special election after Richard Daley's death in December 1976, and, according to many accounts, proved not quite up to the job. To be fair, he inherited a city rife with problems. With a floundering economy, caused in part by decreased manufacturing between 1967 and 1982, Chicago lost a quarter of a million jobs while the suburban sector grew by 25%. During the 1970s, 25% of all Chicago factories closed.[19] After Daley's death, different factions of city council were eager to pursue their own agendas that had been stifled by the Daley machine. Chicago had an increasingly racially segregated city core and suburbs, and racial tension often exploded to violence. Finally, there was a terrible snow storm. In January 1979, Chicago saw the worst blizzard it had ever seen. Nearly two feet of snow fell in a matter of days, and city services stalled. Bilandic directed CTA trains not to stop in black neighborhoods, but to go directly from the white outer ring to the Loop. Needless to say, this caused considerable resentment, and Bilandic's days as Mayor were short-lived.[20]

Following the snowy disaster of 1979, Jane Byrne ran for Mayor on a platform of change, "but soon became the de facto machine candidate."[21] After winning the election of April 1979 with 82% of the vote, she quickly alienated blacks and other ethnic minorities. Byrne, however, was eager to address Chicago's problems head-on, creating

[19] Dominic A. Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 366.
[20] Pacyga, 362.
[21] Pacyga, 371.

ChicagoFest, and plans to redevelop Navy Pier. She wanted the 1992 Chicago World's Fair to be her legacy, and eagerly supported the Chicago World's Fair 1992 Corporation. With the Byrne administration's encouragement, the committee concluded that an international facility at O'Hare, a sports pavilion, and a world's fair were keys to revitalizing the city. Financing would be through bank consortiums (no collateral required – the technique used in Knoxville), and committee members using their business connections to recruit associates, friends, and acquaintances to their cause.

The Steering Committee sought the advice of, then hired, King Cole. A long-time advisor to cities hosting world's fairs, Cole was considered an authority in getting Fairs approved. As a result of Cole's advice in April 1980, the Steering Committee proposed attempting to get tax-exempt status in order to raise the funds for Cole's potential feasibility study. By June 30, the Steering Committee had an initial fund-raising plan: $10,000 was to come from the "architectural profession" and a maximum of $5,000 each would come from other local funding sources. But until the Steering Committee was a tax-exempt corporation, all monies would have to go through the AIA. But before that could happen, the group needed a specific mission. After a series of bi-weekly meetings, the Steering Committee published a nearly 30-page packet outlining their reasons for a fair, as well as potential concerns and potential solutions to those concerns, in August 1980.

At that time, the Steering Committee consisted of James Alexander (Continental Bank), Thomas G. Ayers (Commonwealth Edison Company), George Burke (The *Chicago Tribune*), Frank Considine (National Can), William Hartmann (Skidmore

Owings & Merrill), Paul Hirt (*Chicago Sun-Times*), Daniel McMaster (President Emeritus, Museum of Science and Industry), James O'Connor (Commonwealth Edison Company), John Perkins (Continental Bank), Donald A. Petkus (Commonwealth Edison Company), Arthur Schultz (Foote, Cone & Belding), architect Harry Weese, and Carol Bruckman (Foote, Cone, & Belding).[22] Together, these men wielded considerable power. Following from the hypothesis that urban growth stems from privately funded "growth coalitions" that plan, develop, and change the urban landscape, sociologist Anne Shlay and urban theorist Robert Giloth, in their 1987 article "The Social Organization of a Land-Based Elite: The Case of the Failed Chicago 1992 World's Fair," point to "interlocking directorates" that show "organizational structure and the presence of common concerns that exist independent of 1992 Fair organizational activity."[23] Through analysis of records of city clubs, boards of directors, and organizational affiliations, they conclude "Chicago 1992 Corporation was an extension of already connected corporate interests, as well as the business and planning organizations that support these interests."[24] Perhaps the advice of King Cole, then, was the advice that any member of an 'interlocking directorate' would give to any other member of an 'interlocking directorate.'

Tom Ayers convinced his friend Art Shultz of the advertising firm Foote, Cone & Belding (FCB) to conduct a number of surveys to determine if the people of Chicago were amenable to the Fair idea. Their summary report of September 1980 was

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[22] Minutes of World's Fair Authority Meeting, August 4, 1980, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[23] Anne Shlay and Robert Giloth "The Social Organization of a Land-Based Elite: The Case of the Failed Chicago 1992 World's Fair" *Journal of Urban Affairs* 9 no. 4 (1987): 310.
[24] Ibid., 10.

overwhelmingly positive, and laid the groundwork for future arguments for the Fair. Rather than the reimagining of the purpose of a World's Fair – like the AIA conception of a fair that emphasized human issues in a post-hardware world – the FCB report summarized a fair as:

> [A] once-in-a-lifetime extravaganza combining entertainment and enlightenment. It is a family adventure with something for everyone. It is a time machine to the past and future. It is a stage for industry to display its latest wares. It is a playground where young and old can tinker with technology's newest toys. It is a poor man's grand tour, a mini-trip around the world, brimming with foreign food and exotic wares. It is a grand event by which one measures one's life before and after.[25]

With a description such as this, who could be against a World's Fair? In just a few short months, the fair planners would find out. This description emphasized consumption, and, in referencing the grand tour, placed the Fair in the context of a long history of Anglo, European, and American tourism. The grand tour was considered an essential part of a gentleman's education, and was, by and large, decidedly undemocratic. In contrast, the FCB report attempted to democratize the Fair, noting full support from community groups and "the man on the street." The language here is meant to sound historic: words like 'tinker' and 'grand' remind the reader of the past, and 'foreign food' and 'exotic wares' point to the fact that there were still sensory experiences that television could not replicate. The full FCB report, however, is a bit more nuanced.

The report divided respondents into four key segments: married, middle income Chicago area residents who have children; married, middle income residents of areas within a 200 mile radius of Chicago who have children; married Blacks who live in

[25] "Chicago World's Fair Report: A Qualitative Investigation: Reactions to a Chicago World's Fair and Proposed Theme," September 1980, FCB Research Department, CB15A909, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.

Chicago and have children; married Hispanics who live in Chicago and have children. A two phased public attitudes study was recommended: phase 1 was an qualitative exploratory study, and phase 2 quantified reactions indicated by phase I. FCB completed a total of 400 personal, face to face interviews early September 1980 with married men and women aged 25 – 45 who had children under 16 years old. 100 interviews were conducted with white Chicago suburbanites; white residents of outlying areas; Chicago Blacks; and Chicago Hispanics.

The report found that most people had heard of a world's fair but very few had attended a fair. Most respondents expected that the fair would be international, be equally past and future oriented, appeal to all kinds of people, be highly entertaining and highly educational, and be good for the city and of broad benefit. FCB concluded that respondent's expectations of entrance fees was unrealistic: more than half said they would expect to pay five dollars or less for an adult admission. (Through the next few years, there were significant discrepancies between what the public expected fair costs to be, and what they actually were.) A significant number of people also voiced concerns about security and crime, and problems related to crowds, transportation, and inadequate facilities. Suburbanites anticipated more civic benefits from the fair and expected somewhat more problems than did other groups. Interestingly,

> Hispanics tended to think the community would view the fair as yet another attempt to placate rather than help their people…Similarly some Blacks regarded the fair as another attempt by City Hall to push them out of the picture by reclaiming the downtown for whites…

Based on these results, FCB recommended that "the fair should be considered a "new product" which will require "very extensive education for genuine understanding and appreciation."[26]

From there, planning moved with extraordinary speed.

Making Decisions Regarding Site and Theme

In the first (1981) edition of 1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery Theme Book, distributed primarily to the members of the World's Fair Corporation, supporters from the business community, and designers from Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, the authors attempt to reassure investors and win over sceptics through presenting a series of arguments for the World's Fair. The introductory language emphasized the importance of America on the world stage: it is the "free world's single greatest discovery," and the Fair would celebrate "500 years of discovering freedom." "A World's Fair in the United States," declared the executive briefing "will galvanize this nation as no other single event to affirm our world leadership among nations."[27] This was not wildly different from the themes from any past World's Fairs: from the very first American Fair in Philadelphia in 1876 to the more recent New York Fair in 1964, Fairs served to affirm American hegemony. The notion of America as a discovery rather than construction harkened to nineteenth century notions that Americanness comes from the water and land; that the American character emerges from eating the produce of the soil,

[26] Chicago World's Fair Report: A Qualitative Investigation: Reactions to a Chicago World's Fair and Proposed Theme, September 1980. FCB Research Department, CB15A909. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[27] 1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery Theme Catalogue, volume 1 (1981). Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

working the fields, and breathing the air. In extending this idea, the World's Fair Authority postulated that freedom is a natural right, and naturalizes American leadership.

Of course, the nineteenth century process of becoming American was not available to all, and became all but impossible for many twentieth century immigrants. To that end, the theme catalogue called Chicago "The Ethnic Heartland of North America," pointing out large populations of the "three major Hispanic groups: Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban," as well as the ethnic neighborhoods. It was the Hispanic survey respondents who were most resistant to the Discovery theme, pointing out the sizable native population of the continents prior to Columbus' landing.[28] In part to address this critique, and in part to address survey respondents assumption that the Fair would primarily address history, the World's Fair Committee slightly changed the mission statement of the fair to bring focus to future discoveries: "All nations join hands in celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Discovery of the Americas and the great worldwide discoveries in all fields since then and to come."[29] It was to be an event where the Santa Maria would be next to the Battlestar Galactica; where historical accomplishments would be celebrated, but futuristic technologies would be highlighted.[30]

The Theme Catalogue's vision of the 1990s and the twenty-first century seems a bit far-fetched. By 1992, the catalogue contends, "space activities will no longer be regarded only as experiments or spectaculars, but will be accepted as continuing,

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[28] Ibid.
[29] 1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery Theme Catalogue, volume 1 (1981). Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[30] Ibid.

productive operations that are part and parcel of our lives."[31] It's hard for the contemporary reader not to imagine a *Star Trek* world; indeed, the catalogue more accurately predicts the world of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, which first aired in 1987, than it predicted 1992.

The World's Fair Corporation decided that focusing on a future tech utopia was a valuable investment. And in many regards, they were right: great leaps in thought and technology come from such optimistic and wild imaginings. Science and science fiction advance hand in hand, and the Corporation continued to emphasize an optimistic future rather than fully accepting the oft depressing present. In fact, they consulted the World Future Society to help them to create their mission statement and sub-themes.[32] Perhaps we should consider, though, if such optimism is a mark of privilege. The FCB survey clearly pointed out that many respondents felt no excitement for the fair or the future, noting, "Some respondents seemed almost despairing about the future and could not project 1992 with any degree of hope."[33] Rather than responding to the dejection of some survey respondents – an impossible task beyond the purview of any one group of people – the World's Fair Corp. assumed people would come around once they saw how the plans would have long-term positive effects for the city in the form of infrastructure development and a new lakefront park.

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[31] Ibid.
[32] 1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery Theme Catalogue, volume 1 (1981). Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[33] "Chicago World's Fair Report: A Qualitative Investigation: Reactions to a Chicago World's Fair and Proposed Theme," September 1980, FCB Research Department, CB15A909. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.

Chicago's location, on the southern-western shore of Lake Michigan, has long been a selling point for the city. Every twentieth century plan for the city has sought to make use of the shore, and there is now (in 2017) an unbroken string of parks and beaches that stretches the length of downtown. (Figure 2) The planner's Burnham Harbor plan was first published for the public in July, 1981. The image from the *Chicago Tribune* includes almost none of the details that had already been decided, or gives the reader an idea of what the altered shoreline would look like; that map wouldn't appear until late November, when the federal government officially recognized Chicago as the United States' candidate for a 1992 fair.[34] (Figures 3, 4)

The Corporation proposed a massive expansion of Grant Park in the near South Side. It included closing Meig's Field (the small airport on land created for the 1933 Century of Progress Exhibition), over 180 acres of landfill in Lake Michigan, widening Lakeshore Drive and the Dan Ryan Expressway, demolishing some older structures, and upgrading roads in Pilsen and Chinatown. The Burnham Harbor Site, though ultimately designed by SOM, was the result of many months of debate among the members of the World's Fair Corp. and the American Institute of Architects Chicago Chapter, which had remained an active voice in Fair planning, often volunteering time and resources to the project.

The Burnham site met many of the logistical requirements for a Fair. There was plenty of potential space, it was zoned properly, it was easily accessible by private vehicles and public transit, it was close to existing amenities (the museum complex and

[34] John McCarron and Douglas Frantz, "U.S. Gives Chicago Nod for World's Fair," *Chicago Tribune,* November 26, 1981.

parkland), and it offered residuals that would benefit the city: namely, an expanded lakefront park that would partially fulfill the designs of the 1909 Burnham Plan of Chicago. The Fair site included over 575 acres on the near south side lakefront (295 acres from existing land, 100 acres of lagoon and harbor area, and 180 acres of landfill), a 150 acre parking lot with space for 19,000 cars and a secondary lot for 10,000 cars.[35,36] The entire site, other than the proposed parking lots, was owned by the Chicago Park District of the State of Illinois.

The 1909 Burnham Plan encompassed far more than directions for roads and services. In the text that accompanied the plan, Burnham, who designed the 1893 World's Fair, outlined the planning history of great cities, meditated upon the relationships between private citizens and the public good, and described the importance of parks. He posited, like many of his contemporaries, that outdoor spaces were essential to maintain health and vigor amidst growing industrialization. The Lakefront parks provided a way for Chicago's factory workers to keep their robust, healthy character. The plan called for a large green space connecting Grant Park with Jackson Park. It was, Burnham recalls, "the beginning of a general plan for the city."[37] All of Chicago's city plans since 1909 have referenced Burnham and attempted to realize his vision, and the Burnham harbor site was part of that realization. In addition to the logistical advantages of the site, the World's Fair Corp. again appealed to history and tradition, arguing for a continuation of

[35] "The World's Fair: A Citizen's Guide," prepared by George W Davis and the Fair Review Council, August 1983, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[36] "Age of Discovery Environmental Assessment," Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corp., September 1982, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[37] Daniel H. Burnham and Edward H. Bennett, *Plan of Chicago*, ed. Charles Moore, (Chicago: The Great Books Foundation, 2009), 7.

history as they understood it. While the Corp. focused on a technological future, they saw no other path or method than those typified by the last century's captains of industry. Thus, when the plan was presented to the public in 1981, it was fully formed; even archival materials (meeting minutes, design notes) skip over how decisions were made and focus on results.

The Red Tape: Getting Approval from the Public and Bureaucratic Bodies

A July 1980 article in the *Chicago Tribune*, the first press about the Fair, stated that "a group of prominent Chicagoans has begun serious discussion of a fair, and they think 1992 should be the big year." The article notes that Thomas Ayers, retired chairman of Commonwealth Edison, agreed to be the non-salaried chairman of a special committee to investigate the feasibility of staging fair. After meeting with Mayor Jane Byrne, he stated, "I have no illusion that this is a sure thing," and Harry Weese added, "the deadline is very important. After you've invited millions of people to a party, you want to be sure to start on time." According to the article, the steering committee purposely kept its membership young and the expressed hope that most of his members would still be alive at the end of 22 year project.[38] The article concluded that the planners would have to seek permissions from city, state, and federal bodies, in addition to the BIE.

After the presentation of the FCB report in September 1980, King Cole advised the Steering Committee to begin courting the BIE. As with most international

[38] This is the only time the ages of any of the members of the Steering Committee or World's Fair Corp. was mentioned in any document I found. Given the ages of the planners, and their focus on the future, it's unusual that age wasn't mentioned more often, and that there wasn't a more concerted effort to recruit young people to the World's Fair cause.

organizations, the regulations of the BIE are complex. The Committee and US Commerce Secretary Philip Klutznick notified the BIE of their intention to submit an application in late October 1980 while continuing to court the Department of Commerce, which had to approve their plans before getting a final approval from the federal government and president.[39] Mayor Jane Byrne communicated directly with Patrick Reid, the President of the BIE, about her support for the Fair, and Klutznick included letter of support from the previous two mayors.[40] As Klutznick laid the groundwork with the BIE, the World's Fair Corp. continued to gather letters of support from businesses and civic organizations to include in their application, including the Open Lands Project, the South Loop Planning Board, the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council, the Chicago Central Area Committee, the Museum of Science and Industry, the Art Institute of Chicago, the DuSable Museum, United Airlines, and others.

In late June 1981 the Illinois General Assembly "proclaim[ed] its support for the goals of the Chicago World's Fair 1992 Corporation and the establishment of a 1992 World's Fair in Chicago," and Governor James Thompson officially supported the Fair in August 1981.[41] His letter to Ayers ('Tom') and President Reagan endorsed the plan and offered "the support and assistant of myself and the departments of my office in the staging of a successful exposition," and promised assistance in acquiring the lakefront

[39] "Chronology of Events: Chicago's World's Fair 1992," compiled by Don Petkus, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[40] Philip Klutznick letter to Patrick Reid, October 31, 1980, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[41] State of Illinois eighty-second general assembly House of Representatives, House Joint Resolution No.44, Offered by Representatives Madigan and Ryan, June 27, 1981.

site for the fair.[42] By that time, the World's Fair Corp. had secured charitable contributions totaling $450,000 from some of the largest corporations in and around Chicago, including Commonwealth Edison, Continental Bank, FCB, Marshall Field & Co., National Can Corp., and Illinois Bell Telephone Co.

Until 1981, the planning committees consisted of informal groups of like-minded businessmen and architects. In January 1981, they made it official, and incorporated as the Chicago World's Fair - 1992 Corporation. Businessmen all, they ran the group like a corporation, with all the hierarchy that corporations imply. This was, in many ways, very effective. The group got their 700-page application to the BIE in record time, and recruited talented and well-regarded committee members from industry and art. As we shall see in the next chapter, however, much of the general public resented what they perceived as the Corporation's authoritarian attitude. Don Petkus recalled that, "the incorporation was not necessarily to formalize our existence. It was more of a reason to get the not-for-profit status so we could continue to solicit contributions that will be tax-deductible."[43] Until then, all of the planning had been funded by individual donors and pro bono services.

As 1981 progressed, the Corporation focused on accumulating reams of data to bolster their application to the BIE. The governing body regulates the frequency of universal class expositions, and had several applicants in the early 1980s. In the US, Sacramento, Houston and Miami pushed for municipal support (indeed, groups in

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[42] Governor James Thompson, letter to Tom Ayers and President Ronald Reagan, August 17, 1981, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[43] Don Petkus interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, August 26, 1983, transcript, Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.

Houston and Miami are still pushing for municipal support), Paris wanted an exposition in 1989 to celebrate the centennial of the 1889 fair that gave the city the Eiffel Tower, and Seville also proposed a 1992 celebration to commemorate Columbus's voyage. The Committee remained stalwart, insisting that the BIE not only hear them out, but substantially change their general regulations to allow more than one fair site. Eventually, the BIE relented.

The *Tribune* did not publish another article about the fair until January 1981. In it, architecture critic Paul Gap summarized all the general information about the fair, stating that it had been discussed for years but had become feasible only because of backing from private-sector money and expertise. He noted that three lakefront sites were selected, that their final site decision would be made by June 1, 1981, and that the theme was "discovery." Fifty-two million people would attend, he predicted, emphasizing as well that the Fair Corporation would spend about 365 million and earn a small profit (funding would come from the sale of private bonds secured by expected admission ticket sales) and that "post fair benefits" that include possible new parks structures for public use, and continued use of new transportation facilities.[44] The *Tribune* lent its full support to the fair a week later, asserting that,

> there is good reason for optimistic boosterism… A magnificent fair here would mean a new infusion of city spirit in a metropolitan area increasingly fragmented by minority interests. It would call enthusiastic attention to Chicago's role as a trade transportation center. It would bring in money and jobs. It could leave a handsome legacy of new public land public buildings, as did both the 1893 Columbian Exposition and the 1933 Century of progress. Most of all, it would be great fun for millions of people. Count us among the boosters.[45]

[44] Each new feasibility study suggested different numbers for attendance and revenues.
[45] "Chicago's 1992 Fair," *Chicago Tribune,* January 19, 1981.

The *Tribune* offered support for the fair in other ways as well, devoting sections of the paper to feature stories about past world's fairs and some of their main attractions, like the Ferris Wheel at the 1893 Fair. Other stories featured accounts of SOM and the history of Chicago architecture, as well as stories about artifacts from the 1893 fair and exhibits at the Chicago History Society, and several pieces featuring personal reminiscences from average folk who attended the 1933 Fair.

The Committee did not begin a press campaign in earnest until summer of 1981, but, when it did, it smothered the city with releases. In an early July editorial, WGN-TV announced, "A group of Chicagoans is trying to arrange a World's Fair…We like the idea. The Fair proposal is far from assured at this point…[But] it has our endorsement."[46] In August, the Committee held its first-ever press conference, with 18 media outlets in attendance.[47] Additionally, members of the committee met individually with local radio and television newscasters. Ayers and Petkus appeared on WMAQ-TV with NBC evening news anchorman Jim Ruddle. In the segment, Ruddle began by recounting the success of the monorail in Montreal and Space Needle in Seattle, and then summarized the proposed site boundaries. When asked why the city should host a World's Fair, Ayers responded that it:

> offers us a great opportunity to showcase this great city...there's a popular notion going around that the great cities…are going downhill…I don't happen to think that's so. Now, we think this is important to change the image of Chicago. I don't say the image is bad but it sure isn't as good as it could be.

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[46] WGN Editorial #81-162. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[47] "Chronology of Events: Chicago's World's Fair 1992," compiled by Don Petkus, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.

Later Petkus noted that the Fair would "act as a catalyst…things that have been put off seem to get done." He also answers Ruddle's question about residual benefits, postulating a park on the near south side as well as improved transportation infrastructure.[48] These interviews, and the others recorded that day, are not exactly hard-hitting. What is obvious from these early clippings and interviews, though, is that there was general concern for the state of the city, and a general idea that something needed to be done to change it for the better.

Meanwhile, the Chicago City Council endorsed the Fair on July 30, 1981, and the World's Fair Committee met with local groups and commissions, including the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council and the Chicago Park District. In a July 5 article, the *Tribune's* Mary Elson summarized the completed FCB report's numbers: 65 million visitors could be expected. The fair would cost $400 - $600 million. She emphasized SOM's Kimbal Goluska's insistence that, "the idea of a deficit is not a consideration." Additionally, she noted that revitalizing south side neighborhoods was an expressed benefit of the Fair.[49]

February 1982 brought the first notice of a public display of the proposed plans. Along with architectural plans from 1933, they were installed in an exhibit space in the Chicago Architecture Foundation on S. Dearborn Street. The "Arts at Large" brief in the "Tempo" section of the Tribune announcing the installation also advertised a Philip Glass concert, two performances of "The Taming of the Shrew," and auditions for the School of

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[48] "1992 World's Fair, Chicago-Style," Radio TV Reports, Inc., television news transcript of *Newscenter Five*, WMAQ TV, August 28, 1981.
[49] Mary Elson, "World to be Invited in '92 – Chicagoans Prepare to Invite the World to 1992 Fair," *Chicago Tribune*, July 5, 1981.

American Ballet.[50] One might argue that such a brief would not reach a terribly wide audience. Indeed, within the next few months, protest groups would contend that the plans were not made sufficiently available to the public. Pairing the announcement with more privileged entertainments would ensure that residents of the neighborhoods most affected by the fair would be less likely to see it.

The general public was far more likely to have seen the spread on the previous day: a profile about James F. Sheerin showed the readers the many intersections between business and government. Sheerin, the city's "chief host," has just been elected chairman of the Metropolitan Fair and Exposition Authority, which governed McCormick Place. He was also senior vice president of Hilton Hotels, past president of the Chicago Convention and Tourism Board, and was involved with the Chicago World's Fair Corp. Sheerin's election, the *Tribune* claimed, was "designed to curry favor with the world's fair selection committee," and Sheerin noted that, "it would be better suited if there was a continuity of service" between city leaders and the public.[51] The Fair Authority tended to frame the interconnections between its members in both business and government as eminently helpful to their endeavor, and indeed these connections were crucial to the success of the fair. The question soon asked by the public, however, was whether these dealings between the private and public sector were right – and more troubling for fair planners, whether the fair itself was a good idea.

By November 1981, the World's Fair Corporation had secured preliminary support from an important source in the federal government, the president of the United

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[50] *Chicago Tribune*, February 18, 1981.
[51] Kathleen Myler, "City's Chief Host Looks at World's Fair and Beyond," *Chicago Tribune* February 17, 1982.

States.[52] In early May, 1982, President Ronald Reagan wrote to E.R.I. Allan, the chairman of the BIE Pre-Inquiry Committee: "[T]he United States is intensely interested in hosting a universal class exposition……My Administration fully supports an increased role for American business and public affairs along with increased reliance on state and local government. The Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation is an example of business, government, and labor working together to advance worldwide cultural communication." Reagan's support, however, was not unconditional. According to the *New York Times*, Reagan made his support contingent on the understanding that federal participation would not exceed $90 million over the next decade.[53]

The national press was far less consumed with the Fair than the Chicago media, but several media outlets hinted at the larger political milieu of fair planning. World's Fair Corp. spokesman Timothy Schulte commented in the *New York Times* on the Miami/Chicago Fair rivalry, worrying that, after two years and two million dollars [about $400,000 in cash donations and the remainder in donated work hours], choosing the US Fair site "might be a political decision tied to the Congressional and Presidential elections."[54]

Representatives from the BIE visited Chicago in May 1982, and were treated to a whirlwind tour of the city. Delegates arrived on May 2 and departed on May 9. In that brief week, they were treated to dinners in the John Hancock Center, the Field Museum, the Civic Opera House, several private residences, and Tempel Smith's family farm (Smith was a steel magnate whose family farm hosts horse shows, weddings, and a CSA

[52] "U.S. Recommending Chicago for World's Fair Site in 1992," *New York Times*, November 27, 1981.
[53] "Reagan Officially Recognizes 1992 World's Fair in Chicago," *New York Times*, November 14, 1982.
[54] Francis X. Clines, "Chicago and Miami Fight for a Fair," *New York Times*, August 32, 1982.

garden); took a carriage ride around Lake Point Tower; fished for Coho salmon on Lake Michigan; they lunched at the governor's mansion in Springfield; they saw the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Art Institute, and the Field Museum; toured Merchandise Mart; had lunch at McDonald's headquarters; danced at Faces Nightclub, and rode the historic L Car #1 to Wrigley Field to see a Cubs game (incredibly, the Cubs won).[55] In other words, they saw the best the city had to offer. Tom Ayers recalled, "[B]y the time they left, we were really best friends, and they were terribly impressed with the Chicago people."[56] Members of the delegation were impressed with Chicago's beauty as well. Mayor Jane Byrne commented to them that, in addition to the city's beauty, "it's the most American city in the United States."[57]

Nostalgia for historic Chicago and its American-ness dominated stories in Chicago's press. Sections of the *Tribune* dedicated to arts and culture included short articles about the best parts of the Columbian Exposition and Century of Progress Exposition, focusing on these fairs' physical and cultural residuals (Jackson Park, the Field Museum) as well as their technological residuals (especially with respect to electricity and consumer goods like air conditioning). One spread outlined Chicago's history as a party town, noting that another fair is a natural fit for a city that likes to have a good time.[58] Each of these articles encouraged Chicagoans to think of themselves as historic actors; through participating in the fair, they would be a part of history.

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[55] "B.I.E. Delegation Visit to Chicago, Week of May 2nd, 1982," Itinerary, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[56] Thomas Ayers interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, August 25, 1983, transcript, Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.
[57] Dave Schneidman, "World's Fair Group Inspects Chicago: It's Beautiful," *Chicago Tribune,* May 4, 1982.
[58] John McCarron, "It's a Party Town – and They Are Legend," Chicago Tribune, January 30, 1983.

In August, Mayor Byrne offered her enthusiastic support for the fair to Ayers. She cited the success of the previous two fairs as well as their cultural and economic residuals as important arguments in support of the 1992 plans, and noted that some residuals are not as obvious as others, like "bold progress in architecture, city planning, and investment." She concluded, "I'm a believer in Chicago. We have much to offer in this city…I welcome your project and offer it my cooperation and support." Byrne's support was rooted in more than her confidence in the city, however; it was also rooted in her old friend Ayers (whom she had appointed head of Chicago Schools, much to the anger of the Black community) as well as her contacts at SOM.

After a dazzling multi-media display, the BIE executive board tentatively approved the Burnham Harbor site at their June 1982 meeting, making it "the only one subject to the current date reservation process."[59] Unfortunately, the slides and music that were part of the Chicago presentation are lost, but it was, by all accounts, spectacular. Born out of the Fair Corp.'s frustration with processing all of the information in their 700-page application, the display meant to "show, not tell." Don Petkus later recalled that George Burke, who was then director of public affairs and communications at the *Tribune*, recruited some of his staff to create both storyboards and the presentation itself.[60] Tom Ayers recalled in the press, and in personal interviews, that the 16-camera media show before the BIE board was far superior to the French delegation's presentation, which, according to Ayers, boiled down to showing an overhead image of a map of Paris with arrows pointing to where pavilions or exhibits might be. The French

[59] "Environmental Assessment 1983," prepared by Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[60] Don Petkus interview.

delegate argued that, because Paris was so well known, they didn't need all the razzle-dazzle of the Americans.[61]

As the summer progressed, Chicago waited for the BIE executive board and general assembly to approve the Fair and determine whether or not there would be a sister Fair in Seville, Spain. It seemed that the Fair idea was gaining enough momentum to be unstoppable. By fall, however, some voices in the public became more vocal in questioning the motivations of the World's Fair Corporation. Soon, the press started covering a coalition of grass-roots community groups calling itself the Chicago 1992 Committee. From the moment of its inception, the Committee proved to be a thorn in the World's Fair Corp.'s side. For every report that the World's Fair Corp. commissioned, the Chicago 1992 Committee commissioned their own. For each piece of positive news, the Chicago 1992 Committee pointed out the plan's flaws.

The Women's Committee and Fair Review Council

Not all community groups were so adamantly against the fair as the Chicago 1992 Committee. The Fair Review Council and the Women's Committee both supported the fair and tried to work with the Fair Corporation throughout the planning process. The Women's Committee was composed of mostly professional women in the city who saw themselves as essential parts of the upper echelons of politics and business but felt conspicuously left out of fair planning. The Fair Review Council positioned itself as a clearing house for information, sought to make sure that all options were fully investigated and publicized before any decisions regarding the fair were made.

[61] Tom Ayers interview.

Historically, fairs and expos have had separate committees and pavilions for women. Often left out of planning processes, the women sought inclusion in a variety of ways that, according to fair historians T.J Boisseau and Abagail M. Markwyn, "provided a venue for organized groups of women to communicate to a mass and often international public a vision of themselves as constituent members of particular nations and a newly collective consciousness of themselves as a sex."[62] Thus, while the 1992 women's committee surely were already conscious of themselves as a sex, the women demanding inclusion in the planning of the 1992 fair were establishing themselves not only as members of a nation and city, but also established their place in the city's corporate and civic elite.

The Women's Committee for the 1992 fair based their actions on those of the Women's Committee of the 1893 fair; one of their agenda items included making sure that all members had read *The Fair Women*, a history of the Women's Committee and women's pavilion at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. Jeanne Madeline Weimann's substantial and well-illustrated narrative recounts how Bertha Palmer and the Board of Lady Managers designed and ran the Woman's Building at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition.[63] They were inspired by the fact that the Woman's Building had been designed by a woman, that the art it housed was created by women, and that the pavilion, unlike the Woman's Building at the Philadelphia fair in 1876, left a substantial historical, if not physical, legacy. "[The] women of today," declared Bertha Palmer,

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[62] T.J. Boisseau and Abigail M. Markwyn, eds., *Gendering the Fair: Histories of Women and Gender at World's Fairs*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 2.
[63] Jeanne Madeline Weimann, *The Fair Women: The Story of The Woman's Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago 1893*. Chicago: Academy Chicago, 1981.

"having had a taste of independence, will never willingly relinquish it." In her speech on the fair's opening day, she opined, "[e]ven more important than the discovery of Columbus which we are gathered here to celebrate, is the fact that the general government has just discovered women."[64] It seems as though the discovery of women was ongoing: the fair planners' catalogues and interactions with the Women's Committee are testament to their ignorance of the fairer sex. The Women's Committee, however, would not relinquish their independence.

The 1985 Theme Catalogue devoted a paragraph to the Women's Pavilion, "one of the most novel exhibits."[65] The imagined exhibit was divided into two parts. The first, "Women as Discoverers," would focus on known and unknown historical figures like Sojourner Truth, Marie Curie, and Phillis Wheatley. "But the Woman of the Future is where the real excitement begins. You find that women are working on some of the world's most advanced projects…"[66] As though in direct mitigation of that statement, however, the next stop on the imaginary tour of the fair was in the Hall of Discoverers, where the viewer, upon asking who invented the bikini, would be treated to a hologram of, "a model wearing the item in question" who detailed the history of its design.[67] It seems that, in spite of a host of accomplishments, women were to be relegated to be objects of the male gaze.

Susan Catania, a former state representative and member of Harold Washington's Advisory Committee, recalled their first meeting in December 1982: "[i]t was attended

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[64] Quoted in *The Fair Women.*
[65] "1985 Theme Catalogue," 29, Chicago 1992 World's Fair – Authority, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid., 29-30

by well over a hundred women, and a couple of men." The location choice was symbolic. The committee wanted to be seen as supportive of the work that had already been done by the World's Fait Corp. In her October 31, 1983 interview with Evelyn Wilbanks, she noted that, after the initial meeting, the Women's Committee met at the Chicago Bar Association, "which is interesting because the meeting rooms…all have pictures of white, dour looking males staring down at us. I have yet to find any meeting room in downtown Chicago where you can find cheerful looking women, or any kind of looking women for that matter, looking down at you from the walls."[68]

Men were looking down from more than the walls, and the Women's Committee was the object of criticisms from several factions. In response to Wilbanks' report of a young architect who had, "criticized the committee for being too focused on semantics and logistics," Catania responded that the women were reasserting their desire for democracy and transparency; "they were truly democratic with a small d…everybody's being given an opportunity to discuss." Catania and the Women's Committee pushed for transparency in response to the Fair Corp.'s often opaque workings. The soon-formed Legal Committee produced Articles of Incorporation and by-laws, and, in their status report, noted, "[t]he final draft reflects our attempts to reconcile the need for democratic, member-responsive governance and the need for a governance structure that will allow timely response to the political process surrounding the debates about the…Fair." From its inception, the Women's Committee concern with structure was a marked contrast to the working of the World's Fair Corp.

[68] Susan Catania interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, October 31, 1983, transcript, Chicago History Museum.

The women were also responding to the way the Fair Corp. had advertised and lobbied for the Fair, and argued against sexist representations. Many women protested the content of the multi-media show that the Fair Corp. had taken to the BIE on the grounds that, "[t]hey thought that it had a lot of sexism in it…There was a certain amount of hissing during the presentation….They did blow-ups on a large screen of a back view of female cheerleaders." The Fair Corp further angered the Women's Committee by suggesting that it be absorbed into the Corp. as an auxiliary with the caveat that no one from the Women's Committee would be an 'official' member of the Corp, but that a member Corp would be made chairman of the women's committee to report their comments. The move was an insult to women who were, "[s]etting out to be sure that women are present where we need to be present and represented as intelligent contributing members of society."[69]

In the first six months of its existence, the Women's committee organized itself into eight sub-committees and created a mission statement. In their six-month status report, each subcommittee presented a list of long term goals and possible actions to progress towards those goals. The Aesthetics Committee's purpose was, "to guarantee that all materials released on behalf of the women's committee and all exhibits representing the work of women at the Fair are first class in design and aesthetics, [and] to assure that women artists, designers, and architects have an active role." The Archives and Research Committee aimed to, "establish guidelines for record-keeping…, to outline what all the possible functions of the [committee] could be and then to prioritize and make recommendations for what should be." They concluded, "[i]t is clear that we must

[69] Catania interview.

decide how much we want to accomplish, how much we must accomplish, and what resources we have available. The pains of "organizing"!" Wilbanks' interviews with women are strikingly different than her interviews with men for several reasons; one notable difference is that all of the women were clear about what happened, when it happened, and who was involved. They had the records. Their style was a direct contrast to the like of Ayers, Petkus, and Burke, for whom ideas and memories just seemed to appear out of the mist, and Wilbanks chatted with several women about their different strategies.

One can't ignore the last line of the Archives and Research Committee report: "The pains of "organizing"!" None of the Women's Committee papers state any kind of feminist agenda, but "organizing," in quotes, strongly implies a history of political activism. By the 1980s, the second wave of feminism had diminished what it meant to be a feminist changed. The decade was replete with backlash – against the Civil Rights Movement, the environmental movement, and feminism. In many ways, educated, professional women, like the ones on the Women's Committee, separated themselves from the image of sixties 'bra-burners;' they wore tailored, shoulder-padded skirt suits with high heeled shoes and strove to be the economic equals of men (while, of course, being primary caretakers for household and children). The Women's Committee, however, saw themselves as "organizers" – outsiders who dedicated themselves to activism to reach equality. The priorities of the Women's Committee foreshadowed feminist discussions of intersectionality that emerged in the late 1980s. They were far more concerned about race, ethnicity, class, and community than the World's Fair Corp.

The Community Liaison Subcommittee's (CLS) goals were to inform local women's groups about the fair and the women's committee, to disseminate information about the "impact of the World's Fair on quality of life" in and around the fair site as well as the larger metro area, and to reach out to ethnic groups.[70] Similarly, the Media Relations Committee had already begun the continuing task of announcing meetings in all media outlets and connecting the Women's Committee with Chicago women in the media. Both committees were a direct rebuke to the Fair Corp's policy of secrecy and closed-door meetings. As the Fair Corp. tried to assess the positive effects of increased civic pride, the CLS attempted to grapple with that elusive barometric, "quality of life." While both groups tackled with predicting possible qualitative analyses, their underlying assumptions were much different. The Fair Corp. assumed that the only outcome of a fair would be pride, and the question was merely how much. The CLS assumed that there would be change, but didn't presuppose that the change would be positive or negative. The white, male, middle-aged Fair Corp. had the general expectation that what was good for them was good for all, and had the weight of history to support their beliefs, whereas the women saw (and probably experienced) that historical change did not necessarily move quickly or visibly in their favor.

After studying the 1893 Woman's Building and the experience of women at the fair, Susan Catania noted that the experience, "had…been a real break-through for women, but nothing was left that we could point to and show to our daughters…so we thought that after this one we would have to have a museum to forever preserve what we

[70] "Women's Committee Six Month Status Report, December 15 1982 – June 13 1983," Chicago 1992 World's Fair Women's Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.

did." The visible legacy of Burnham, Nathaniel Owings, Bertrand Goldberg, and other male civic leaders was – and remains – plain at every turn; indeed, the visible legacy of men is plain in every American city, but the lives of women are often silent and invisible. Thus, the stated goal of the International Women's Museum Committee was that, "women must have an important, authorized, visible presence at the Fair and therefore there must be a women's Building or Pavilion, preferably permanent, on the Fair site" so that "the work done by women in conjunction with the 1992 Chicago World's Fair shall not be lost to posterity…" as so much women's work was. The Exhibits Committee worked on developing a theme; "Discovering Women" and "Women: Leaders in Discovery" had been suggested. The ultimate goal of both committees was that a permanent Women's Museum be established in Chicago. The Committee identified potential sites, including a building from, coincidentally, 1893. Although the Lexington Hotel (renamed the New Michigan Hotel in 1938)[71] was originally a hotel for the fair, it was used in the following years as an Al Capone hideout and a 400-room brothel, but had been occupied only by squatters for some time in 1982. The non-profit Sunbow Foundation purchased the building for $500,000 on Dec 20, 1982.

Richard Reeder, a long-time Chicagoan, former city employee, and author of *Chicago Sketches* recalled Sunbow Foundation Director Patricia Porter as a, "tall, imposing woman wearing workboots and overalls," who was tenaciously dedicated to her work.[72] The foundation trained minority women in construction trades, and the plan was that, with the help of city and federal funding, their crew would rehabilitate the hotel into

[71] Richard Reeder, "The Lexington Hotel," *A Literary Reader* (blog), June 4, 2012, aliteraryreader.wordpress.com.
[72] Ibid.

the museum and research center. The Lexington achieved some fame in 1985 when a Sunbow crew found secret tunnels, staircases, and vaults used by Al Capone and his crew.[73] Opening one concrete vault was a major media event that ultimately left many disappointed: it contained nothing but a few whiskey bottles.[74]

By 1987, Sunbow listed the property for sale, admitting that the state of the property was much worse than anticipated. Spokeswoman Barbara Moss cited lack of funding as a significant factor, noting that, "[w]omen in construction just isn't enough of a cause for some people to give money."[75] According to Reeder, "Sunbow dissolved in 1987 due to lack of funding. The Lexington Hotel was demolished in 1996. The McCormick Place Convention Center now extends across the street of the site…" The entire affair seems sadly symbolic; despite their best efforts, no visible legacy of the Women's Committee remains.

The Fundraising Committee had not yet developed a long term budget, but had created an annual award for service to the organization, The Bertha Palmer Award. The award ceremony was intended to be the Women's Committee's "major yearly event." Lastly, the Fair Corporation Committee was to develop and present goals for women's employment and participation to the World's Fair Corp. They hoped to develop an equal opportunity statement to ensure the place of women and minorities in planning and building the fair.

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[73] Even this was not without controversy, as two men claimed to have discovered the vault in 1981, and sued the Sunbow Foundation for any and all media income, which included $50,000 from the Geraldo Rivera Show.
[74] "Capone's Hotel Vaults Full of…Tv Publicity," *Chicago Tribune*, April 22, 1986.
[75] David Ibata, "Capone Hotel Can't Shake Jinx: Group Drops Rehabilitation Effort, Lexington for Sale," *Chicago Tribune*, April 8, 1987.

The Fair Corp. Committee chairperson was Bette Cerf Hill, an executive director of the South Loop Planning Board, a "membership organization of property developers in an area bounded by Jackson on the north to Sixteenth Street, from the Chicago River to Lake Michigan." It was a private non-profit group consisting of South Loop property owners whose purpose was to co-ordinate development plans. Cerf Hill, formerly of the Landmarks Preservation Council, was interested in stimulating development in Printer's Row while maintaining and restoring historic structures;[76] with her past experience as deputy director of the Bicentennial Commission for the state of Illinois in the 1970s, she was also active in creating the Fair Review Council.

In her interview with Wilbanks, Cerf Hill and her assistant Barbara Lynne recalled that many people felt they were not being heard by the Fair Corp. as early as 1981; Barbara Lynne even contended that fair planners and architects from SOM left a public hearing early to avoid talking to the press. On December 2, 1982, Cerf Hill received a letter from fellow civic leader Judith Kiriazis (who will be discussed at greater length in the following pages and the next chapter), informing her about Department of Commerce's official approval of the fair and her desire to create an organization or coalition to communicate fair ideas and plans.

Like the Women's Committee, the Fair Review Council tried to be neutral or positive about the fair plans. Publicly, they declared themselves a

> coalition of civic, professional, and community organizations whose purpose is to act as an information clearing house; to investigate and consider key issues related to the proposed Fair, and to convey common concerns to the public, the Corporation, the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois as they proceed with the planning and implementation of the

[76] Bette Cerf Hill Interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, October 26, 198, transcript, Chicago History Museum.

> Fair. The FRC publishes a monthly newsletter, has sponsored site tours, has organized a financial seminar and symposium concerned with the Fair, encouraged participation of all its members and others in the Dept. of Commerce's Environmental Impact Statement Scoping meeting, and has working committees dealing with specific topics.[77]

Officially, the diverse membership of the group meant that "not everyone [felt] the same on every issue."[78] Privately, however, Cerf Hill and Kiriazis were strongly suspicious of the planning process. Cerf Hill and the South Loop Planning Board contended that if the 1933 fair, which was on a nearly identical site, didn't revive the south loop, then this fair wouldn't either. (They were not alone in that assessment – Nathaniel Owings agreed.) Cerf Hill was also suspicious of the motivations of some of the fair planners, including Tom Ayers. Like many others, she concluded that Ayers' position as chair of both the Dearborn Park Corporation and the Fair Corp. was a significant conflict of interest. Furthermore, as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Chicago Architecture Foundation, and had serious qualms about the design of the site and its effect on the neighboring communities.

The Turning of the Tide:
The New Authority and a Populist Government

In March of 1982, John McCarron reported on the frustration of the community and the actions of a newly formed protest group, the Chicago 1992 Committee. His headline, "Battle lines drawn on world fair plan," clarifies the 'us v them' fears and attitudes of grassroots groups and individuals who long felt that city leaders ignored not only the importance of their communities, but their personhood. The major groups

[77] "The World's Fair: A Citizen's Guide," Prepared by George W. Davis, August 1983.
[78] Cerf Hill interview.

involved in Fair protests are cited here, including the Center for Neighborhood Technology (and their publication, *The Neighborhood Works*). The article includes an oft-quoted statement from George Burke: "They [community groups] think all our energies ought to go into urban renewal…But the fact is that no one is going to buy a ticket to an urban renewal project."[79] Most press until the 1983 election, however, was positive.

All of this planning happened amidst news of the Knoxville fair's financial difficulties, and the papers regularly featured profiles of that event's exhibits, planners, and politics. Chicago's press was neither uniformly for nor against this fair: the travel section offered advice for enthusiastic visitors, while the urban affairs section often portrayed Knoxville as a cautionary tale. An April 4th spread raised concerns about the corruption of Knoxville fair officials, pointing out the conflicts of interest among fair planners and investors with the business community with each group "lining each other's pockets."[80] Additionally, the chairman of the Knoxville fair had been incarcerated for fraud the previous year. Later that month, however, the *Tribune's* travel section focused on the great success of the fair the week before it opened. The press was now divided in its enthusiasm for all things Fair, as were the people.

By federal law, all actions "significantly affecting the quality of the human environment" require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).[81] The World's Fair Corp. had completed the preliminary report assessing the Fair's effect on Lake Michigan,

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[79] John McCarron, "Battle Lines Drawn on World Fair Plans," *Chicago Tribune,* March 14, 1982.
[80] James Coates and Andy Knott, "Power Brokers Cashing in on Knoxville World's Fair," *Chicago Tribune* April 4.
[81] This process will be addressed in detail in Chapter Three.

but the official EIS would take much more research and time, and would require the input of the community. An Environmental Impact Scoping Hearing was set for Monday, February 28. It would be held at the Field Museum, for the Department of Commerce to "hear from the public about the kinds of environmental questions that have to be answered."[82] A February 27th *Tribune* article highlighted the fact that the World's Fair Corp. report summarizing the Fair plan had not been made public until a month before, and that the report had predicted "only a small impact on the nearby Pilsen and Douglas neighborhoods," a point with which the inhabitants of Pilsen and Douglas vehemently disagreed. The neighborhoods foresaw years of construction traffic and road closures, rising rents, and gentrification. In their minds, the primary effects the fair would have on the neighborhoods would rob them of what made them home. The article quoted the report itself, stating, "there is no overt, organized opposition to the fair at this time."[83] As the next chapter will show, the World's Fair Corp. was terribly wrong. Simmering public resentment at the Corp.'s continued hubris boiled over into the press; urban affairs writer John McCarron compared the World's Fair Corp. to "determined salmon hellbent for upstream."[84] The EIS Scoping Hearing proved a turning point in planning the fair.

At least 200 people attended the hearing on February 28, 1983. The event was in fact the first public hearing sponsored by the Fair Corp. about the Fair. Some of the attendees had read the Fair Corp's Environmental Assessment despite the fact that it was not released to the public until February 14; even then, reading copies were $10 a piece at the public library. The Fair Corp. did what it could to maintain control over the hearing,

[82] "Hearing Set on Impact of World's Fair," *Chicago Tribune*, February 27, 1983.
[83] Ibid.
[84] John McCarron, "World's Fair Backers Keep Their Momentum," *Chicago Tribune*, March 6, 1983.

but person after person expressed their doubts about the Fair in general and the World's Fair Corporation in particular. The hearing, the details of which will be addressed in Chapter Three, along with the election of a new mayor, Harold Washington, the city's first African American to hold that office, resulted in both the city and state gradually pulling their support for the Fair.

Tribune writer R.C. Longworth profiled fair planning to date and probed "the dollars-and-cents issues of the fair and its impact on the city" in a week-long series of articles. He began by acknowledging the two sides of the fair: it could galvanize nations and "spawn a bright new south side." Or, it could divert money that could be better used elsewhere, create air and water pollution, and leave Chicago with a large park that the city couldn't afford.[85] Regardless, the fair would be "an extravaganza that seems certain to dominate Chicago's life for the next decade." By May, fair planners predicted that the six-month fair would "spend more than $1 billion in public and private money, change the shape of Chicago's lakefront, draw 54 million fairgoers and bring $1.8 billion in business to the city. Planning for it has moved almost beyond the point of no return." Longworth concluded, however, that the plans were still "vague," noting that there were no solid plans for financing. Most criticism, he said, reflected "traditional distrust which Chicago's many neighborhoods…feel towards the businesses of the Loop. But the fair's backers say they want to unite Chicago in one huge, forward-looking project."

Longworth described all of the alternate sites proposed by a variety of city planners and architects left out the fair plans. He delved into the controversy about the

[85] R.C. Longworth, "World's Fair 1992: What it Means for Chicago – and You," *Chicago Tribune,* May 3, 1983.

legality of changing the site. He quoted Lisa Haber of the BIE, who said "It's not terribly convenient. Most countries don't go back on their site. If the site is changed, another inquiry [by the BIE] would have to be made." She implied that a second inquiry, unlike the first one, might not give the nod to Chicago, and any request for a site change would have to come to the BIE through the U.S. government. Dr. George L.B. Pratt, director of international expositions for the U.S. Commerce Department, stated flatly that "the site cannot be changed." Architect Harry Weese argued that presenting any different site plans was futile, stating that "[t]he truth is that the site is frozen. What they [the corporation] are doing is the old Mayor Daley game, which is meaningless public involvement. They're building up such a head of steam that nobody can derail them. I call them the Gang of '92."[86]

It strains credulity to believe that the Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Corporation did not more seriously consider the ramifications of their name change in 1983. For many of Chicago's residents, the idea of a Corporation making major decisions that would impact their lives for the next decade was uncomfortable; the notion that an Authority would make those decisions was even worse. In 1983, with the election of Harold Washington, a majority of the city's residents, in effect, cast their votes to protest the authoritarian Daley political machine. Change in city government fostered a change in attitudes towards local politics and the power of minority and ethnic community organizations. For the first time, many of these groups felt they had a voice in local government and policy, and they were eager to make their voice heard. New mayoral

[86] Ibid.

committees with anti-authoritarian platforms began to vocally question the processes and motives of the World's Fair organizers.

Nonetheless, the newly-minted Chicago World's Fair 1992 – Authority sought greater legislative influence and power as an official state governmental entity. The Fair Authority met for the first time on December 9, 1983.[87] The Authority's board had 27 members – 13 appointed by Mayor Washington, 13 appointed by Gov. Thompson, and chairman Tom Ayers (who was approved by both politicians). The Authority quickly established by-laws (against the wishes of several of Washington's appointees), authorized a $360,000 contract with four firms to carry out the Environmental Impact Study, hired three firms to "supervise construction of the fair-grounds," and hired Earl L. Neal of Sidley & Austin as special counsel.[88] On January 11th, 1984, just one month before Washington's election, John McCarron of the *Tribune* announced that the Fair Authority was seeking the ability to sell bonds, condemn property through powers of eminent domain, grant pensions to employees, and levy a statewide tax on hotel rooms and cigarettes.[89] In March, McCarron reported on the frustration of the community and the actions of a newly formed protest group, the Chicago 1992 Committee. His headline, "Battle lines drawn on world's fair plan," clarifies the 'us versus them' fears and attitudes of grassroots groups and individuals who long felt that city leaders ignored not only the importance of their communities, but their personhood. The major groups involved in fair protests are cited here, including the Center for Neighborhood Technology (and their newsletter, *The Neighborhood Works*). McCarron's article included an oft-quoted

[87] John McCarron "1992 Fair Takes 1st Step as Board Sets up Shop." *Chicago* Tribune, December 12, 1983.
[88] Ibid.
[89] John McCarron, "Tax, Bond Authority Sought for '92 Fair Unit," *Chicago Tribune,* January 11, 1983.

statement from Fair Authority Secretary George Burke: "They [the community groups] think all our energies ought to go into urban renewal…But the fact is that no one is going to buy a ticket to an urban renewal project."[90]

His statement perfectly encompasses some of the most common issues that arise from contemporary world's fairs plans. They are events that need to be marketed and sold to a wide variety of consumers. How could the World's Fair Authority possibly design an event that would be everything to everybody? Although it was clever, Burke's statement was not entirely true. As the next chapters will show, the Fair was indeed an urban renewal project – it was just designed to renew a very specific place (the South Loop) and empower very specific people (business investors and architects – the very people already designing the fair).

In July of 1983, international approval was won, so the planning went into its second phase: "planning, marketing, and studying the environmental impact," according to Ayers. Once the BIE approved the plans, the Fair Authority could petition the legislature to issue tax-exempt bonds; the Authority could hire an engineering firm selected by the U.S. Department of Commerce, to study the environmental impact of the fair; and start marketing to potential exhibitors and tourists.[91] The Fair Authority could also spend some time winning over the different factions of the city council and Mayor Washington.

Harold Washington's election further inspired the fair's detractors to action. Washington's support of the fair was, at best, lukewarm. His statements regarding the fair

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[90] John McCarron, "Battle Lines Drawn on World Fair Plans," *Chicago Tribune,* March 14, 1982.
[91] R.C. Longworth and John McCarron, "World's Fair Shifts into its 'Second Phase' after OK: Funds, Marketing among Next Steps" *Chicago Tribune*, June 16, 1983.

are a study in politics, exhibiting neither support nor outright disapproval. Elizabeth Hollander, director of Washington's Department of Planning, recalled, "[T]he mayor's message was not clear. He did not declare himself against the Fair but encouraged concentrate[ing] on questions of cost and minority participation…it was never clear to me whether the aim was a better fair or no fair."[92] Pierre Clavel, a professor of city planning at Cornell University, and Wim Wiewel, a professor in the School of Urban Planning and Policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago (and author of a report that contradicted the Fair Authority's employment statistics) contend that Washington's habit of "making up his own mind as late as possible," a tactic from his days as a Congressman, was also rooted in the fact that he probably "lacked the power to enforce a single point of view."[93] Much ink has been spilled over the City Council Wars of the early 80s: a group of twenty-nine white ethnic alderman would block anything that Washington proposed.[94] The Wars were so contentious that the city was referred to "Beirut on the Lake," the first of several comparisons to the Middle East.[95,96]

As the fair's location and design continued to spark impassioned debate in Chicago, the state General Assembly debated distributing funds to the fair. The Fair Authority hoped that the state would approve a two cent per pack cigarette tax and a one

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[92] Elizabeth Hollander, "The Department of Planning Under Harold Washington," in *Harold Washington and the Neighborhoods: Progressive City Government in Chicago, 1983-1987,* eds. Pierre Clavel and Wim Wievel, (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1991), 132.
[93] Pierre Clavel and Wim Wievel, conclusion to *Harold Washington and the Neighborhoods: Progressive City Government in Chicago, 1983-1987,* eds. Pierre Clavel and Wim Wievel, (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1991), 274.
[94] Pacyga, 376.
[95] William Grimshaw, *Bitter Fruit: Black Politics and the Chicago Machine, 1931-1991*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992), 185.
[96] In the early 2000s, for example, the name "Chi-raq" became popular.

percent statewide hotel tax to pay interest on the bonds they hoped to issue.[97,98] According to the *Tribune*, by the end of October the cigarette tax had been dropped and the key issue in Springfield was whether or not the General Assembly would "pledge the state's general revenue fund as a back-up" if the bond measure failed.[99] Ayers told the state legislature that the Fair Authority needed state money immediately if the planning was going to continue. The general fund would only be tapped if the fair's revenues did not reach more than $793 million ("an unthinkably large shortfall, say organizers").[100] Ayers called the state's financial exposure minimal, but contended that, "if the bonds are to carry the projected interest rate of 10.5 percent rather than the 16 to 17 percent they would have to yield without a state backstop."[101] Nonetheless, "a number of legislators told the *Tribune* that the whole matter should be put off until spring…giving lawmakers time to study it in detail."[102]

The Fair Authority, City government, Mayor Harold Washington, Governor James Thompson, and Illinois General Assembly spent the fall of 1983 and all of 1984 wrangling over who would pay for the fair, and how. When Ayers and the Fair Authority presented a plan to the General Assembly that would tax hotels and motels statewide, the planners had a new group to win over: downstate legislators, who sided with neither Mayor Washington nor the Authority. *Tribune* writer Daniel Egler summed up the feeling of many legislators that Harold Washington's demand that all fair profits benefitted

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[97] John McCarron, "Fair Planners Drop Cigarette-tax Bid," *Chicago Tribune*, October 25, 1983.
[98] John McCarron, "World Fair Organizers Seek a Revenue Pledge," *Chicago Tribune*, October 16, 1983.
[99] John McCarron and Daniel Egler, "World's Fair Hinges on Support by State," *Chicago Tribune,* October 31, 1983.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.

Chicago, "left legislators, especially those who represent districts outside the city's borders, infuriated." As one legislator said, "it sounds like he wants to tax everybody in the world who doesn't live in the city and take all the money himself."[103] Nonetheless, and despite widespread reservations, the Assembly approved, and Thompson signed, a temporary 1% hotel-motel tax on November 11.

The Fair Authority delayed presenting a final budget until 1984, in part because fair critics demanded more time to plan participation. Frankie Kozuch said she, "couldn't be more pleased…[it was] a breakthrough for public participation."[104] Alderman Stone was less friendly to the delay, calling every previously proposed spending plan "ludicrous," stating that the proposed budgets "lacked sufficient detail to meet private business standards…but I suppose it's different when you are spending taxpayer money."[105]

In response to his constituent's concern about the fair, Washington created the World's Fair Advisory Committee, and tasked them with re-assessing the fair. The committee completed its review in three stages: fact finding; study and hearing public testimonies; and an exploration of ways to redress foreseeable problems of hosting the fair for the city. The October 1983 public hearings of the committee were the first of their kind in this fair planning, signaling Washington's willingness to work with the community. The results of those hearing altered the city's expectation of inclusion in fair planning, and the city devised an Intergovernmental Agreement to be signed by the Fair

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[103] Daniel Egler, "1st World's Fair Wish Granted: Temporary 1% Cook County Hotel Tax OK'd," *Chicago Tribune*, November 8, 1983.
[104] John McCarron, "World Fair Board Delays Final Budget for 1984," *Chicago Tribune,* December 31, 1983.
[105] Ibid.

Authority, Chicago, and Illinois. The city demanded, among other things, that no resources be diverted from the neighborhoods, that the city would not be a guarantor against any financial liability, and that the Authority participate in an affirmative action program.

McCarron postulated two reasons for the Mayor's "hard-line" approach to the first drafts of the document: first, "local officials finally are coming to grips with the public cost and disruption" that the fair would cause. Second, many people suspected that "the fair may have become a hostage in the political fight between the mayor and the Chicago City Council's anti-administration majority led by Ald. Edward Vrdolyak."[106] Although the Chicago Park District was one of the first entities to whole-heartedly endorse the fair, Park Superintendent Edmund Kelly was adamantly against it after Washington's election. The Fair Authority needed the Park District's approval for the site because they determined if the Fair Authority would lease the site. John McHugh, president of the park board, said that the district opposed the fair because it would curtail use of the parks for the better part of a decade and change the access to Soldier Field.[107] He maintained that the park district's stance on the fair was not, "politically or selfishly motivated,"[108] but those with a nose for politics thought differently. "A critical sidelight," contended McCarron "is that the Mayor has threatened to oust Edmund Kelly…and convert the park system into a city department. Such a consolidation would

[106] John McCarron, "City Takes Hard Line in Fair Bargaining List" *Chicago Tribune,* March 1, 1984.
[107] Rudolph Unger and McCarron, "World's Fair Plan Snags on Park Use" *Chicago Tribune*, February 28 1984.
[108] John E. McHugh "Park District's Views on Fair Site," *Chicago Tribune,* April 2, 1984.

be a body blow to the regular Democrats because the park system is one of their largest sources of political patronage jobs."[109]

The Intergovernmental Agreement went through a number of drafts, but the negotiations resulted in a document highly favorable to the city. Some of the articles were reasonable: one section requires that the World's Fair Authority provide "equal employment opportunity and shall take steps to ensure non-discrimination" and adopt an affirmative action plan.[110] Other provisions, however, seemed designed to hamstring the Authority. While the State and City would receive "substantial tangible and intangible benefits as a result of the fair," the Authority was "responsible for financing the Fair, including, but not limited to, planning for the Fair, constructing, operating, and terminating the Fair site."[111] In other words, the city would reap all the benefits of the Fair, but "neither the City nor the State will bear any financial responsibility for the Fair."[112] The Authority was not pleased with the demands. Tom Ayers described them in a radio interview as, "not realistic, [and] unfair…If it gets to be too much and people don't want it, we can always fold up our tent and quit."[113]

Meanwhile, the gears of the state legislature continued to grind slowly. In April, the Fair Authority proposed a 'zoned' tax plan that would raise the hotel-motel tax across the state. The plan would have raised taxes downstate as much or more as in the city;

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[109] John McCarron, "Aldermen, Park Officials Label World's Fair an Economic Risk," *Chicago Tribune* March 8, 1984.
[110] "Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement among the State of Illinois; the City of Chicago And The Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Authority for the 1992 Chicago World's Fair," Article 19 Section 01, Harold Washington papers, Harold Washington Public Library.
[111] "Intergovernmental Agreement," 3.
[112] "Intergovernmental Agreement" Article 2.01(b).
[113] John McCarron and Shanker, "Demand on Fair to Protect Taxpayers," *Chicago Tribune,* March 5, 1984.

needless to say, downstate legislators once again wondered what was in it for them.[114] That plan was dropped in a matter of weeks, and wasn't replaced until June with a plan that would tax restaurants. The legislators liked the idea of a "meal tax," but the Illinois Restaurant Association didn't; its lobbyist threatened to "recruit every restauranteur in the state to oppose it."[115]

Following the two plans that clearly generated enmity from a broad base of Illinoisans, the Fair Authority emphasized the importance of a public/private partnership. In response to the news that the Knoxville fair, which had just closed, left taxpayers on the hook for millions of dollars in shortfalls, John Kramer stated that half of the $900 million in bonds that would be sold for the fair would be backed by private groups. The General Assembly still needed to agree on how to fund the fair, however, and the Governor backed a plan sponsored by downstate legislator Pate Philips [R., Elmhurst] that would provide $8.8 million to the Fair Authority for the next year, at which point they would request more funds from the state.[116] Neither the Fair Authority nor the state GOP lawmakers liked the plan, however; the Fair Authority argued that, without the promise of future funding, private backers wouldn't guarantee loans. Moreover, the $8.8 million fell $1.5 million short of what was required to conduct yet more feasibility studies, as required by the state, while continuing the planning process. The state's GOP maintained that the fair would benefit only Chicago, and didn't want to back any plan that their constituents deemed too expensive. Additionally, many people downstate, and

[114] John McCarron and Daniel Egler, "Hotel Tax Plan for Fair: 'Zoned' Levy Favors City, Critics Charge," *Chicago Tribune,* April 3, 1984.
[115] Daniel Egler and John McCarron, "Agreement Near on Fair Funds," *Chicago Tribune*, June 8, 1984.
[116] Daniel Egler, "Thompson Backs Alternative Plan to Finance Fair," *Chicago Tribune*, June 14, 1984.

their elected representative, resented the priorities given to the city over the years. Rep. Judy Barr Topinka [R., Riverside], for example, said, "[a]nything you put on it is not going to cover up the smell. You can perfume it till the cows come home and it's still going to stink…I think we ought to end it right now."[117]

Eventually, the fate of the fair was tied to the future of McCormick Place, Chicago's major convention center. On July 4th, Thompson, "in a ceremony on the 23rd Street Bridge over Lake Shore Drive" signed a tax package that would provide the same $8.8 million to the Fair Authority and a "permanent $27.5 million-a-year revenue stream to construct a $265 million annex hall" Chicago's largest convention center, McCormick Place. The legislation was passed in the last hours of the session in order to "head off opposition from the beverage industry" to a 5 percent statewide tax on soft drinks.[118]

In a move to garner greater support from the state, in September, the Gov. Thompson and the Fair Authority named John D. Kramer as general director and James W. Compton as chairman. The team brought, "powerful political influence with the Illinois General Assembly and a solid background in interracial relations."[119] At the time of his appointment, Kramer was the state's Transportation Secretary and interim chairman of the Regional Transportation Authority. Kramer's "deft maneuvering" in the past had prevented the fair from getting axed, according to McCarron. The Fair Authority hoped Kramer's youth (he was 36), enthusiasm, and proposed permanent performing arts center and Tivoli-style amusement park would sway more aldermen and state

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[117] Daniel Egler, "House Defied Thompson: New Fair Tax Proposal," *Chicago Tribune*, June 30, 1984.
[118] John McCarron, "Governor Hails Fair Tax Deal" *Chicago Tribune,* July 4, 1984.
[119] Stanley Ziemba and Daniel Egler, "Kramer, Compton Team up to Save '92 World's Fair," *Chicago Tribune*, September 11, 1984.

legislators.[120] Widely regarded as a wunderkind, hopes for Kramer were high. Compton was, and would remain, president of the Chicago Urban League, and one of the few Black people involved in fair planning. Even as the fair stood on shaky ground, Kramer and Compton had, "secured a guarantee that would allow them to continue collecting their pay for an additional six months if the legislature [terminated] the Fair Authority as of June 20," the end of the legislative session.[121]

Shortly after they began their tenure, Kramer and Compton revealed a new plan for the fair. It was the first of several plans to scale back the scope of the event to something the public found more manageable to fund.

The Fair Falls Apart

In spite of local protests and lack of city and institutional support, some organizers of the Chicago fair persisted in their plans**.** In early1985, the Authority was still hopeful that the Fair would happen. They released a new version of the theme catalogue in what seemed to be a "last-ditch effort" to convince the public of the fair's usefulness.[122] Additionally, The Authority released a much revised, and more compact, site plan that both cut costs and reduced landfill. (Figure 5) The new "economy model" fair site cut costs by 30 percent, reduced landfill 47 acres (from 180), and included

[120] John McCarron, "It's Decision Time, with Future Fuzzy for World's Fair," *Chicago Tribune,* October 28, 1984.
[121] John McCarron, "Fair Board Hires Chief of Planning," *Chicago Tribune*, November 6, 1984.
[122] John McCarron, "Book Gives Peek at Ideas for Fair Site," *Chicago Tribune,* April 19, 1985.

satellite sites in the neighborhoods. Both Gov. Thompson and Ald. Stone said the new plan was a step in the right direction.[123]

The new plan did not convince skeptical critics and legislators, however. In a March 1984 Memo, Commissioner Robert Mier noted that there was considerable real estate speculation in the South Loop area, and that "many businesses are anticipating being driven away by spiraling property values…some businessmen even are eagerly anticipating it in order to capture a windfall profit and an opportunity to retire,"[124] and an April *Tribune* article quoted Philip O'Connor, chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission, who stated that the nearness of the fair might improve the attraction…to private developers.[125] Rep. Dwight Friedrich was also quoted, stating, "Until now, the State of Illinois is the only whipping boy we can find…The legislature is not going to give you money for another year unless we find some way to pay for it other than the State of Illinois getting stuck."[126] By 1985, the fair was perceived as a get-rich scheme for the fair planners rather than a boon to the city.

A June 1985 statement from John D. Kramer and James W. Compton called the fair a "noble dream," but conceded that the "dream has died" because of lack of political support. The Chairman and Director "most reluctantly" recommended that the Board of Directors disband. As a whole, the statement is eloquent, offering both sincere thanks and apologies to those who had supported the Fair for half a decade. They conclude that,

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[123] Stanley Ziemba, "Final' Fair Design an Economy Model." *Chicago Tribune,* March 6, 1985.
[124] Robert Mier Memorandum to Bill Ware, Jim Montgomery, Liz Hollander, "World's Fair Intergovernmental Agreement," March 19, 1984, Harold Washington Papers, Harold Washington Public Library.
[125] Daniel Egler, "Fair Told to Lure Private Funds – Domed arena, Navy Pier Cited as Bait," *Chicago Tribune*, April 18, 1985.
[126] Ibid.

> The Fair was a project based on optimism, confidence, and faith in the future. Those of us involved with the Fair retain that optimism and that confidence and faith, despite our disappointment at the loss of the dream. As we go on to other things, we promise to do what we can to help Chicago and Illinois to grow and prosper without a World's Fair. But with each passing day between now and 1992, we'll continue to feel the loss of what might have been.[127]

On August 6, the Authority issued a press release stating that they would go out of business on September 30. The Authority would return $2.5 million (of their $8.8 million appropriation) of unused funding to the state. The release further notes that the BIE approval for the fair was not held by the Authority, but by the Corporation, thus keeping the door open for a privately funded fair. Indeed, in a 1986 statement to the BIE, William Tatge, commercial counselor of the US Embassy and speaking on behalf of Petkus and the 1992 Corporation, stated that the fair organizers "now believe that a means has been found to return their efforts to full speed ahead." The means was private sector financing, allowing the Corporation to proceed without "competition for resources…from other projects."[128]

In the press, however, the Fair was dead. The fair was configured in the press as a living thing: not only was the fair 'dead,' it would have a postmortem and a funeral.[129] Patrick Quinn, leader of the Coalition for Political Honesty, argued for a public referendum, noting that, "World's fairs in other places have become bottomless pits for public money." John Kramer countered that public opinion polls still favored the fair, and

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[127] John D. Kramer and James W. Compton, "Statement," 1992 World's Fair Authority, June 20, 1985, World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[128] "Statement of the Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Corporation before the Bureau of International Expositions; Delivered on Behalf of the 1992 Corporation by Mr. William Tatge, Commercial Counsel of the Embassy of the United States, Paris, France," June 5, 1986, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[129] John McCarron. "Fair Authority Plans its Funeral – Last-rite Decisions Made behind Closed Doors," *Chicago Tribune*, July 17, 1985.

that the public should trust their elected leaders to do what was best for them.[130,131] Indeed, most newspaper polls showed that about 2/3 of Chicagoans still liked the idea of a fair and 42% of those supporters favored a tax to subsidize the event.[132] Perhaps a *Tribune* op-ed by Kenneth E. Gerler, a member of the World's Fair Advisory Committee, sheds more light: his piece, "Negative reporting on World's Fair?" argues that "the newspapers continue their negative reporting and only print items of dispute or anything that makes the fair look like no one favors it."[133] Quinn was hardly alone in his contention that the public should be able to vote on the fair rather than leaving the decision up to legislators; in an op-ed, University of Chicago law professor Philip B. Kurland not only compared John Kramer to P.T. Barnum and Boss Tweed; he also suggested that, "[t]he Fair process is simply a revival of the corruption of the Constitution…legislators are uninformed…and the people are kept in the dark...It is all a dismal…failure of representative democracy."[134] People and groups who had previously endorsed the fair publicly withdrew their endorsements, including the Chicago Park District[135]

In December 1985, Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Corporation (the original planning entity that remained after the state's World's Fair Authority was dissolved) addressed the BIE General Assembly. In their statement, they recalled King Cole's warning that their first stage of planning would be greeted with enthusiasm, while their

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[130] John McCarron, "State Referendum Urged on Funding for '92 Fair," *Chicago Tribune*, April 22, 1985.
[131] Steve Neal, "Most Chicagoans Give Fair Their Vote," *Chicago Tribune*, April 9, 1985.
[132] "Preparing for the Fair," *Chicago Tribune*, April 18, 1985.
[133] Kenneth E. Gerler, "Voice of the People: Negative Reporting on World's Fair?" *Chicago Tribune,* February 5, 1985.
[134] "World's Fair a Corruption?," *Chicago Tribune*, April 4, 1985.
[135] John E. McHugh, "A Change of Heart on the Fair," *Chicago Tribune*, April 11, 1985.

second stage would be greeted with skepticism; Cole certainly was right. "Because of the open nature of our planning process," they claimed, the second phase was particularly difficult. However, they believed that they could "weather…setbacks and still meet our construction schedule in order to open on time."[136] "Using the 20-20 vision that hindsight provides," they admitted that the strategy of creating the 1992 Authority as a funding vehicle was a mistake. They did not note, however, their many blind spots and miscalculations of other parts of the planning process.

With the hindsight of longer history, the WFA troubles seem easily predictable; at the time, though, it seems that, while the Committee/Authority foresaw many of the issues with the public, they vastly underestimated either the power, passion, or both, of grassroots community organizations, the details of which will be described in chapter three. First, however, I will address the many design choices that the fair planners made until the fair was dead in 1985, and alternate plans proposed by other architects and community planners.

[136] "Statement of the Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Corporation before the Bureau of International Expositions; Delivered on Behalf of the 1992 Corporation by Mr. William Tatge, Commercial Counsel of the Embassy of the United States, Paris, France," June 5, 1986, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.

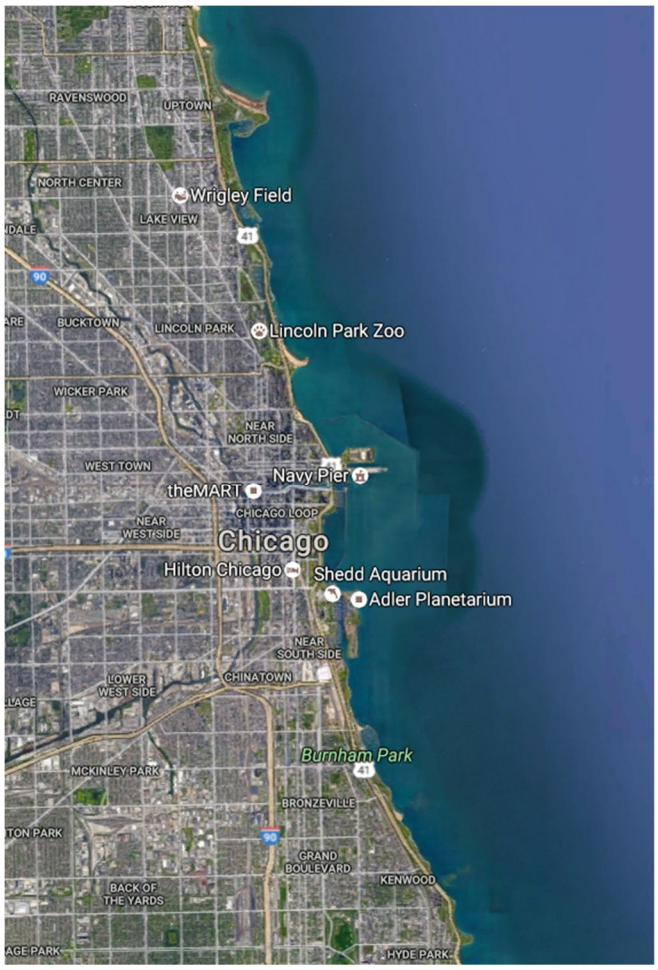

Figure 2: The Lake Michigan shore is devoted to parks and beaches in a continuous chain from the South Side to the north neighborhoods. Google, googlemap of Chicago and region.

Figure 3: The first image of the fair site designed for public consumption. *Chicago Tribune*, July 1, 1981.

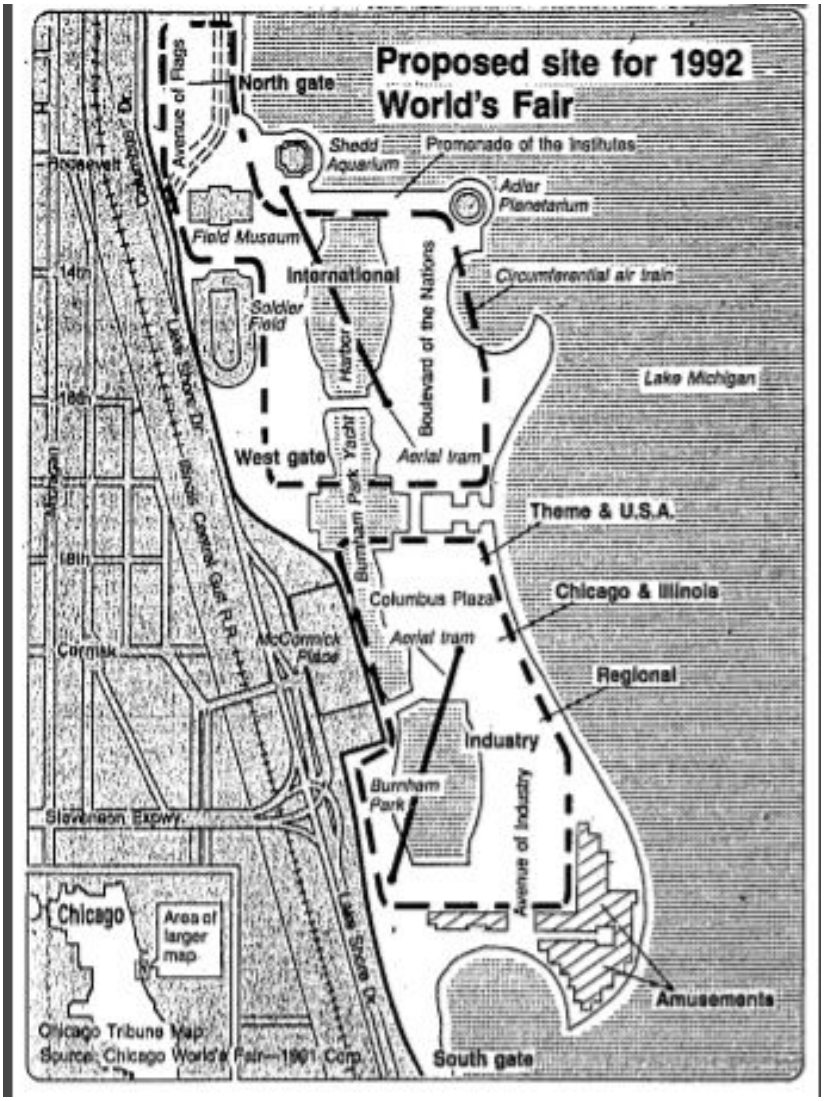

Figure 4: A more detailed site plan, with the proposed landfill in white. Even in this early stage, the fair planners had designed the details of the fair site, down to the location of themed areas and pavilions. *Chicago Tribune,* November 26, 1981.

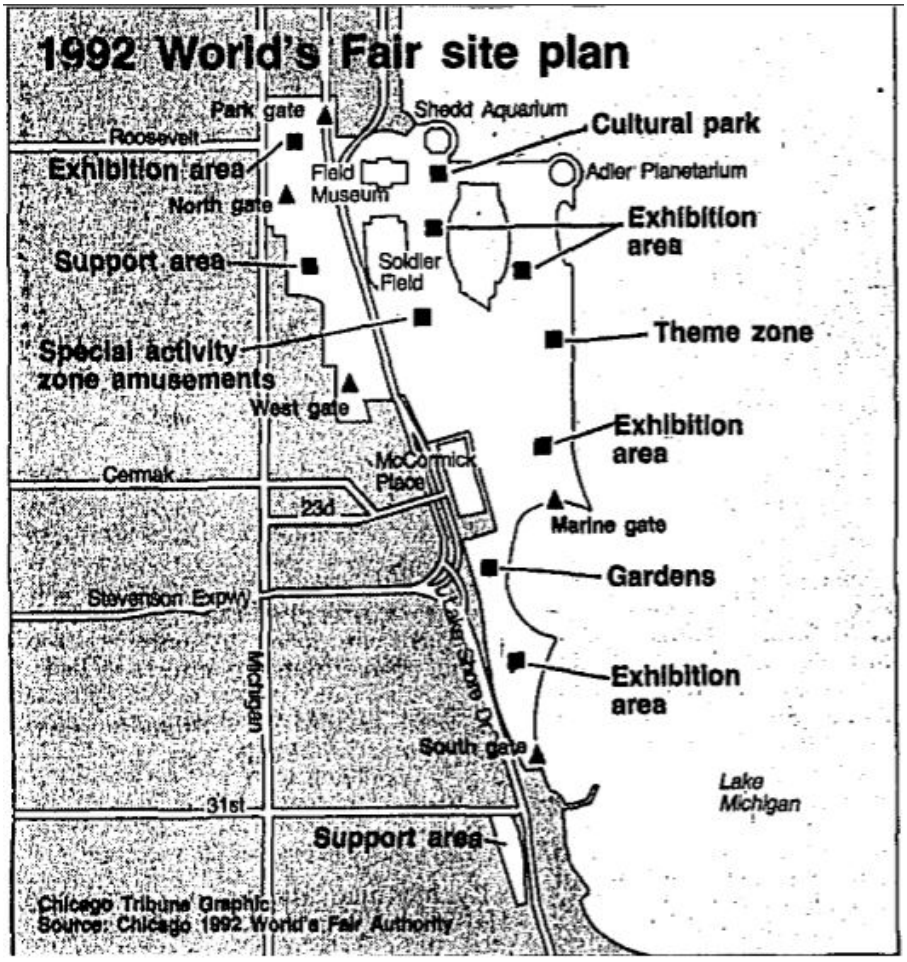

Figure 5: An Economy Model, *Chicago Tribune,* March 6, 1985.

DESIGNING THE AGE OF DISCOVERY

History, Discovery, and the Fair

Fair planners placed the fair on an historical spectrum. Their theme, "The Age of Discovery" looked to both the past and the future. In situating the fair as part of a continuum of the progress of history and technology, the fair assumed its own inevitability as well as the inevitability of the version of the future that it presented. There were no moments of contingency in the fair plans (either in the larger narrative of the fair in the history of world's fairs or in the plans for this individual fair). The juxtaposition of historical and future technologies implied a single, teleological narrative of progress. The 1983 Theme Catalogue states that, "[h]istorically, World's Fairs have provided the forum for visually measuring the progress of civilization by assembling the results of productive and ideological activity undertaken on an international scale."[1] Although many twenty-first century historians of world's fairs would disagree, the fair planners saw "visually measuring progress" as an unqualified good. Fair scholarship, however, would suggest that the fairs' ideological underpinnings often seek to reify existing power structures that justify and reiterate the global status of super-powers.

Tall ships and space ships were to be major visual themes of the fair. The theme catalogues mention possible future technologies to mine asteroids and far-flung moons, and postulate that, by 1992, a human child would be born in a space colony. The fair focused on the technologies of extraction and colonialism, with the assumption that those

[1] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1981), 2.33, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

technologies signified progress. A reenactment of Columbus' voyages was proposed, with a few minor alterations: three reproduction ships were to leave Seville's sister fair for the Caribbean, then flown "to Chicago via C-5A airfreight line." A film of the journey would be an exhibit to augment the "large watercraft" on the lakefront including Tall Ships, "old ships, the lake fleets, military craft, container shups, cruise ships…"[2]

The so-called "Fleet of Discovery" was proposed by Geo/Arts Associates of New York. The group wanted to view Columbus from a modern perspective, figuring him as an "enterprising entrepreneur…compared to a scientist today" whose commodity was information.[3] They further imagined the ships themselves as microprocessor chips – conduits of information. Geo/Arts projected that construction of the authentic replicas would take three to three-and-a-half years, followed by a three to four year touring schedule before arriving in Chicago for the fair's opening. The group emphasized the importance of the authentic replicas; the 90-100 million people who visited them would be fascinated to "see and explore these vessels, to feel the experience of actually being on board, to fantasize what it must have been like…There are no high-tech tricks…and we believe that the public will respond with genuine curiosity, and with appreciation for the organization that brings them the opportunity to witness the past."[4]

The Fleet of Discovery provided a starting point for history that lead inevitably to the present, inevitably to the United States, inevitably to Chicago, and inevitably towards space. This sense of inevitability pervaded the plans for the fair. This chapter will discuss

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[2] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, April, 1985, 90, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[3] "Fleet of Discovery Proposal," Geo/Arts Associates – Managing director Rockwell Stensrud, July12, 1984. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[4] Ibid.

four fair design considerations: theme, technologies of the future, urban planning in Chicago, and potential fair pavilions, exhibits, and events. In the first section, the development and ramifications of the theme, "Age of Discovery" provides an opportunity to close-read two theme catalogues from 1982 and 1985, arguing that, while the planners engaged three persuasive strategies (ethos, logos, and pathos), their failure lay in the fair planner's assumptions about audience. The second section will investigate what the future looked like in 1982. What did scientists and futurists believe the future would be? I will pay special attention to computers and space exploration in the context of historical presentations of forms of transportation, arguing that the fair planners' understanding of technologies were ultimately based in technologies of colonialism. I will then summarize plans for the fair, and look specifically at how the variety of plans would have affected the city. I will then investigate the intersection of SOM's fair plans and their role in city planning in Chicago. I conclude section three with a discussion of gentrification in Chicago – which some might call another form of colonization – which became a rallying cry for the Chicago 1992 Committee.

Theme Catalogues and The Age of Discovery

The 1982 theme book proclaims, "Chicago's theme – The Age of Discovery – is extremely appealing to potential visitors; appropriate for a national celebration; and broad enough to expect exhibitor interest from many nations, regions, states, and corporations," and announces the mission statement of the fair: "All nations join hands in celebrating the 500th Anniversary if the Discovery of the Americas and the great worldwide discoveries

in all fields since then and to come." Indeed, at the outset, the theme seemed fairly innocuous. It, and the fair's logo, are the very definition of design by committee, intended not to offend anyone. The catalogue elaborates: "Five hundred years of New World progress is a concept eminently worthy of celebration. But the additional opportunities to reflect on the discoveries of all the world, both past and present, and to lead the world in preparing for the miracles of the future…that's awesome." The catalogue situates the fair participant as a discoverer and asserts that attending the fair will make the participant a world citizen, themes which the fair planners elaborated in 1985.

In the 1985 theme catalogue, the fair planners described how they arrived at their theme. "After careful market research coupled with much deliberation and discussion with consultants, community organizations and civic groups, governmental leaders and others, "Age of Discovery" was chosen."[5] The catalogue emphasizes that the theme was tested with several focus groups of Chicagoans. Perhaps in response to criticisms from fair protestors, who contended that too much of the fair planning happened behind closed doors, the catalogue enumerates the "consumer studies" as well as "hundreds of informal meetings"[6] in the theme selection process. Mayor Harold Washington's World's Fair Advisory Committee (appointed to educate his new administration about the details of the fair plan and to assess its viability from a different perspective) included a "theme principle statement" as an appendix in the 1985 catalogue. Curiously, it contains most of the same language in previous publications, suggesting that the Advisory Committee was

[5] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation), April, 1985, 39, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[6] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation), April, 1985, 44, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

perhaps strongly influenced by the Fair Authority members assigned to the committee. Both publications emphasize that the choosing the theme was a, "long, complex, and deeply considered process."[7]

However, and as was more often the case, there was a considerable difference between what was reposted and reality. In his interview with Wilbanks, George Burke described the process of deciding on the theme for the fair. "Well," he said, "the theme was worked out by about ten people…"[8] The team wanted to focus on education more than entertainment, and expected visitors to "be prepared to take in some information." Although there was some criticism that the theme was too high minded, its broad appeal quickly made it the frontrunner of any themes suggested. Burke described how he 'discovered' and lobbied for his theme:

> Christopher Columbus discovered America. It was that simple….because Christopher Columbus had a successful P.R. person, but Leif Erickson and St. Brendan and whatever, all these claims to the discovery of the Americas didn't matter……all of a sudden people were stumbling on this piece of land, and it would seem if you would catalogue inventions, those kinds of things, that they really began heavily at that point. Modern times from that point were very different than any other similar length of time. Certainly nothing happened in the previous 500 years…Discoveries started to rise up out of the mist…[s]o the broader word "discovery" came out of it…it was very important that it would be an acceptable concept to countries all over the world. The only thing left on the platter after everybody cut off the parts that they didn't like the taste of, was discovery.[9]

The process certainly wasn't long or complex; on the contrary, it was rather quick. Burke's summary reads as though the Fair Corp. was begrudgingly acquiescing to

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[7] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation), April, 1985, 60, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[8] George Burke interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, August 11, 1983, transcript, Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.
[9] Ibid.

political correctness: the things that people "didn't like the taste of" - that is, something that might be offensive – makes any problems with potential themes matters of opinion rather than a matter of history or privilege. Additionally, it ignores any history of North America that existed before 1492.

The cover of the 1983 catalogue featured the logo for the fair: an abstract image that appears to be a reach for the stars. (Figure 6) This emblem, like the logos for Montreal 67 and Osaka 70, attempted to graceful in its simplicity, but falters, instead resembling the tail of a Chevy, or, as a graphic designer friend put it, "My first thought was a star of Bethlehem over a water slide…is this for a Jesus-themed water park?"[10] The fair planners describe the logo, but not who created it:

> the circle was selected to symbolize the Earth and to represent the universal category of the 1992 Exposition. The color blue mirrors the view of the Earth from outer space, which is dominated by its vast oceans; it also represents Columbus' ocean voyage of discovery. The star symbolizes the spark of creativity, of genius, of innovation, which lead to all great discoveries. The pathway symbolizes the passage through the five centuries since the Columbian voyage and the future which lies ahead. It can also be seen as a hand eternally reaching out to grasp for a star, for new discoveries, for the betterment of mankind.[11]

In general, the catalogue is an appeal to ethos and logos; the writers assert that the, "United States, no other country, should host a World's Fair in 1992."[12] The arguments for the fair are then laid out logically and without doubt; the authors point first to Chicago's experience and success with World's Fairs, arguing that a successful world's fair is one that leaves its city in the black (the 1964 New York Fair was,

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[10] Teresa Keserich, text message to author.
[11] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1983), 46. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[12] Ibid.

famously, a financial disaster).[13] They then state that the theme will interest the world, that Chicago is ideally located, that the BIE had provisionally approved the plan, and that there was sufficient enthusiasm and infrastructure. They boasted that the "nationally recognized architectural firm" SOM had been actively involved, and that Foote, Cone & Belding, "the fourth largest and fastest growing communications firm in the U.S.A." had completed a sales and promotion plan.[14] Mentioning both firms was meant to inspire trust.

In addition to the discussion of theme, the 1983 Catalogue includes five subthemes: A: Discovering the World Community (man's relationship to man); B: Discovering Man's Partnership with Planet Earth; C: Discovering the Necessities of Life; D: Discovering the Creativity of Man; Discovering the Scope of Man's knowledge. The theme was extended in an Addendum: Contact with Futurists. The planners speculated that technologies presented at the fair had not yet been invented (quite true).

The section "Site Evaluation and Selection: assures that the site had been determined with the input of Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects as well as "interested groups and individuals."[15] The main parameters (site characteristics, adjacent context, acquisition, residuals) were enumerated, and the reader was assured that all options were thoroughly vetted before the South Lakefront site was chosen.

The catalogue included several images: a circulation map simplified traffic patterns to the fair; a site organization map indicated the main layout of pavilions, parks,

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[13] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1981), Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[14] Ibid., 1.1.
[15] Ibid., 2.20.

and entries; a concept plan further detailed locations of concessions amusements and transit; an aerial view with an insouciant hot air balloon; and a scale architectural model of the lakefront with the fair. (Figures 8, 9) Each image, published in clear and comforting colors served to assure the reader that all contingencies had been planned for; that everything had been taken care of. (Figure 7) What's more, the planners had historical data to bolster their argument for the fair. They used data from Montreal 67 and Osaka 70 to estimate both land usage and attendance. Finally, the catalogue addressed design, both of the U.S. pavilions in particular and general international pavilions. The structure would be "relatively efficient and very cost-effective." Located at the intersection of the Boulevard of Nations and the Avenue of Industry, the U.S. pavilion would be about 250,000 square feet and cost about $88/square foot. While the 1992 Corporation would pay for infrastructure (water, sewer, electricity, and approaches), the federal government would be responsible for construction and operating expenses. The Corp. also provided design standards for all pavilions to ensure that, "the concept of the Exposition as a truly global cultural, educational, and social event."[16] Lastly, the Fair Corp. predicted a number of special events (including sporting events, concerts, etc.) and special days.

In short, the Fair Corporation constructed a catalogue that assumed and affirmed its authority. Regardless of how well-researched and well-planned the fair was, the catalogue did not allow for alternate opinions; in fact, the catalogue assumed that the audience, once given a reason why certain decisions were made, would agree. By 1985, however, much had changed: the Fair Corporation had gained the approval of the state

[16] Ibid., 2.30(c).

and federal government, and was officially a government entity. But, as a result of not gaining the trust of the public, it was on the brink of losing that status. The1985 Theme Catalogue had a much different mission; the Fair Authority knew that the data had failed to win over the minds of the people, so they set out to win over their hearts.

The first third of the 1985 Catalogue was written in the second person, "a view of the Fair from the vantage point of a "typical" Fair-goer in 1992." They used that narrative as a "point of departure, not only for evaluating the ideas subsequently presented in this catalogue, but also for helping the Fair Authority to take the theme and content of the Fair to its next stage of development."[17]

That point of departure, however, was flawed. The catalogue assumed the fair goer would be a white suburban man with a wife and two children; however, "with a minimum of willing adjustments, readers [could] easily imagine their own Fair experience, substituting their own special curiosities and interests for those of the imaginary family."[18] The sight of the floodlights on the Wrigley Building "is a reassuring memory of your boyhood days when your dad would bring you to Chicago to see the Cubs at Wrigley Field."[19] From the beginning, fair planners failed to realize that their audience – the people of Chicago, and most especially the people of Chicago who opposed the fair – was not willing to make adjustments. Why should African Americans in Chicago have to make adjustments when the Fair Corporation and Authority – controlled by white suburban men with wives and children – did not?

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[17] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1981), 5, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[18] Ibid., 15.
[19] Ibid., 27.

Nevertheless, the catalogue encouraged the reader to imagine wakening in the Riverside Hotel on a day at the fair with technologies of 1992 at hand: "all-fuel cars," personalized agendas determined by computers in response to stated interests (the "Vacation Machine"), and GPS touchscreen terminals. While some of the predictions seem far-fetched – space colonies for example, or the extended funding of NASA – others sound accurate. Interactions with exciting new technologies pervaded the catalogue even as the fair-goer connects with the past, pointing towards a post-modern crush of past, present, and future colliding. At the idealized fair, "[e]ighteenth century horse-drawn carriages abound. Huck Finn rafts and Ohio River flatboats ply the lagoons along with hydrofoils and Venetian Gondolas."[20]

The planners wanted to give visitors an opportunity to interact with history at every turn, and planned for historically themed pavilions in addition to national and technological themes. The imaginary fair-goer and his family chose to visit the Victorian pavilion; the catalogue tells us that modern entertainment started in the Victorian era (despite its reputation for prudery). Thus, the pavilion would feature "girls" dancing the cancan, and reenactors of Mark Twain, "cheroot and all," speechifying and P.T. Barnum directing "a circus side show to rival the best the original master ever put together himself".[21] The family would then dine at a restaurant featuring food from the menu of Aux Trois Fréres Provenóçaux[22] – "a repast fit for Emperor Napoleon himself." – and the

[20] Ibid., 21.
[21] Ibid., 23.
[22] The Nineteenth century French restaurant "played a large role in the life of the bourgeoisie. As styles and tastes in cuisine developed, members of the bourgeoisie utilized the social area of the restaurant to display wealth, social status, and good taste," "Restaurants and the French Revolution," www.mtholyoke.edu, https://www.mtholyoke.edu/courses/rschwart/hist255-s01/pleasure/restaurants_revolution.html.

food of nineteenth century American immigrants – "Nothing fancy" – at Brazilian Coffee Shop and Viennese Bakery.[23] Finally, in the ultimate confusion of past, future, and myth, the imaginary fair-goer could enter a virtual reality "ride" to "climb Pike's Peak with old Zebulon himself (but watch out coming down!); take your life in your hands with Alexander von Humboldt in search of the sources of the Amazon; or merely splash with the babies while Ponce de León discovers the fountain of youth."[24] The imaginary fairgoer would participate in the reiteration of a narrative of imperialism much like the narratives established during the 'great fairs' of the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century.

The last experience for the imaginary fairgoer is the "Urbanology" exhibit, which is in fact a bus tour of the city. Perhaps the fair planners' response to the desire by the fair's opponents for the fair to be integrated into the neighborhoods, the tour would travel through neighborhoods that would narrate the history of a city:

> In a single day you will relive the history of the first urban Newtown in the Pullman District's paternalistic plan for its railcar assemblers, as well as the uniquely American design of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie School homes in Oak Park and the stunning examples of the downtown's Chicago School architecture. You will see the successful transition of economic and racial integration in Hyde Park/Kenwood and the emerging high style of the rehabilitated but once forgotten "Gap." You visit the nearby Model School and the novel housing experiments, as well as the "incubator" facilities for new high tech industry along the Greenway between the Fair's core site and the Chicago River. You also take in the exhibits at the DuSable Museum of African American History…[and finally pass through recently redeveloped Pilsen] located west of the fair site…you see a model community that integrates residential and commercial revitalization in what continues to serve as a port of entry to thousands of Mexican immigrants, but was recently redeveloped under the direction of the

[23] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1981), Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[24] Ibid., 32.

> community itself in a way that balanced displacement while at the same time allowing for balanced, sustainable economic growth and job opportunities.

Opposite the entry to the fair, planners envisioned a Time Tunnel that would be an enclosed electric sidewalk that transported visitors "from 1992 to 1492. A series of exhibits, films, and holograms gives the feel, sight, sound, and smell of stepping back through history."[25] Tourists at the fair would start in the present and use technology to travel to the past; they then would traverse a postmodern jumble of ahistorical juxtapositions; and finally physically travel through various iterations of "community." To many Chicagoans, however, the journey into the past and implied progress of the bus tour would whitewash the complexities of living in one of the most politically corrupt and racially segregated cities in the country. The catalogue does not say whether the tour would mention the violent Pullman strike, the politics of red-lining in Bronzeville (home of the Gap), or the trouble with gentrification in Pilsen. But one would imagine, given the untroubled acceptance of imperialism in other parts of the fair, not. The urbanology bus tour was the 1992 Fair's equivalent of the 1893 Midway Plaisance.

Like the Midway, the bus tour encouraged the view/spectator to create an ethnographic narrative. As part of a "novel experience," the neighborhoods are made exotic. The spectator is separated from experience in the confines of the bus. Unlike the Midway, however, which highlighted difference, the tour encouraged the white, male, middle class family man to see himself in the spaces around you, while ignoring what is actually and already there. Proposed tech firms, new schools, and housing, presumably

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[25] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1981), 19, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

built in all of five years, effectively whitewashed the histories of those places. The fair planners' hope for racial and economic integration was a laudable one, but many of the neighborhoods – especially in places on the black South Side, like Bronzeville – thought that the plans for that integration were as paternalistic as Pullman's. As one scholar notes, some of the "hype" over the gentrification/rehabilitation of the gap was spurred by land speculators expecting the World's Fair to drive up prices. Given the theme catalogue's mention of a relatively small neighborhood, those observers were probably right. The viewers' physical distance from their surroundings is made more complete with the use of video screens. The bus does not go through Pilsen, which at the time was the center of resistance to the Fair, but rather reproduces images of it.

After the tour concludes, "you realize that every aspect of your experience has been shaped by urban conditions. You and your whole family will talk to each other about more issues than you have ever addressed before."[26] The authors again position the fictional family as center and the city-dwellers as other. They are made a museum exhibit, a display from which to learn, rather than people with whom the family can exchange information and ideas. One wonders if the fair planners thought about how to approach the violence of history – and the violence of the present – in a family-friendly way. While the fair planner could be very progressive in their presentation of technologies, and see how the future could be shaped by new and global ways of thinking about the world, their ability to think creatively failed when grappling with the injustices of the past.

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[26] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1981), 34, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

Fortunately, as fair planners saw it, the departure from the fair and journey home cleansed any bad tastes from the palate: "[a]s certified Midwestern Flatlanders," traveling from the contested physical spaces of the city through Illinois farm country and a reconstructed "Old Abe Encampment" reaffirms what the planners assumed were traditional cultural values. The "pioneer décor" offers a homey respite for the weary travelers, and historical reenactments of, "battles and artillery duels" reiterate and re-inscribe familiar historical narratives. Indeed, one wonders how different the reenacted camp would be than another display of rural Illinois: the United States' exhibit at the 1867 Paris Exposition included a contemporary working Illinois farm and rural school. After the imaginary fairgoer and his family reacquainted themselves with the rural, it would be "time to cross the river towards home."[27] Crossing rivers or other bodies of water often signifies the transition from the real to the mythical, from one state of being to another, or being cleansed. The city is further exoticized and othered.

Like many fairs before it, the Chicago 1992 Fair would have special days to celebrate individual countries, U.S. regions, and national holidays. The 1983 catalogue included a list of countries that would have their own days, and the 1985 catalogue included that list to "give special attention to specific groups such as children, veterans, the handicapped, futurists, environmentalists, or astronauts."[28] Historically, special days at the universal expositions became moments that revealed contested power structures; Negro day at the 1893 Exposition, for example, provided a platform for Frederick

[27] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1981), 35, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[28] Ibid.

Douglass and Ida B. Wells to debate black politics.[29] Similarly, the Fair Authority's choice of special days recognized contradictions in contemporary American society. Chicago was one of the homes of the disability rights movement and, in the days before the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed (in 1990), the fact that disability access was even considered was remarkable (although perhaps mitigated by the presence of a traditional Barnum sideshow). Days devoted to environmentalism and futurism could have offered a platform for critics to question the teleological narrative presented at the fair.

Because his voyage was a starting point for the fair's history and theme, and because the fair was planned to end on October 15, Columbus Day was to receive special attention. Not everyone, however, was pleased with the notion that Columbus was the figure chosen to represent the importance of America. Even in the early Foote, Cone & Belding study, some respondents commented that they were uncomfortable with the idea of Columbus as a heroic figure, noting the complicated history of the Columbian legacy among Latin and Native Americans.

There were very few references to Native Americans in the fair plans, and most of them are in the Art Theme Catalogue from 1985. It was prepared in a few short months by the newly formed Arts, Culture, and Entertainment Advisory Committee. While many of the suggestions were similar to ideas that had already been discussed, the Committee had two new and interesting suggestions. They first tried to find a balance between art and technology; "[r]emembering the syndrome of technological overkill, common at

[29] Ida B. Wells, Frederick Douglass, Irvine Garland Penn, Ferdinand Lee Barnett, *The Reason Why the Colored American is not in the World's Columbian Exposition*, ed. Robert Rydell, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press), 1999.

smaller world's fairs, it should look to ways of harmonizing art and technology." They asserted that, "[t]he Fair should be dedicated to stimulating the personal journey of discovery. And in this, art can and must be the way, the means and the end."[30] Secondly, the Committee suggested an exhibition "celebrating the great cultures of the North and South American Continents at the time of Columbus' voyage. This exhibition could present treasures from Alaska to the Aztecs and Incas, revealing the world of 1492."[31] The fair should, "[a]cknowledge the civilizations that were here in 1492 by presenting their discoveries, arts and contributions. For example, the Mayan calendar could be "rediscovered" as an important step in the recording of history."[32]

Their suggestion, however, does not recognize that some of the cultures that were established long before Columbus set foot in the Caribbean were still very much alive in the late twentieth century. Native Americans have a long and complicated history with both Columbus Day and World's Fairs. In the Victorian-era American Fairs, Native Americans were often part of ethnographic exhibits, depicted as the last specimens of a dying race.[33] The exhibition of indigenous peoples (including Africans and Pacific Islanders), displayed in "traditional" attire and housing, served to affirm the cultural superiority of white Europeans. Planners for the 1992 fair had difficulty escaping from the effects of these exhibits, suggesting that displays of technological innovation would come from the Anglo-European world, Russian, and Japan, while nations from Africa

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[30]"1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery, Art Theme Catalogue" (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1985), 8, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[31] Ibid., 10.
[32] Ibid., 22.
[33] See, for example, Rydell, *All the World's a Fair.*

would display traditional ceremonies (Japan had "whiz-bang" technology, while "the Nigerian Dunbar Festival's tribal dances…capture your attention and your heart").[34]

To be sure, the history of Columbus had already been complicated and messy. As Trouillot explains:

> As a set event, void of context and marked by a fixed date, this chunk of history becomes much more manageable…one can await its millennial and await its commemoration. It accommodates travel agents, airlines, politicians, the media, or the states who sell it in the prepackaged forms by which the public has come to expect history to present itself for immediate consumption. It is a product of power whose label has been cleansed of the traces of power.[35]

Perhaps, then, Burke was not so off the mark when he observed that Columbus was an obvious choice of theme because Columbus had good PR. The celebration of Columbus Day on October 12th, according to Trouillot, is a historical accident rooted in a 1790 Tammany Society fundraiser as much as anything else. The confluence of United States nation-building efforts, the desire of Italian and Irish Catholic immigrants to embed themselves in nineteenth century American culture, and the continued re-justification of American expansionism in commemorations all added to the reification of Columbus' identity in the United States. In fact, he tells us, the town of Columbus, Ohio, had no connection to the man in its founding or records for nearly a century; it was not until 1893, and the furor over the Columbian Exposition, that the name of the city, "was obvious proof of Columbus' wide recognition in the United States."[36]

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[34]"1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1985), 27, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[35] Trouillot, 114.
[36] Trouillot, 133.

Chicago fair planners, however, tried to keep the quincentennial to themselves. They garnered the support of Senator Charles Percy [R., Ill] and Representative Dan Rostenkowski [D., Ill] to "get tight restrictions on a proposal for a 30-member federal Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Jubilee Commission."[37] Rostenkowski amended a House bill that created a committee to plan "observances and activities" of the quincentenary with the provision that the federal commission would be "barred from selling…anything to do with the Chicago fair."[38] Percy wanted to add members of the Fair Corp. to the federal commission, but Senator Charles Mathias [R., Md], chief sponsor of the commission measure, responded: "Fears of competition are somewhat overblown…"[39] The battle for the Columbus commemoration extended to performances in 1983 as well as potential future performances. In Chicago that year, the Columbus Day parade belonged to the Italians. The theme celebrated Italian contributions to "science, education and space exploration." While "most of the names were not Italian," the article notes that "some were." Of course, very few, but probably none, of the 8,000 marchers or many thousands of spectators were Italian. Rep. Frank Annunzio [D.,Ill] (honorary parade chairman) and Jerry Campagna (central chairman of the parade) may indeed have names that end in vowels; they were, however, American. Mayor Washington declared it, "the greatest parade Chicago's ever seen," then proclaimed, "Viva Columbus Day!"[40] It was appropriate, considering that 'viva' means 'long live' in both Spanish and Italian;

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[37] James Worsham, "City Charts Columbus' Course with '92 Fair," *Chicago Tribune,* June 6, 1983.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40]Robert Enstad, "Politicians Strut their Stuff at Columbus Day Parade," *Chicago Tribune*, October 10, 1983.

Washington's brief exclamation in all three languages from the countries that claim Columbus perfectly reflects the long-standing debate over who owns Columbus' legacy.

By the quincentennial, though, "The Discovery" had been reconfigured by many as "the encounter" or "the conquest." The Native American response to Columbus is perhaps typified by artist James Luna's performances "The Artifact Piece" and "Take a Picture With a Real Indian." The former premiered in 1987; in it, Luna placed himself in a glass exhibition case, commenting upon the Indian as historical and museum artifact. On Columbus Day 1992, he stood in Washington D.C. in stereotypical Indian dress encouraging passers-by to "take a picture with a real Indian." As the day progressed, he changed to contemporary clothes, but exhorted the public to take a picture with the same voice. The piece forced spectators to rethink their role as actor or object. Moreover, by the 1990s, the civil rights activism of the 1960s and 1970s, and the growing identity politics of the 1980s resulted in legislation that further affirmed the personhood and experiences of cultural others: Title IX (1972), the Civil Rights Restoration Act, Civil Rights Act of 1991, Americans with Disabilities Act, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and continued implementation of Affirmative Action policies. Beginning in the 1970s, a variety of Native American tribes (and an official UN sub-committee) argued that Columbus Day should be rechristened Indigenous People's Day. In the face of these cultural changes, a celebration of Columbus seemed both offensive and antiquated.

The Future and the Fair

For many, then, the quincentennial was a celebration not of freedom but of colonialism. And, while the fair was to celebrate many advances in technology, it specifically celebrated the technologies of colonialism. As the 1983 catalogue put it:

> Of particular interest will be the future explorations and use of space. Space shuttles, orbiting astronomical observatories, communication satellites, robotic exploring devices, and the capture of extra-terrestrial materials are among the possibilities for further development. By 1992, space activities will no longer be regarded only as experiments or spectaculars, but will be accepted as continuing, productive operations that are part and parcel of our lives…Low-thrust ion propulsion engines may make planetary exploration a reality. Not since the development of blue water sailing ships and the bold oceanic voyages of Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French, and English explorers in the 15th and 16th centuries has mankind been faced with such a challenge.[41]

> You marvel at the advancement the shuttle fleet has brought mankind in only 10 years – the colony that was launched in honor of the Fair's opening on May 1; the hundreds of others, some enormously complex, in various stages of planning and construction. The satellite system, placed into orbit and maintained by personnel in the shuttle fleet, provides a choice of thousands of television programs from every nation on Earth.[42]

In 1985, fair planners spent much of the Theme Catalogue talking about space. Visions of space certainly pervaded popular culture: 1977 and 1979 saw the releases of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind, Star Wars* (both in 1977)*,* and *Alien*. In the first half of the 1980s, the *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* series dominated movie theaters; *The Thing* and *E.T.: The Extraterrestrial* presented different hypotheses of what alien life might be like. *Tron, The Terminator,* and *Blade Runner* speculated how new and unpredictable

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[41] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1983), 2.1, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[42] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1985), 21-22, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

technologies would affect future earth, and *Back to the Future* connected past and future pop cultures, playing to young consumers.

1992 World's Fair planner predicted a future much more akin to *Star Trek* than *Blade Runner*; space exploration would prove that mankind's greatest hopes and aspirations could be achieved, and that expansion and exploration were parts of human nature. Space exploration was naturalized and the fair planners, in comparing space ships to the sailing vessels of conquistadores and colonists, used the language of manifest destiny. Meanwhile, NASA's space shuttle program regularly launched shuttles throughout the decade. The more earth-bound Star Wars – Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative – was first announced in 1983. Given this context, it is little wonder that the conquest of space figured prominently in the minds of the exposition planners.

In addition to space travel and exploration, the catalogues describe the integration of computers with everyday life. In the 1985 catalogue, as the imaginary fairgoer encounters a robot that greets him and his family to the fair, then sees the same robot greet a couple in Japanese and a man in Swahili, the narrator notes that the fair is "user-friendly." A proposed computer technology pavilion offers a consultation with a computerized doctor, and a display of microprocessors, in which, "[y]ou discover that every word of every book in the Des Moines Public Library is recorded in a computer no larger than a business card."[43] Other predicted technologies included chips implanted into the brains of the blind and deaf that would allow them, through exterior additions like eyeglasses, would allow them to see and hear.

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[43] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1985), 28, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

In 1980 and 1983, Apple Computer President Steve Jobs publicly reflected on the history and future of computers. In the first known video footage of Jobs, recorded at the Insanely Great Conference at Stanford, he emphasized that a computer is a tool. He compared the dawning computer age to the Industrial Revolution, stating that, "the Industrial Revolution was basically an amplification of human ability…sweat, it amplified sweat…fractional horsepower motors, etc. etc."[44] It is a metaphor that he extended in the next decade. In light of this comparison, it is all the more appropriate that the trade pavilions at the 1992 fair would have housed computer exhibits, just as the 1893 trade pavilions housed machines. Jobs' prescient 1983 speech at International Design Conference Aspen (IDCA) predicted several of the types of interactions with computers highlighted in the 1985 Theme Catalogue. The annual IDCA began in 1951 by Chicagoans Walter Paepke, president of the Container Corporation of America, and Robert Hutchins, then president of the University of Chicago. Its purpose was to, "promote interactions between artists, manufacturers, and businessmen." According to The Getty's summary of IDCA archives, "many of the most celebrated architects and designers (and historians working in these fields) of the post-World War II era have spoken at IDCA, along with a number of influential artists and theorists."[45] Jobs predicted that, by 1986, the U.S. would ship more computers than cars, that we would spend several hours a day interacting with computers, and that electronic transfers of funds would be common. He noted that computer programmers are artists as much as

[44] "Steve Jobs Interview," www.computerhistory.org.
[45] "International Design Conference in Aspen Records, 1949-2006," The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, www.Archives2.getty.edu.

they are scientists, and that the graphic software on the Lisa allowed him to be a visual artist.

By Jan 22, 1984, nearly everyone in the country had heard of the Macintosh personal computer. Its now-famous commercial (directed by Ridley Scott) aired in the fourth quarter of the Super bowl, and was never aired again. The cost of 30 second commercial was $368,000. The ad featured lines of grey jump-suited men marching through a *Metropolis* inspired warehouse towards a room dominated by a large screen filled with a face – Big Brother – pronouncing a new "garden of pure ideology." An athletic woman, in red running shorts and white tank top, runs through the grey men and flings a large sledgehammer at the screen; it erupts in a blinding light. Copy and voice-over announce that, with the introduction of the Macintosh, "1984 won't be like 1984." Computer technology democratized knowledge in much the same way that cars democratized travel: the owner of the technology could make her own choices about how to use the technology and where it could take her. By the time the 1985 Catalogue was written and published, not only was the idea the computer ubiquitous, the idea of the personal computer as a symbol of freedom and democracy had taken hold. The fair planners inclusion of computers into most, if not all, aspects of the fair design showed their desire to be on the cutting edge, and to truly embrace an exciting future.

The fair had to acknowledge the needs for sponsorship and industry in the present, however, and promoted a futuristic car: General Motors' Saturn. The World's Fair Authority proposed that GM locate a new assembly plant in Illinois to build the Saturn that could then be designated as a satellite site to the fair. It would be "America's

principle example of the high tech workplace."[46] The authors of the proposal focused on GM's history as innovators and their history at world's fairs, recounting the success of the Alfred Kahn-designed exhibit at the 1933 Century of Progress Exposition. It was one of several assembly lines at the fair; nearly 1,000 spectators watched several hundred workmen assemble a Chevrolet from two stories up.[47] General Motors had established a legacy of memorable exhibits, including the Futurama exhibit at the 1939 New York fair, which focused on technology and the future. In the dreams of the planners, "[i]t would give the fair goer an experience which GM's Epcot exhibit cannot match."

Whether GM entertained ambitions to be part of the fair is unclear,[48] but exposition planners proceeded with great confidence to project a possible GM display "intended to capture your imagination, might even capture some of the contents of your wallet." The imaginary fairgoer might indeed decide to purchase the official car of the fair, as fairgoers had in previous years. "The special "Fair Price" and the ease of financing with your all-inclusive bank card just might move you to drive one away…" Combined with the catalogue's note that your grandfather had done the very same thing at the 1933 World's Fair, and observation that the "[t]our of the state-of-the-art Saturn plant sold you on the quality of this Illinois product…" eventually made the purchase inevitable.[49]

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[46] Proposal for Satellite Site and Official Car Status for General Motors' Saturn Automobile, World's Fair Authority, March 18, 1985.
[47] Shenk, in *Designing Tomorrow*, 32.
[48] Governor Thompson did travel to Detroit to petition the company to put a new Saturn plant in Illinois, as did governors from around the country, but they ultimately located the plant in Springhill, Tennessee.
[49] "1992 Chicago World's Fair: Age of Discovery," (Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, 1985), 29, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

Fair Designs and City Planning

Architect Carl Rauschenberg said that one of the problems with the fair planning was that the designers had an outmoded philosophy that the fair should be an, "architectural playpen. It's a place for each architect to say, look, kids, here's what I can do…"[50] Many of the most well-known architects in the country had a chance to show what they could do in a series of design charrettes sponsored by the Chicago Central Area Committee. The CCAC asked each one of four teams to consider how to, "locate, conceptualize, configure, and lay out a plan for the 1992 Chicago World's Fair."[51] The three charrettes of two teams each took place in New York (June 28-29, 1983), Los Angeles (September 13-14, 1983) and Chicago (October 31-November 1, 1983). The plans produced by the architects and groups of students were high concept and often impractical.

John Haydek, said Thomas Beeby, had become "obsessed with" the idea of masks. He posited that the idea of a world's fair as an expanding mask, and proposed a warehouse on the fairgrounds in which artists from different countries would make giant puppets which would hang from the ceiling. They would then be moved to be targets in a shooting gallery before their dissection was broadcast via CCTV. At the end of the fair, the puppets would be set afire on Lake Michigan. Haydek's other plan for the fair included a large carousel. Instead of horses, there would be mythological creatures from different cultures "impaled" on a pole. Beeby told Wilbanks that the carousel obviously

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[50] Carl Rauschenberg interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, September 15, 1983, transcript, Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.
[51] "Designing a World's Fair" Poster, undated. Bertrand Goldberg Papers, Burnham & Rearson Library, Art Institute of Chicago.

represented, "the destruction of the power of the image. By pinning him on a pole and making him go around in a circle you destroy…" At Beeby's evident loss for words, Wilbanks interjected, "[p]rogress and freedom and all those…" before she too ran out of words. Beeby summarized Haydek's plans, concluding, "Yeah. He represents this whole aspect of architecture which would normally not be represented in a World's Fair which …deals with politics."[52]

Beeby and his design students, in contrast, conceived of an "anti-monumental" fair in which identical buildings would be laid out in a symmetrical grid. (Figure 14) The nature of the grid would "argue against the traditional role of super powers in world's fairs….every little square is exactly like every other square, which is exactly the idea behind America, and the idea of Chicago. So this becomes an abstraction or a miniaturization of the city. And each block is like a little piece of real estate and by making them so small we tried to make them sort of on a human scale."[53]

The design, however, might have robbed the city and neighborhoods of a sense of place. One can easily imagine the design would have sparked intense debate about how the city should look, and, it seems, suggests a place without history. There is a fine line between the kind of democratized building the design team suggested and little boxes, all alike, long the scourge of suburbanization.

New York's design team, headed by Larry Booth, came up with a floating fair in the center of Burnham Harbor,

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[52] Thomas Beeby, interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, December 19, 1983, transcript, Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.
[53] Beeby interview.

> so you'd have the world looking at Chicago and Chicago looking at the world…the idea of getting people on the water seemed very compelling…And it also created an image of the whole world interdependence…All the barges are linked together so they're one image, but they're not all the same.[54] (Figure 15)

The team contended that the fair needed something that would "make people get out of their living rooms and away from their T.V. sets." The plan called for visitors to have a home base in the neighborhoods and take public transit to the lakefront, thus eliminating traffic jams, a concentration of unsightly (and, after the fair, impractical) parking lots, and assuring tourist traffic in the neighborhoods. The New York team also planned a fountain with a mister that would make a rainbow over the fair. Booth mentioned the all-important Burnham plan in his Wilbanks interview, and claimed that the barge fair would continue his work by creating an inland body of water for small crafts.[55]

The team's plan (whether knowingly or not) participated in the fair planner's narrative connecting the technologies of the present with colonial technologies of the past: "[e]ach country could build its own barge and ship the whole thing over kit and caboodle…coming from around the world and converging like a space station…"[56] One conjures an image of large vessels with twinkling lights against an infinite backdrop of stars; the image emphasizes our common humanity in a large, unknowable universe. While he didn't make those connections explicit, he described to Wilbanks old city streetlights, "those beautiful streetlights, great ornamental streetlights. Made you feel you

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[54] Larry Booth interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, no date (late 1983), transcript, Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.
[55] Booth interview.
[56] Booth interview.

were a citizen of a great place." Modernity, he argued, made the streetlights safe but ugly; his team strived for images that would be safe, and modern, and global, but – most importantly – beautiful.

None of the design teams included a female architect. If they had, one wonders how the designs would have looked, and how they might have been different. The *Tribune* published several article about women in architecture in 1983 and 1984, and each suggested that there was a fundamental difference between 'male' architecture and 'female' architecture. Gerta Lempp Kerbis, the director of the Chicago Chapter of the AIA (and mentioned in Chapter One as one of the first architects to try to imagine a 1992 fair) and "longtime gadfly hounding the smug male architectural establishment," provided a provocative explanation for the kinds of designs produced by large, masculine like SOM: "There is a male architecture. Obviously, the high-rise towering above the city is a phallic kind of symbolizing. Then there is the female kind. It stresses spaces, openings and so on, plazas within the cities. It is the antithesis of the towers."[57] Cynthia Weese (sister-in-law of Harry Weese), pointed to an additional difference between male and female architects: "we are more willing to sit down with a community group and listen…"[58] Nathaniel Owings, in his interview at SOM, also emphasized an architecture of small spaces. He argued that skyscrapers destroy a city's relationship with the land, and that places like plazas should be more thoughtful. He also argued for more awareness

[57] Jeff Lyon, "Women Have Big Designs of World of Architecture," *Chicago Tribune*, June 23, 1983.
[58] Ibid.

of environmental concerns and a greater awareness of preserving the natural world, which is "more viable and lasting than any man-built intrusion."[59]

One exchange at the charrettes highlighted an important difference between male and female designers. Wilbanks asked several of her subjects about an exchange between Denise Scott Brown, an influential architect and writer, and John Haydek.[60] Both Booth and Beeby recalled that she, "got up and did a series of these sort of hints to good housekeeping for the World's Fair," including making sure that there were enough garbage cans that looked like garbage cans (not pieces of art) and bathrooms.[61] Beeby called the ensuing exchange a "big fight," over Scott Brown's mentioning "little things with waste baskets and all that stuff…and John attacked her for trivializing the whole exercise." Booth reports that the exchange "wasn't that heated," but that Scott Brown's desire to look at things from a more "mundane level" irritated Haydek, who was "playing the poet." Haydek called such considerations "absurd," and a, "waste of time." Haydek, harkening back to Daniel Burnham's dictum about the architecture for the 1893 fair, wanted to "stir men's souls" with his intellectual and grandiose plans, but he, and most of the other architects involved in the fair, failed to consider things like bathrooms, sewers, and pollution. Environmental groups would point out those failures in their protests, and the questions of what would happen to the fair's waste would be raised several times in the next year. Booth and several other architects also pointed out that, in spite of their input, the fair belonged to SOM and Bruce Graham. Booth argued for an independent

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[59] Paul Gapp, "Owings on Quality and Culture: A Dialogue with a Master Builder," *Chicago Tribune*, July 3, 1983.
[60] In 1989, Scott Brown published the essay "Room at the Top? Sexism and the Star System in Architecture."
[61] Booth interview.

planning group that would answer to the Fair Authority (not to SOM's planners). Doug Gills, a director of community development and a charter member of the Taskforce for Black Political Empowerment, later recalled that

> the World's Fair proposal entailed much more than merely an opportunity for Chicago to have a good time or to host a big party. At the core of the issues surrounding it was a plan for the economic redevelopment of the Near South Side. It was viewed by many activists as a resurrection of the old Chicago 21 Plan. It was derisively referred to as "Master Plan Number Two."[62]

In the 1970s and 1980's, Graham and SOM worked with the Bilandic and Byrne administrations to develop a series of city plans, including Chicago21, that were not met with universal approval. The world's fair was indeed central to implementing those plans.

The designs of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill dominated discussion about the fair from its inception. The firm was founded in 1936 "with a commitment to modern design" and its first decade was marked by buildings for world's fairs.[63] In the next two decades, SOM "advanced the postwar conversion to a civilian economy" by building hospitals, universities, and office buildings; the John Hancock Building and the Sears Tower are iconic markers of this era. In the last several decades, SOM has worked globally as well as domestically.[64]

SOM positioned itself as much more than people who make buildings: the architects are city planners and artists as well. Engaging in discussions of aesthetics and design, and what affect design has on community, are important aspects of the firm.

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[62] Doug Gills, "Chicago Politics and Community Development: A Social Movement Perspective" in Clavel and Wievel, 48.
[63] *Skidmore, Owings & Merrill: Architecture and Urbanism 1973-1983, (*New York: Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1983), 13.
[64] Ibid.

There is a certain idealism to this attitude; their plans hoped to, as Burnham had said, "stir men's imagination." Indeed, SOM defined four conditions for architectural patronage: "a society with idealistic objectives; clients who are cultured and altruistic; a respect for craftsmanship; and a reliable economy."[65] The need for a building is not one of the four conditions for architectural patronage.

One might assume that Nathaniel Owings would be pleased that the firm he founded was instrumental in planning for a fair and was following the precedent he set years earlier in designing major elements of the Century of Progress Exposition in 1933. But, in an interview with R.C. Longworth, Owings said, "It's a bad idea to try to emulate anything…I don't think they should even have another world's fair…especially the attempt to reproduce the old fair on the old site is just – so what?"[66] In May of 1983, Owings received a gold medal from the American Institute of Architects, and Paul Gapp published highlights from his conversations with young architects at SOM. In both the Longworth article and the interview, Owings speculated that the 1992 World's Fair should be located on the prairie, not the city.[67] Fair detractors frequently quoted his argument that the 1992 fair was not new, different, or inspirational. He criticized the "sameness" of contemporary building around the world, and argued for an architecture that would improve people's way of life. Built spaces, he said, should engage people intellectually *and* spiritually.

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[65] Ibid., 14.
[66] R.C. Longworth, "Planner of '33 Fest Fears Replay of Old Record," *Chicago Tribune,* May 11, 1983.
[67] Paul Gapp, "Owings on Quality and Culture: A Dialogue with a Master Builder," *Chicago Tribune*, July 7, 1983.

Arguably one of the most famous (and most high minded) of the SOM architects in the last three decades of the twentieth century was Bruce Graham. Fellow Chicagoan Stanley Tigerman noted, in his introduction to a collection of Graham's work, "under most circumstances it is not really important to establish the nature of an architect's personality…In the case of Bruce Graham, however, this assumption cannot be made."[68] As a leader of the American Institute of Architects, he influenced the choices and careers of two generations of designers. And not unlike Steve Jobs, Graham was notorious for his sometimes "explosive personality," authoritarian attitudes, isolation, and genius. Tigerman called him a true architect: "an individual fighting against the forces that conspire to make normative that which is not always acceptable from a moral viewpoint…"[69] Tigerman's rhetoric rises to hagiography: "Through his continuous struggle he has ennobled, rather than diminished, that tradition in architectural practice that separates it from much of the endeavors of humankind."[70,71]

Graham's visions directed the plans for both the city and the fair. As a leader of the Chicago Central Area Committee (CCAC), "a private organization representing downtown business interests, which is actively involved in planning for the downtown, e.g. the Central Area Plan,"[72] he was involved in all levels of planning. (The Central Area is bounded by 31st Street, Ashland Ave., North Ave., and Lake Michigan. See Fig. XX) Founded in 1956, it is one of many private/public planning organizations in the city. It

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[68] Stanley Tigerman, "Introduction," in *Bruce Graham of SOM*, (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), 8.
[69] Ibid., 9.
[70] Ibid., 9.
[71] This despite the fact that Graham and Tigerman "had long disliked one another ferociously and seemed to share not an inch of philosophical turf" before the death of mutually admired structural engineer Fazlur Kahn in 1987. *Chicago Tribune*, Paul Gapp, 1985.
[72] "The World's Fair: A Citizen's Guide;" Prepared by George W Davis and the Fair Review Council, August 1983, 8, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

claims to have, "worked in partnership with the city of Chicago on every major comprehensive plan that has focused on the development of downtown Chicago."[73] The CCAC sponsored several iterations of the Chicago21 plan, intended to carry Chicago into the twenty-first century.

The 1973 Chicago21 Plan – a continuation of Mayor Richard J. Daley's 1966 Comprehensive Plan – was, according to University of Chicago professor Gerald D. Suttles, "devised largely by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill."[74] If, as Tigerman asserts, SOM and Graham were the same, the one can assume that Graham played a significant role in devising Chicago21. In a November 1973 review, then urban affairs *Tribune* writer Pail Gapp announced that a scale model of the plan (built by SOM) would be unveiled at the Civic Center.[75] The plan, according to Gapp, was a public-private partnership designed to "rejuvenate" the area; it included a provision for low-income housing and there would be no dislocation. Gapp quoted Jack Cornelius' assessment of the plan, who determined that it "fits in well with our goals, and Chicago is the only city in the United States that hasn't already used urban renewal in its central area. We hope something similar will be done at the Loop's southern end, too, to tie in with the new town."[76] It is the first of many plans that uses the phrase "urban renewal" in reference to the Loop.

University of Chicago Professor and Sociologist Gerald D. Suttles notes in his 1990 text *The Man-Made City: The Land-Use Confidence Game in Chicago*, that the plan

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[73] "About," Chicago Central Area Committee, ccac.org.
[74] Gerald D. Suttles, *The Man-Made City: The Land-Use Confidence Game in Chicago*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 36.
[75] Paul Gapp, *Chicago Tribune*, November 4, 1973.
[76] Ibid.

describes the Central Area as a residential community (a first in planning documents for the area), uses cultural centers, rather than business towers or department stores, as anchors, and that preservation of historic buildings was an integral part of the plan.[77] The overriding impression, he claims, "is that of creating a new residential population to replace the decline in suburban shoppers and the restoration of a white presence in the Loop during the evening hours."[78] The plan soon lost its luster in the business community, however, and another SOM Central Area plan that used the 1992 World's Fair as a catalyst for development was released in 1984.

In late 1983, Paul Gapp reflected on 25 years of city plans. He noted that the 1958 and 1966 Daley plans "seemed grandiose when…released, but downtown growth has been stronger than many people imagined at the time."[79] Since then, "SOM has become the single most influential planning force in Chicago."[80] Gapp did not have kind words for the variety of central plans since 1958, noting that "the automobile…has dictated too many expensive and disruptive planning decisions that run counter to all intelligent notions of urbanity and the good life." The CCAC was not immune to his criticism; their plan for the loop, like the plan for the fair, called for 20,000 new parking spaces, moving Lake Shore Drive, and widening the Dan Ryan Expressway. Gapp further criticized Chicago's planning department, which had "been deteriorating for at least the last decade…The city's laissez-faire attitude toward real estate developers is a chronic cause

[77] Suttles, 36.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Paul Gapp, "Looking back at a 25-year-old master plan for the Loop area," *Chicago Tribune,* September 11, 1983.
[80] Ibid.

of haphazard growth."[81] However, he concludes, "anyone who has lived in Chicago…would probably agree that in the central area the city's gains have more than offset its losses…Chicago still radiates a vigor that can be matched by few other cities in America."[82]

In July of 1983, Jack Cornelius informed the *Tribune* that "the central business district as a whole gained 6,500 residential housing units since 1973. [CCAC] forecasts that those numbers will continue to grow."[83] Within the next decade Cornelius expected the Loop and its immediate environs to pick up an additional 10,000 to 15,000 residential units. Even Chicagoans, however, could not stop comparing themselves to the first city, New York. South Loop Planning Board President and community activist Betty Cerf Hill commented on "the Manhattanization of Chicago," a new lifestyle choice for Chicagoans. To the comment that the Loop lacked essential services, like a supermarket, Cerf Hill responded, "didn't I have to drive to a shopping center for everything I needed when I lived in Willamette?"[84] Cerf Hill had an apartment in Dearborn Park, a low-density residential development funding by a public-private corporation also called Chicago21. The corporation's board included a number of prominent Chicago businessmen and civic leaders, including Tom Ayers and Paul Klutznick, as chairmen.[85] Not surprisingly, SOM had a hand in its design.

Although he didn't want to seem to work with them intimately, Graham was very concerned with the welfare of the people of Chicago. In a *Tribune* editorial excerpted

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[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Editorial, *Chicago Tribune*, July 16 1983.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Suttles, 174.

from a speech to the Economic Club of Chicago, he argued that, with every year distant from Burnham's Plan, Chicago was becoming uglier. His solution, naturally, was following through on Chicago21 Plan (in newly updated version, Chicago 92) and the World's Fair. His plan is an optimistic one, but assumes that there is no value in the city as it was. He contends that, "[w]ithout the energy of optimism to unify its citizens…Chicago's greatness – its energy – will continue to fade away." Finally, his assertion that "our neighborhoods are a disaster" surely further alienated readers who lived in, and had pride in, those neighborhoods.

Graham drew from history to make his point, recalling the optimism and high-minded visions of Columbus, Pope Sixtus V, architect Raymond Hood, and Martin Luther King, Jr. The piece emblematized the attitudes of the fair planners and the AIA: Graham argued for a singular vision of the city guided by wise planners. In other words, he argued that the city should be constructed by people like himself, rather than politicians and communities who are easily stalled by "timidity and the abstract economics of myopia." There was little room in his argument for an assessment of the so-called myopia of the neighborhoods. He seemed unable to see that some would consider immediate alleviation of suffering a far more important cause than resurrecting the City Beautiful. The issue was, as he correctly points out, one of systems. Ironically, he did not see himself as the system against which the neighborhoods rebel. His prose, however, was undeniably effective, and at times persuasively rousing. "If," he declared:

> one were to propose to bring the city together – in search of a common objective; in search of our role within the nation; in search of leadership; in search, ultimately, of cohesion and meaning – groups would gather immediately to contest the issue. Aldermen seek fame and fortune to

> destroy the World's Fair…We are afraid to climb that mountain that might show us what we should be…It is time we searched for a vision, jointly.

The Chicago 1992 Comprehensive Plan, released in by Byrne in 1982, outlined a number of goals and strategies for the city during the next 10 years, presents a 10-year capital development strategy, and recommends the formation of neighborhood planning districts. The world's fair is presented as both a symbol of the growth and improvement of the City and as a source of private investment."[86] The first page included a letter from Byrne to the Citizens of Chicago proclaiming that the plan would facilitate "Chicago's evolution into an international city" and called upon citizens to "[examine] our weaknesses honestly and [attend] to these problems efficiently."[87] The letter was accompanied by a photograph of Byrne smiling next to Tom Ayers, his arms spread imperiously, both of them gazing down at a glass-enclosed architectural model of the lakefront and fair site. (Figure 10)

The plan included large investments in infrastructure, including expansions of O'Hare Airport, "revitalized streets and boulevards," and rehabilitated neighborhoods. The plan proposed eleven neighborhood planning districts, each with an appointed advisory board, to "reflect the concerns of their specific communities and voice these concerns with vigor."[88]

On November 14, the *Tribune* quoted an alderman who called the plan an, "insult to the neighborhoods, loaded with generalities we know already." The paper further criticized the $700,000 study that lead to the plan, which was conducted by Melaniphy &

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[86] "The World's Fair: A Citizen's Guide;" Prepared by George W Davis and the Fair Review Council, August 1983, 8, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[87] "Chicago 1992 Plan Executive Summary," 2, Municipal Records, Harold Washington Public Library.
[88] Ibid., 3.

Associates, who had been "a major contributor to Byrne's political funds."[89] "The two reports," contend the *Tribune*, "were obviously written to complement each other, with the city's plan anticipating virtually every 'need' discovered by Melaniphy."[90] The plan revealed yet another connection with the fair: Suhail al Chalabi, whose marketing firm was one of the first to declare the fair a worthwhile enterprise, served as a deputy commissioner for the department of planning as well as an interim commissioner in the department of economic development.[91]

The one reasonable point of the plan, according to urban affairs writers McCarron and Ziemba, was that it avoided proposing unrealistic goals regarding neighborhood revitalization, noting that the plan did not include "Buck Rogerish schemes." However, they believed that the plan for district advisory boards would not work, as such boards have a way of being ignored or never being heard from once they are established."[92] The Plan concluded, "After a decade of extraordinary capital investment, culminating the 1992 World's Fair, Chicago intends to be…a city of worldwide importance, yet fair, attractive, and livable to the many who regard it as their home."[93] The subsequent official Chicago city plans and proposed fair plans became endlessly intertwined.

CCAC played an important role in the fair design. On April 22, 1983, it (at the behest of Graham) hosted the first of what was supposed to be a series of symposia at the University of Chicago about the philosophy of a 1992 Universal Category World

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[89] John McCarron and Stanley Ziemba, "A Tale of Two Studies: What They Say – and Don't Say – about Chicago," *Chicago Tribune,* November 14, 1982.
[90] Ibid.
[91] "Chicago 1992 Plan Executive Summary," Acknowledgements, Chicago History Museum.
[92] John McCarron and Stanley Ziemba, "A Tale of Two Studies: What They Say – and Don't Say – about Chicago," Chicago Tribune, November 14, 1982.
[93] "Chicago 1992 Plan Executive Summary," 11.

Exposition. “It was a consensus” of the discussions “that people were of utmost importance and that there should be a humanistic approach to the Fair.”[94] The idea of a humanistic approach was championed by most of the architects who submitted plans for the fair, which will be discussed in the next section. The published notes summarizing the symposium listed four other philosophies that the participants thought should be included in the fair designs. They were concerned with the “fulfillment of life of human beings, the discovery of oneself, how each man can fulfill his life…”[95] The attendees wanted to “try and buck the mold of great big pavilions and create groups of pavilions,” that were architecturally coherent. Next, “the idea of creating an arc of performing institutions close to the Fair was deemed very appealing, but could be viewed as somewhat controversial by some groups…” Exactly why an arc of performing institutions would be controversial is unclear. What is clear is that the attendees focused on the “the concept of interdependence” that would “lead to a deeper involvement in neighborhoods and embraces the unique ethnic conditions of Chicago.” Lastly, the symposium concluded that physical and psychological residuals were the most important things that fair planners should consider. Psychologically, the fair would “bring the city together and result in a momentum of vitality and activity heading to a great sense of achievement and pride that will be invaluable.”[96]

The April 22 Symposium is one of the few events referenced in the records of every group interested in the fair’s plans. The protest group Chicago 1992 Committee

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[94] “Chicago Central Area Committee 1983 Symposium Series: Summarized Notes from the Symposium on The Philosophy of a 1992 Universal Category World Exposition,” April 22, 1983, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.

picketed the event because they had not been invited to attend. In later interviews, Fair Corp. members Ira Bach and Tom Ayers dismissed the picketers' presence as unimportant (I will discuss the protest in the next chapter). George Burke similarly dismissed the importance of the meeting in general, leading one to question if the Symposium had been designed, in part, to appease the desires of some groups to be involved – in other words, to satisfy them enough to keep them quiet. However much they tried, the symposium was certainly not enough to keep everyone quiet. Respected architects Bertram Goldberg, Harry Weese, and Carl Rauschenberg all loudly criticized the proposed site for the fair and sowed further discord in the city.

Bertrand Goldberg, who designed the River City housing development in the South Loop and the iconic Marina City in River North, also fought the plans for the fair, and presented instead a plan for a floating fair. He, William Brubaker, John Moutoussamy, and Harry Weese – who had all been on the original AIA planning committee in 1978 but were not officially part of the SOM/Fair Corp plans – formed an ad hoc program review committee under the auspices of the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry (CACI) to review the fair plans with members of the community. Invitees to their July 8, 1982 meeting included representatives from Northwestern University, UNICEF, the University of Chicago, the Afro-American Police League, Chicago Community Trust, WFMT, and Continental Bank. In a written statement, Goldberg summarized the goals of the three architects who had been on the original AIA fair committee and who were fellows of the AIA. He acknowledged the work that SOM and the Fair Corp. had put into the fair, but suggested that they could, "add social and

planning considerations which time and dollar constraints of the initial development didn't permit."[97] He contended that "there remains a need for continued work on a master plan," and that, "any master plan would be a failure if it did not include serious consideration of its residuals…"[98] Goldberg concluded that it is the job of citizens, and his committee to have an active role in planning both the design of and funding for the fair. Goldberg proved to be a thorn in the fair planner's side for the next several years, disrupting their plans for the fair as well as SOM and Ayers' plans for Dearborn Park. Goldberg's River City was in direct competition with the Dearborn Park plans; his high density development along the river went against Chicago21's plan for family oriented, low-density residences.[99]

A long memo from a CACI meeting (of which Bertrand Goldberg & Associates was a member) reveals Don Petkus' frustration with the way that community groups protested the fair. The author, William J Price, director of governmental affairs for the Fair Corp., attended the meeting and reported back to Petkus. He notes that the group had contacted Petkus personally to obtain plans for the fair – "a short kit of general press releases" – and talked with Fair Corp. press man Tim Schulte about "the multi-volume Commerce Department study and one-volume 'blue cover' city volume presented to the BIE…" Petkus' handwritten note in the margin, circled in yellow highlighter, reads "not

[97] Bertrand Goldberg's statement, July 8 1982, World's Fair Meeting. Bertrand Goldberg Papers, Burnham and Rearson Library, Art Institute of Chicago.
[98] Ibid.
[99] At the time, Paul Gapp asserted that Goldberg believed that the controversy over Dearborn Park/River City was rooted in a rivalry between different architectural schools. Perhaps he, as a student of Corbusier, was looked down upon Graham and his ilk, who followed Mies van der Rohe.

public until after pres[entation] to BIE."[100] The memo mentioned the Center for Neighborhood Technology and the Chicago 1992 Committee, but noted that, "the group's agenda is still in formation." Nonetheless they, and the League of Women Voters, the Center for Urban Affairs of Northwestern University, and half a dozen other community groups, had serious questions about the fair that were not being answered. Goldberg himself noted at the meeting that, "the concept of making specific commentary on planning aspects of the fair project, rather than discussion of whether or not to have a fair, would be a more fruitful modus operandi."[101]

Petkus' marginalia were sparse but meaningful. He highlighted a passage about the community groups, who "believe the fair can be community building, but also believe that the fair corporation members are engaged in the activity for their own benefit and that of their shareholders, and so should share the risk." A large black explanation point is alongside the passage. Petkus objected to the assertion that the meeting between the Ad hoc committee and the Fair Corp. was a "dog and pony show" and noted, "5 showed up and only 2 were on time…" Members of the Fair Corp. repeated the criticism that, while fair protestors spoke loudly in the press and amongst themselves, that did not attend planned and announced meetings.

Architect Carl Rauschenberg, president of Burnham & Hammond, proposed yet another plan for the fair. Rauschenberg saw himself as the intellectual and aesthetic heir of Burnham & Root, and drew inspiration from some of Burnham's unpublished writings stored in their archives. In his interview with Wilbanks, he contended that many, if not

[100] Don Petkus marginalia, Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry Memorandum, July 23, 1982, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[101] Ibid., 3.

all, of the fair planners had alternative motives, in contrast to his unmitigated desire for civic good. He told her:

> the point is that there are a number of events that have happened over the years and there's people who are looking into the long-range development of that area. It's partially maybe for the good of the city and partially for their own interests…to get the South Loop developed. And they want to be in on it.[102]

He further compared the Fair Corp to a "Wizard of Oz type group" that intentionally chose not communicate with the public, and wanted to pull away the curtain to reveal their "sham."[103]

Because of the fair's impact on the city as a whole, it is not surprising that many involved in discussions about the fair stepped back to Burnham's 1909 Chicago Plan. Rauschenberg, for instance, professed an affinity with Burnham and argued for a fair design that was inspired by Burnham's philosophies. He prefaced his plan with several quotes from Burnham's "Uses of Expositions," presenting himself and his ideas as the true heir of Burnham, whose interest was, according to the many people who quoted him endlessly, the public good, and, in the process, arguing against the plans of SOM. Rauschenberg's plan was, "to permanently TRANSFORM a city wasteland into a permanent public facility, to create a "city beautiful" prototype – as Burnham did."[104] Burnham, he decided, would argue for permanent improvements to the city, rather than the very temporary fair planned by the Fair Corp. He also thought that the fair plans were too provincial and too Chicago-centric when they should have been considering the

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[102] Carl Rauschenberg interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, September 15, 1983, transcript, Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.
[103] Rauschenberg interview.
[104] Rauschenberg, Transform 92 Conceptual Outline, Burnham & Hammond, Inc. September, 1982.

world. He defined provincial as "to think in terms of limiting both the rewards and the experiences and the benefits of the fair to the people in the local area;" the provincial thinker sees the fair as a vehicle to show the world Chicago's products.[105] The fair should be a learning experience for both the planners and visitors, and highlight creative problem solving with technology. It is immoral, he claims, "not to take advantage of" new construction technologies that can create better architecture and interactive environments to create a fair that would make a substantive contribution to humanity.

Rauschenberg proposed a plan he called "Transform 92," that would have moved the fair site west to straddle the Chicago River and include Lake Calumet. The plan's permanent structures included an International Trade Center, a new Public Library, and "a permanent all weather sports stadium."[106] The land Rauschenberg wanted to use was "abandoned and/or underutilized," would use the existing transportation system while adding a scenic aerial transportation system between the river and lakefront.[107] John McCarron reported the details of the Calumet site plan in the *Tribune* on March 9, 1983, noting that the site was 450 acres, much smaller than the 575-acre Burnham site, and highlighting Rauschenberg's planned residuals.[108] In the long run it would cost far less than the Fair Corp. plan because it included residuals that would continue to earn revenue long after the fair was over.

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[105] Rauschenberg interview.
[106] Ibid.
[107] "Presentations on Possible Modifications to the Site Configuration for the 1992 Chicago World's Fair" 1992 World's Fair Joint meeting of the 1992 Corporation's site committee and the Site Advisory Panel, Wednesday, March 23, 1983 at the Palmer House, Sketchbook notes by William Brubaker, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[108] "World's Fair Should Be along River, Not on Lakefront, Architect Contends," *Chicago Tribune,* March 9, 1983.

Rauschenberg was also concerned about the environmental impact of the fair, asserting that damages to the lakefront could not be mitigated. One of his chief concerns was where the landfill would come from. He was suspicious that no in-depth report on the process had been released. In a March 24, 1983 press release, he claims that it would take:

> 13 million cubic yards of landfill to create the 180 acre site that's proposed…That's one and one-half million truckloads – or a convoy 8,000 miles long. If we assume one truck a minute dumping its load into the site, seven days a week, eight hours a day, it would take eight and one-half years to fill the site.[109]

In addition to the press release and a presentation at a well-attended site configuration meeting sponsored by the Fair Corp.'s Site Committee and Mayor's Site Advisory Panel, Rauschenberg's plan was presented in *Crain's Chicago*. A letter from Paul J. Milord, of R.T. Milord Company, Contractors/Engineers calls the plan the first imaginative one since Daniel Burnham's.[110] Rauschenberg was one of several architects present at a meeting that month that was hosted by the Fair Authority and meant to give the public the illusion of input.

The March 23, 1983 Site Configuration meeting at the Palmer house was chaired by Frank Considine and Philip Klutznick of the World's Fair Corp. Presenters included the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council, South Loop Planning Board, South Side Planning Board, Harry Weese, Rauschenberg on Burnham & Hammond, Lake Michigan Federation, Association for Fair Alternatives, Stotler & Company, Bertrand Goldberg,

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[109] Press release from the Hanlen Organization for Burnham and Hammond, "Lakefront Fair Site Poses Big Problems According to Architect Rauschenberg, March 24, 1983. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[110] Milord, letter to Rauschenberg, March 1, 1983.

Warren Wood, Chicago 1992 Committee, Stuart Cohen, League of Women Voters of Chicago, Chicago Associates Planners & Architects, Kenwood-Oakland Community Organization, 32nd Ward Voters, Wendy Allen (an anthropologist), Hyde Park Kenwood Community Conference, and Friends of the Parks. Klutznick's handwritten notes, copied and distributed the groups present, summarize the statements of each group. Most of the suggestions included reducing lakefill, shifting the site west, reconsidering transit to the fair in light of insufficient parking spaces, and decentralizing the fair (different parts of the fair would be in the neighborhoods, along the river, and on Goose Island). The main concerns revolved around traffic, sewage, and the environmental health of the lakefront.[111] The most common alternate site proposals placed the fair on Lake Calumet, and were modeled on Rauschenberg's plans.

McCarron summarized the Palmer House meeting in the next day's *Tribune,* declaring, "[s]ome of the most innovative plans for the 1992 Chicago World's Fair never will be built."[112] "A veritable parade of flip charts and slide projections were shown to the Site Committee," but the Fair Corp. maintained that they were, according to Considine, "locked into this [lakefront] site…If we had to go back to [the agencies] now, they'd think we were out of our minds…and we'd probably lose the fair." "So," McCarron concluded, "although the fair committee listened politely to some elaborate plans for alternative sites, it was looking only for ways to improve the lakefront site…" McCarron's report included a few important details left out of the Fair Corp.'s official

[111] "Presentations on Possible Modifications to the Site Configuration for the 1992 Chicago World's Fair" 1992 World's Fair Joint meeting of the 1992 Corporation's site committee and the Site Advisory Panel. Wednesday, March 23, 1983 at the Palmer House. Sketchbook notes by William Brubaker, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[112] John McCarron, "1992 Group Dampens Parade of Fair Plans," *Chicago Tribune*, March 24, 1983.

notes from the event. In addition to expressing her concerns about the health of the lake and the pending environmental assessment, Judith Kiriazis "warned that her organization [the Lake Michigan Federation] and other environmental groups might file a lawsuit to stop the landfill if the environmental study soon to be conducted be the federal government shows it would endanger the lake."[113] Thomas Forman, an architect with Chicago Associated, testified that "we need a lot of things in this city, but more land isn't one of them."[114] He further argued for a decentralized fair that would rejuvenate both the river and the neighborhoods.

In late May of 1983, the CCAC revealed an update of Chicago21. John McCarron's report, "The Loop master plan: Is it a vision or a hallucination?" was skeptical, calling it a, "mixed bag of sound ideas and unattainable dreams."[115] Updates to Chicago21 included:

> a towering monument in Monroe Harbor, a canal between Burnham Harbor and the South Branch of the Chicago River paralleling 18th Street and a new opera house for the southwest corner of Grant Park. Here are amenities worthy of Periclean Athens, of Imperial Rome, or flush times in thriving places. But this is Chicago, 1983 – where the public schools may not open next fall for lack of funds…[116]

McCarron criticized the plan's lack of consideration for the neighborhoods, "the 99 percent of the city's land area outside the scope of the committee's plan," and suggested

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[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.
[115] John McCarron, "The Loop Master Plan: Is it a Vision or Hallucination?," *Chicago Tribune,* May 29, 1983.
[116] Ibid.

that showing the city the plan was akin to, "handing a hungry man the pastry list from Chez Paul."[117]

Other improvements listed in the plan overlapped with elements of the fair's infrastructure. The costs for those plans were not included in the total cost for Chicago21 redux; Bach, Graham, and SOM felt so assured of their fair plans that they did not see a need to offer alternatives if the fair fell through. In response to McCarron's critical article, an anonymous editorial to the *Tribune* called the plan "full of grandeur," and declared that it would, "build and rehabilitate and brighten the heart of the city with glorious, futuristic public-private ventures…"[118] The writer calls critics of the plan "cynics" and "shortsighted," arguing that "it is essential that someone take a long view of the city."[119] The rhetoric is similar to Grahams and other architects (although, after reading the prose, I doubt it was written by Graham, Helmut Jahn, Stanley Tigerman, or any of the prestigious members of the design team).

For his part, Ira J. Bach, the city's director of development, called it a "bold plan to rejuvenate the heart of the city" amidst concerns that the city center would go the way of the downtowns of Detroit or Cleveland. The larger conversation about urban planning speculated that the city center reflected the health of the city, if not in fact then symbolically. By the following summer, Jack Cornelius of the CCAC noted that "downtown contains less than 1 percent of the city's area, yet generates 36 percent of its

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[117] Ibid.
[118] "A Schematic for the City's Future," *Chicago Tribune*, May 31, 1983.
[119] Ibid.

jobs and 21.8 percent of real estate tax revenues…For every public dollar invested in the Loop, another $6 is attracted from the private sector."[120]

Architecture critic Paul Gapp's take on the plan emphasized Chicago's place in the history of American cities and the history of city planning. He pointed to the physicality of the published 96 page plan, noting that was intended to resemble the Burnham plan with its understated graphic style. Artist Carlos Diniz created the watercolor renditions; unfortunately, the twenty-first century location of those drawings is unclear, as there was some disagreement about who actually owned or deserved to archive them; it is a matter I will address in the final chapter. The plan, according to Gapp, "would fulfill Burnham's unrealized proposal for symmetry…" on the lakefront.[121] (Figure 13)

Gapp paints a picture of Graham, SOM, and the other prestigious architects who worked on the plan as gruff, but brilliant, absent-minded professors, although he does say that Graham and Weese "probably could not decide on where to have lunch, let alone how to guide the destiny of Chicago." Graham was "brusque" and ambitious, and had the foresight to recruit a disparate group of architects that, "gave [his] effort a more credible base and blunted in advance any potential criticism that the plan would be a one-man show."[122] In Gapp's version, the planning sessions were a meeting of the minds, not an evil cabal. "At first," he recounts, "the architects got together after work at the Chicago Club to have a drink or two and discuss ideas. When they started ruining tablecloths with

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[120] David Ibata, "City Shedding Passive Role in Renewal," *Chicago Tribune,* July 1, 1984.
[121]Paul Gapp, "Chicago's New Master Plan: A Few Faults, but Still Extraordinary," *Chicago Tribune,* June 26, 1983.
[122] Ibid.

the Mont Blanc pens, the sessions were moved to SOM."[123] Gapp concludes that the plans were meant to be "provocative, not unwaveringly scripted,"[124] and warns that if Chicago "ever settles for mere survival, it can only fall into still more mediocrity."[125]

Journalist Leanita McClain's assessment was biting and sarcastic. In her short career (she died by her own hand in 1984)[126] as a contributor to *Newsweek* and other news outlets, and as a member of the editorial board of *The Chicago Tribune*, McClain dealt frankly and passionately with the racial problems that plagued the city. To her, the plan represents a "fantasmagoric utopia right in the middle of the toddlin' town." It proposes a "garden of delights…[in which the architects] indulged every fantasy." She mocks the plan's demands for abundant landscaping, telling the reader, "Oh, and let's not forget the gas stations tucked behind shrubbery that will transform Congress Parkway into the Champs Elysées." She, like many people in the neighborhoods and black Chicagoans, asserts that the CCAC plan – and other plans like it – sought to hide and make invisible any elements of the city that the planners don't like. "There is only one thing the CCAC plan lack," she concludes. "A great wall – yes, like the one in China – to keep out the riff-raff from the rotting neighborhoods."[127]

Pervasive racial and class segregation in Chicago, and accusations of racism, dominated the fair planning and protests. Many people understood gentrification to be merely another form of colonization: mostly white, mostly wealthy people systematically displaced most poor, mostly minority people. The entry of certain kinds of businesses and

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[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Laura Washington, "McClain's Painful Legacy," *Chicago Tribune*, December 4, 1986.
[127] Leanita McClain "The City Plan to End All Plans," *Chicago Tribune*, June 4, 1983.

structures are read as precursors to outright invasions: Natalie Moore, in her memoir *The South Side*, recalled that the first Whole Foods grocery store in Englewood made many people suspicious of plans to drive up real estate prices and drive them out. In *Street Signs Chicago*, Lew Kreinberg and Charles Bowden point to the intrusion of "artist lofts" in 1980s Pilsen as the sign of impending neighborhood change.

Opponents of the fair argued that the plans would displace both residents and businesses, and raise property values too much for many people to stay in their homes. The fair planners professed their desire that the fair be a catalyst for new urban development even as they argued that the fair could not be a cure-all, and they claimed that the fair would not impact current residents even as they invested in several high-end housing developments near the fair site. According to the *Tribune*, a group of well-informed real estate agents, "generally agreed that asking prices for the land [at the north end of the fair site] shot from $3-$4 per square foot…in 1981 to $10-$12 [in 1984], depending on location within the block." One real estate analyst called the market in and around Burnham Harbor, "a speculator's playground."[128] (Figure 9) There was such concern about speculation around the fair site that Ald. Bernard Stone [50th] "called an end to secret land trusts in Illinois."[129] He argues that private trusts should follow the same regulations as public trusts to avoid conflicts of interest that would benefit the city's elite. Clearly, people who could not afford speculator prices would have been affected; Graham and Ayers' investments in Dearborn Park, and Goldberg's investment in River City would have undoubtedly paid off even more than they originally thought.

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[128] William Gaines and John McCarron, "Land Values, Sales Jump Near Fair Site," *Chicago Tribune,* July 8, 1984.
[129] "City Report: Ald. Stone: End Secret Land Trusts," *Chicago Tribune,* July 17, 1984.

While some of the fair planners clearly saw the plans as beneficial to both themselves and the economically depressed communities on the near south side, others clearly resented any hint that the fair should or would benefit poor communities. FCB's original market analysis indicated that black Chicagoans were as or more enthusiastic about the fair than white Chicagoans. George Burke told Wilbanks in his interview that "the black people felt that this kind of thing could be done, should be done, and was a natural function of the government one way or another…You could detect it, and you had to really read into what they were saying because it was a higher proportion of them that were just used to the government doing more things for them."

Frank Considine, president of National Can Corp., an original member of the World's Fair Corp. Steering Committee and member of the Authority agreed, stating:

> Well, I'm a little old school I guess on this [fixing up the neighborhoods]. You know this business of figuring that somebody else is going to do it for you all the time has got to stop. And when I heard it once before at a public hearing, I contained myself somewhat to say, well why don't you get out and get your people organized and get them to clean it up…That's what they do in other countries…Unfortunately there's a mentality developing and has developed over time where they feel in these communities that somebody's got to do it for them, and they've got to – you know, either Uncle Sam has to do it or the City has to do or the business community has to contribute or something like that, instead of good sweat labor…Sweat labor I guess is a thing of the past.

Considine brushed off Wilbanks' response that many communities had the sweat, but needed money to buy materials to build and rebuild. Other civic leaders provided alternatives to the Reagan-inflected argument that poor people were poor for lack of trying. Harvey Saver, executive director of Chicago Coalition for the homeless, argued that the Fair would have an impact on the epidemic of homelessness in the city, stating

that the fair would, "result in the loss of…1000 units of SRO [single room occupancy] housing presently operating, [and the loss of] over 5000 units which could be revitalized."[130] Two housing projects within the scope of the fair site, Long Grove and Ickes Hilliard Homes, were at risk of being demolished. Saver demanded independent feasibility studies and impact statements, and concluded that, "[p]lanning for a world's fair must not – can-not – be allowed to.....create a laboratory in Social Darwinism in Chicago."[131] Considine and Burke's attitudes seeped into their public communication, and was one of many reasons that formal protest groups emerged during the planning process. The most influential of those groups, the Chicago 1992 Committee, is discussed in the next chapter.

[130] "Testimony of Harvey Saver, Executive director Chicago Coalition for the Homeless at State Select Committee Hearings on the World's Fair," May 20, 1985, Chicago Urban League Collection, University of Illinois at Chicago.
[131] Ibid.

Figure 6: Chicago 1992 World's Fair Logo

Figure 7: Calm and Friendly Site Plans simplify the complexity of proposed plans.

Figure 8: An Insouciant Balloon

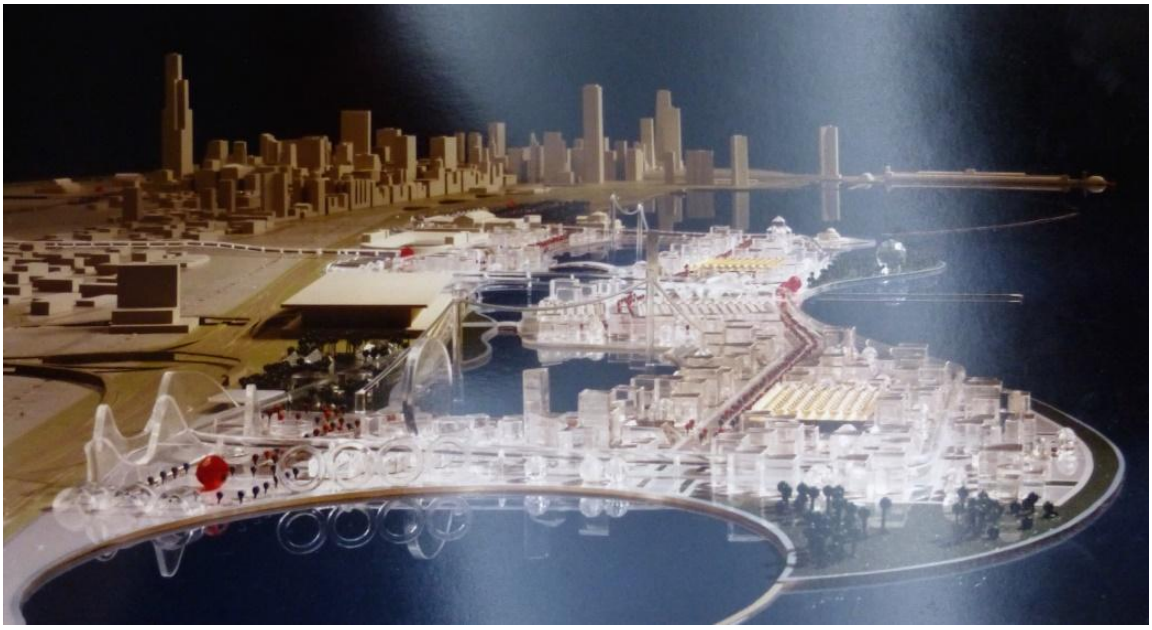

Figure 9: Architectural Model

Figure 10: Tom Ayers and Jane Byrne

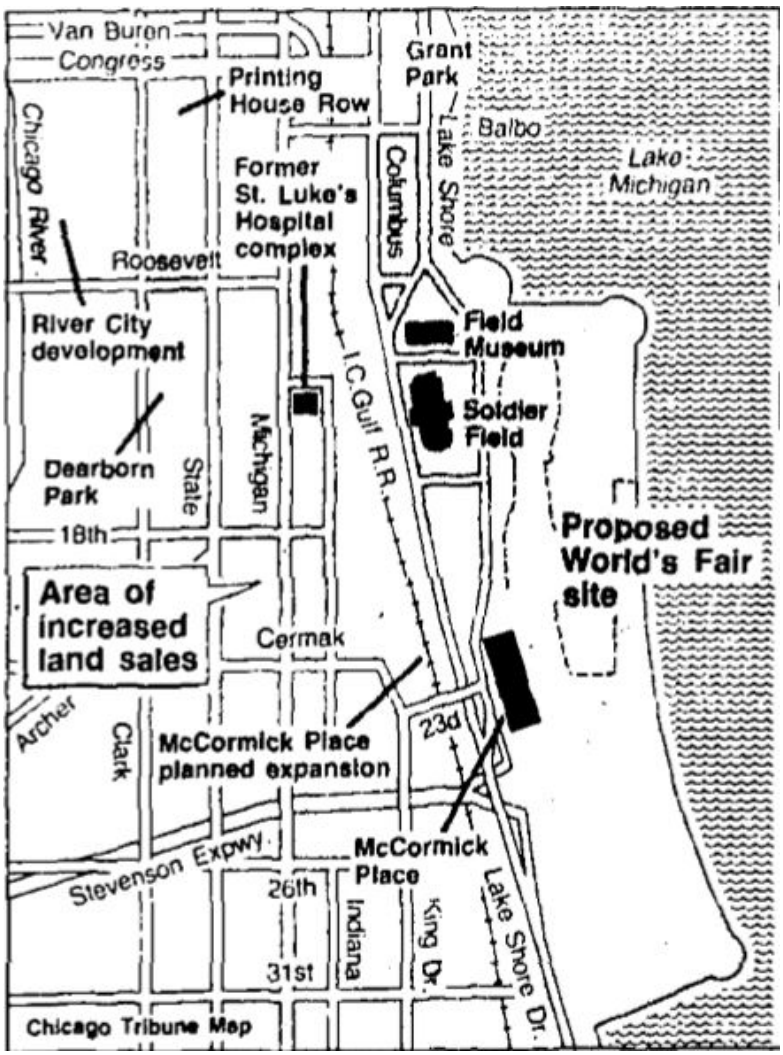

Figure 11: A Speculator's Playground; William Gaines and John McCarron, "Land Values, Sales Jump Near Fair Site," *Chicago Tribune,* July 8, 1984.

Figure 12: Drawing from Chicago 92, released by the Byrne Administration in 1982. John McCarron, “The Loop Master Plan: Is it a Vision or Hallucination?,” *Chicago Tribune,* May 29, 1983.

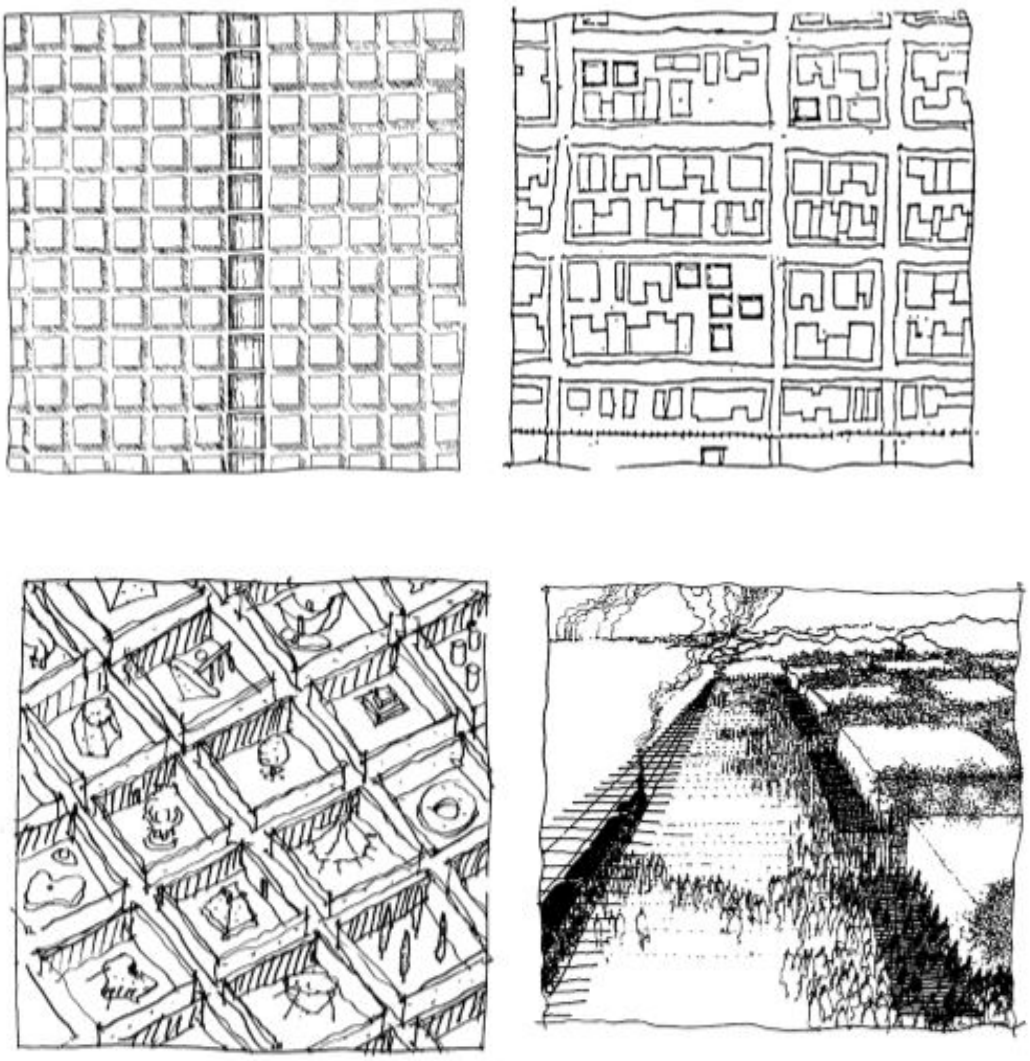

Figure 13: Beeby Sketches, Sketches for the 1992 Chicago World's Fair. *Perspecta*, vol. 26, Theater, Theatricality, and Architecture (1990) 229-230.

Figure 14: Three Architectural Projections from Carl Rauschenberg.

Figure 15: A Floating Fair, with barges on the lakefront and exhibits on boats in the Chicago River.

PROTESTING THE FAIR

The Environmental Impact Statement hearing was planned for Monday, February 28th. It was the night of the final episode of the television show *M*A*S*H*: not an insignificant fact, considering that the show's finale was a two-and-a-half hour culmination of one of the top-rated shows for the previous eleven years. 125 million Americans, 77% of the viewing audience, watched the episode. It was the most-watched, and highest grossing, television show to date, and was a media event.[1] In other words, it was a tempting alternative to the evening of bureaucratic squabbling that the scoping hearing was sure to provide. In many ways, though, the show's conclusion reflected a larger shift in American culture that affected the way the Chicago 1992 Committee acted as community organizers and agents of change.

*M*A*S*H*'s narratives, especially in the later years of the show, created a world in which people were encouraged to feel, connect with, and understand each other. The show grew increasingly anti-war, and "increasingly represented the contemporary currency of emotional therapy for sensitive consumers."[2] It was the expression of baby boomers in the seventies: insular, emotional, and empathetic. The end of the show was the end of an era. The gentleness of Alan Alda as Hawkeye, amplified by Alda's public support of the Equal Rights Amendment and other liberal causes, gave way to the more bombastically portrayed masculinity of actors Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sylvester Stallone. Later that year, the film *The Big Chill* furthered signaled the end of sixties-style

[1] Mike Budd and Clay Steinman." M*A*S*H Demystified: Capitalization, Dematerialization, Idealization." *Cultural Critique*, 10 (1988): 59.
[2] Ibid., 72.

peace and love, portraying a group of friends whose loving idealism had turned to dissatisfaction, loneliness, impotence, and suicide.

Changes in culture evolved hand-in-hand with changes in government. Reagan's election inaugurated an era of military build-up and conservative social and economic values far different than those espoused by the organizers of the Chicago 1992 Committee. Reagan's description of a "lawless "jungle" arising in the nation's cities, or complaints of seeing a "young buck" using food stamps, or a confected story about a "welfare queen" massively defrauding the taxpayers" are reflected his thinly veiled racism and that of many of the silent majority that elected him.[3] His domestic economic policies affected the very programs that neighborhood organizers had embraced during President Jimmy Carter's administration (and, indeed, since the federally funded social policies of the New Deal) to redress the problems attendant with deindustrialization. Although President Lyndon B Johnson's War on Poverty had in fact decreased the poverty rate, in Chicago, and among Blacks, the poverty rate had again increased by the late 1970s and early 1980s. After decades of federally funded urban renewal projects, Reagan ran on a platform of social austerity and tax cuts. For example, he cut funding for the National School Lunch Program, in place since 1946, by 40%. The move did not play well in the press, with columnist Russell Baker writing, "This is an idea by one of Oliver Twists's workhouse bullies, isn't it?"[4] Baker was not the only one to see parallels to the more inequitable aspects of late Victorian culture. Journalist R.C. Longworth surmised that the World's Fair Corp. was trying to use a nineteenth century solution to a twentieth

[3] Doug Rossinow. *The Reagan Era: A History of the 1980s*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 18.
[4] Ibid., 109.

century problem.[5] The Corp. was using a Reaganite solution to a perennial problem: they assumed that their (and the public's) capital investments would naturally trickle down to the neighborhoods. All they needed to do was supply the design and platform for the Fair, and the rest would take of itself. Not everyone agreed: in 1981 an informal group of concerned citizens began to meet regularly to discuss the Corporation's plans, and decided to protest the fair. Soon calling themselves the Chicago 1992 Committee, they argued that the fair plans were a thinly disguised method of gentrification of the South Loop ultimately designed to benefit the planners themselves. They protested the closed-door planning process, firm in their belief that any city plans affecting the neighborhoods – and using public funds –should involve the neighborhoods. Over the next three years, the challenge of the Chicago 1992 Committee was not only to build a grassroots coalition, but to build a grassroots coalition in a culture newly steeped in the rhetoric of economic and social conservatism.

The Chicago 1992 Committee

By 1982, opposition to the World's Fair had reached a critical level. Where the World's Fair Corporation saw efficient planning by a group of experienced experts, many in the neighborhoods saw the hubris of a group of rich, powerful, white men making decisions that would impact the city without even informing its citizens. So, the Chicago 1992 Committee approached publicizing their discontent and arguments in a very different way than the Corp.; they started small, producing leaflets and pamphlets (in both English and Spanish) to distribute in churches, bars, and community centers, and

[5] R. C. Longworth, "A Postmortem on the Fair," *Chicago Tribune*, June 27, 1985.

advertised their meetings well in advance scheduling them after the work day was done in libraries, schools, and halls easily accessible via public transit. They consulted with a different group of experts to produce their own reports and studies, emphasizing that the people who produced their reports had no connection with the fair planners and thus no potential conflict of interest. At least one representative was consistently present at public hearings, and they worked closely with anti-Byrne aldermen and the new Harold Washington regime. They used government policy, particularly the public hearings required by the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) to stall the fair's progress. These four approaches proved successful in mobilizing enough people to convince government that the fair plan was incomplete and bad for Chicago.

People from the neighborhoods volunteered to staff the Chicago 1992 Committee. The "neighborhoods," as Chicagoans know and understand them, are a Chicago phenomenon. The city regularly calls itself the city of neighborhoods, and takes great pride in the idea that each of the 77 neighborhoods has a different character, with distinctive food, culture, architecture, and style. When Byrne and others referred to Chicago as the "American City," this is part of what they meant. Chicago's population boomed from the second half of the nineteenth century to the onset of WWII, and many of the neighborhoods still reflect the settlement patterns of immigrants attracted to the industrializing city. The ethnic makeup of other neighborhoods has changed over time – the shift in Pilsen from Bohemian to Mexican, for example. The South Side, however, has been a neighborhood of middle class Blacks (rather than a variety of ethnic whites) for a century. WBEZ reporter and journalist Natalie Y. Moore recalls growing up in

Chatham in the 1980s in her memoir, *The South Side: A Portrait of Chicago and American Segregation*:

> My South Side black cocoon was a solid middle-class neighborhood. Judges, teachers, lawyers, doctors and city, postal, and social workers live in Chatham…ice cream trucks jingled in the summertime…[w]e rode our bikes to buy…potato chips…candy and dill pickles at the nearby Amoco gas station…We jumped through lawn sprinklers in backyards while our parents barbecued.[6]

Moore firmly establishes that her neighborhood was (and is) not dissimilar from the white neighborhoods in Chicago and around the country. At the same time, however, she notes that, until very recently, she would not consider living in a neighborhood with a different ethnic makeup because she "would feel [her] presence to be disruptive."[7] Her story shows that, while the experiences of many people in different neighborhoods – and, indeed, around the country – were very similar, the Chicago neighborhoods remained firmly segregated.

The first people involved the Chicago 1992 Committee, however, reflected the diversity of the neighborhoods: Lew Kreinberg, a member of the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, Art Vasquez, from the Chicago Latino Institute, and architect Chris Burgess. They quickly garnered the support of established neighborhood groups, including the Southwest Community Congress, North River Commission, League of Women Voters Chicago, Chicago Black United Communities, Bethel Housing, and Long Grove Tenants Association.

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[6] Natalie Y. Moore, *The South Side: A Portrait of Chicago and American Segregation*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2016).
[7] Moore, 2.

As membership grew, the committee organized itself into two groups: the Plumbers, who were tasked with gathering data about the fair, and the Straight Flushers, who spent time developing long term strategies to address the problems they believed the fair would exacerbate.[8] Frankie Knibb, who originally came to the Chicago 1992 Committee as a representative from the League of Women Voters, was soon involved on the Plumbers Committee, and in short order became the only paid employee as a chairperson. A former reference librarian at the University of Chicago, she quickly learned tactics from Kreinberg and others; her name appears on nearly every letter written by the Committee, she testified at every public hearing, and maintained her role as a community organizer and activist long after the fair had been defeated.

The Chicago 1992 Committee officially incorporated in early 1984 with four objectives: to promote research into the1992 World's Fair; to educate the public about the Fair; to "provide education in methods of effective citizen participation in public decision making processes; and, to "do any and all lawful activities which aid in accomplishing the foregoing purposes[.]"[9] Any neighborhood group, civic group, or individual could pay dues to be a voting member of the Committee. The incorporation papers emphasize that only the executive director would receive financial compensation. Proving that they had a sense of humor, the determined that the corporate seal "shall be circular in form,

[8] Robert McClory, *The Fall of the Fair: Communities Struggle of Fairness*, (Chicago: Chicago 1992 Committee, 1986), 11.
[9] "Incorporation Papers for Chicago 1992 Committee," 1984, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.

bearing two flippers and a long snout. It shall be experienced in the use of beachballs and circus horns."[10]

The Committee's total expenses for 1984, not including committed funds for independent studies, was a slim $22,066.27[11] In 1985, their budget totaled $47,000, as well as a $30,000 grant from the Joyce Foundation (a private foundation founded in 1948 whose mission is to advocate for "policy reforms that promise to improve quality of life" in the Great Lakes region[12]) and a $15,000 grant from the Woods Charitable Fund. Other contributors included the New Prospect Foundation and the Wiebolt Foundation.[13] The largest expenditure in 1985 was the salary of one employee – Frankie Knibb, who volunteered for several years before grant funds allowed her a modest salary - followed by photocopying and printing costs.

Sociologist and Harvard Professor Robert Sampson has argued that civic engagement is spatially ordered, and that social ecological differentiation remains prevalent in the twenty-first century. This spatial logic organizes our collective and individual lives and communities; "neighborhoods are not merely settings in which individuals act out the dramas produced by autonomous or preset scripts, or bigger vessels determined by "bigger" external forces, but are important determinants of the quantity and quality of human behavior in their own right."[14] He further suggests that

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[10] Ibid.
[11] "Chicago 1992 Committee Financial Report, 1984," Chicago 1992 Committee, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[12] "About Us," *Joyce Foundation*, www.joycefdn.org.
[13] Flora Skelly. "Nonprofit Organizations and the World's Fair." *Forum*. Winter, 1985. Chicago: Donors Forum of Chicago, 4. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[14] Sampson, Robert J. *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 2012.

despite the prevailing feeling of a decline in social connections and civic activity in increasingly diverse neighborhoods, data points to an overall increase in civic engagement in the last thirty years. His longitudinal study reveals "a clear pattern in which nonprofit density predicts later civic intensity *at all levels of diversity*."[15] Thus, even though the Chicago 1992 Committee spanned ethnically and racially diverse neighborhoods, which otherwise might be fracturing, the fact that there were a number of pre-existing nonprofit community groups in every neighborhood hinted at the potential for the Committee volunteers' civic activism.

The Chicago 1992 Committee depended upon small groups who had strong ties within the community and consistently engaged in civic participation – things like block parties, neighborhood watches, etc. – more than traditional direct action. (The community groups involved are listed in footnote 140.) In Sampson's terminology, the actions of the Chicago 1992 Committee served as hybrid actions and events because a vocal protest-like movement for social change emerged from common types of civic participation.[16] The ability of the Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation to get business done quickly was based on a thick web of social ties created through shared business and economic interests, as Shlay and Giloth suggest. The ability of the Chicago 1992 Committee to quickly mobilize a large group of concerned citizens was based in a shared ecology of a dense proportion of community organizations. In other words, the physical space of the neighborhoods created a condition in which stable communities thrived: Sampson correlates social links and physical spaces (reproduced to create a "neighborhood effect")

[15] Sampson, 197.
[16] Sampson, 185.

in the same way the Shlay and Giloth correlate social links and financial/business statuses. How ironic, then, that the apparent political underpinnings of the fair (the Reagan assertion of loss of family and community as well as a neoliberalist/trickle down economic theory) proved flawed while groups from the broken inner city reaffirmed community values.

Communication: Flyers, Pamphlets, and Meetings

The World's Fair Corp was frustratingly opaque in its communications, but the Chicago 1992 Committee aimed for total transparency, waging a war of information by emphasizing equal access to data and plans. According to Ohio State University Professor Stephen J. Summerhilll and Appalachian State University Professor John Alexander Williams, "Don Petkus and John Kramer [both members of the Fair Corp.'s executive committee] believe[d] that the 1992 Committee flattered itself in claiming credit for the fall of the fair." [17] However, the actions of the Chicago 1992 Committee, and the press coverage provided by many of the groups involved, affected both Harold Washington and Springfield politicians enough that they withdrew support from the Fair as a direct result of the committee's actions.

Lew Kreinberg, a community organizer in Pilsen, was one of the first to raise his voice to criticize the fair in the name of the neighborhoods. In 1982, Kreinberg started meeting regularly with various community groups, and in the spring of that year formalized their meetings into a coalition of non-profits called the Chicago 1992

[17] Stephen J Summerhill and John Alexander Williams, *Sinking Columbus: Contested History, Cultural Politics, and Mythmaking During the Quincentenary* (Gainsville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2000), 85.

Committee. Kreinberg was a founding member of the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs in 1964, and "was instrumental in founding the West Side Federation" that year, which was an a "coordinating body for west side organizations."[18] Soon after, he left his job as a history professor to pursue community organizing full time. Upon moving away from Chicago in 2001, the *Tribune* published an interview and brief retrospective of his work, noting that his first activism was helping to set up grassroots organizations to fight the slum landlords in the West side. In celebration of Obama's inauguration in January 2009, Kreinberg was interviewed for *Forward* (an independent American Jewish weekly news outlet that began publishing in 1990), and recalled being hit by a policeman while protecting children marching in Selma in 1965. Regarding Obama's election, he said, "It's a miracle. I didn't expect to see it in my lifetime…We keep inching along, but there are stars in our sky. If there are no stars in the sky, there's no sense in having a sky."[19]

In Kreinberg, the Chicago 1992 Committee had an experienced activist who had successfully helped to open banks that would work fairly with poverty-stricken Blacks and knew the ins and outs of the Daley machine. As he recalled, "We were up against the strongest political machine in the country and cloistered, university know-it-alls who thought they knew how to help the underprivileged…Could you imagine taking gang members to museums and thinking that was a cure-all?"[20] Reminiscing about his protest of the proposed world's fair, Kreinberg recalled that he "would attend meetings with a

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[18] "Jewish Council for Urban Affairs," Cfm40.middlebury.edu.
[19]"Obama's Presidency Renews Activists' Memories," Anthony Weiss, Jan 21 2009. http://forward.com/news/15015/obama-s-presidency-renews-activists-memories/.
[20] Dawn Turner Trice, "Activist Retiring after Fighting So Many Causes," *Chicago Tribune,* August 20, 2001.

duck call and…go quack, quack, quack, every time they told a lie."[21] Perhaps Kreinberg was taking a cue from legendary Chicago organizer Saul Alinsky. Like Alinsky, Kreinberg was a Chicago Jew who worked to organize mostly black communities – Alinsky in Rochester, New York (his early organizing in Back of the Yards Chicago was with white ethnic communities), and Kreinberg in Woodlawn.[22] Famously, Alinsky observed that, the more the establishment disliked him, the more he was trusted by the community; it was advice that Kreinberg seemed to take to heart.[23] In quacking, Kreinberg was employing Alinsky's fifth rule: "Ridicule is man's most potent weapon. It is almost impossible to counterattack ridicule. Also it infuriates the opposition, who then react to your advantage."[24]

Perhaps it was in part out of frustration with Kreinberg's ridicule, and in part the criticisms that Kreinberg enumerated in *The Neighborhood Works*, that drove George Burke to say that no one would "buy a ticket to an urban renewal project." Regardless, the exchange set the tone for all future exchanges between Chicago 1992 Committee and the World's Fair Corporation/Authority. Community members frequently complained that the World's Fair Corp. not only dismissed their concerns, but also consistently infantilized them in person and the press. Betty Magness, a representative of the Chicago Black United Communities, said that, "I really got the impression that these people [the Fair planners] thought I was stupid…that I wasn't bright enough to understand what it

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[21] Ibid.
[22] Bill Moyers and Michael Winship, "Saul Alinsky, Who?" *Moyers and Company,* February 6, 2012. http://billmoyers.com/2012/02/06/saul-alinsky-who/.
[23] Saul Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals: A Primer for Realistic Radicals*, https://archive.org/details/RulesForRadicals, 101-102.
[24] Ibid., 128.

was all about."[25] Alderman Bernard Stone agreed, commenting that, "[i]t was this condescending attitude that got me, like he's [Ayers] thinking, who's this little pipsqueak alderman to tell me anything?"[26]

In a late August 1983 interview, Ira Bach seemed remarkably unconcerned about how the World's Fair Corp. would communicate with the public. Bach's assistant, Susan, responded to Wilbanks' concern that 10 public hearings about the fair would not be enough by asserting that the planning process would takes "months and years" and that they hadn't determined the best way to communicate with the public – or any way to communicate with the public, speculating that they would post hearing announcements "possibly" through newspapers or "use the Department of Neighborhoods, somewhere."[27] Advertising public hearings was clearly not a priority.

The Fair Corp. was so reluctant to release information to the public that the Committee resorted to using Freedom of Information Act requests to obtain copies of reports that the Corp. had submitted to the federal government as part of their application for approval.[28] Additionally, attorney Marc Gaynes contacted the counsel for the City of Chicago to

> determine whether the Open Meetings Act, I.R.S. Chapter 102, Sec. 43, will be applied to the series of meetings between the World's Fair Authority, the State of Illinois and Mayor Washington's Interdepartmental team as they negotiate an Intergovernmental Agreement…specifically I am seeking a decision on whether these meetings will be open to the

[25] McClory, 5-6.
[26] McClory, 5.
[27] Ira Bach, interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks, August 30, 1983, transcript. Evelyn Wilbanks Papers, Chicago History Museum.
[28] For example, "Freedom of Information Appeal from Frances Kozuch to General Counsel, U.S. Department of Commerce," 1983, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.

> public, and, if so, whether the notice and taping provisions of the Open Meetings Act will be complied with.[29]

Amended by the Illinois General Assembly in 1981, "The Illinois Open Meetings Act (OMA) is designed to ensure that the public has access to information about government and its decision-making process."[30,31] Although relatively new, OMA had already been used to allow the public entrance into school board and Chicago Transit Authority meetings, and was fully supported by both 1982 candidates for state Attorney General.[32] Even George Pratt of the Department of Commerce had denied materials to the public, prompting Frances Kozuch of the Latino Institute to threaten litigation if the Committee's FOIA application was denied.[33]

The Committee took the further step of appealing directly to Mayor Washington in February, arguing that "the community groups are being ignored and their concerns trivialized and reduced to rhetoric."[34] Even when meetings were open to the public, many still felt both not included and belittled. Chris Burgess expressed his frustration to Mayor Washington about a budget meeting of February 3, 1983:

> Mr. Petkus demonstrated his typical cavalier attitude towards community input..[his] arrogant and erroneous interpretation[s]…is not only an insult to the speakers and the process, but it will ultimately lead to an unsuccessful and detrimental World's Fair…Having the diversity of

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[29] Marc J. Gaynes, letter on behalf of the Chicago 1992 Committee to James Montgomery, Corporation Counsel, City of Chicago, January 25, 1984. Chicago 1992 Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[30] "Illinois Open Meetings Act – Frequently Asked Questions for Public Bodies," Illinois Attorney General. http://foia.ilattorneygeneral.net/pdf/faq_oma_government.pdf.
[31] "Continuing Legal Education – Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act Update," www.isba.org.
[32] Daniel Egler, "Candidates Harmonious in Press Association Show," *Chicago Tribune*, September 11, 1982.
[33] "Freedom of Information Appeal from Frances Kozuch to General Counsel, U.S. Department of Commerce," 1983. Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[34] Mary Nelson, letter to Harold Washington, February 8, 1984, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.

> testimony and ideas callously discounted by Mr. Petkus is simply unconscionable. At a minimum, formal apologies…are due.[35]

The letter demonstrates the increasingly tense interactions between Burgess and members of the Authority. In response, Ira Bach, who was at that time director of city management for Harold Washington, responded that the administration had appointed Victoria Granacki as the director of World's Fair Planning to ensure that the recommendations of the Advisory Committee were incorporated into the Intergovernmental Agreement. Burgess was tenacious, exchanging terse letters with John Kramer. He contended that the fair was white and euro-centrist, that the Authority was dismissive, and that the Authority's assertion that the Fair would make Chicago a first class city ignored the position of the neighborhoods that the city was already first class – its cultural institutions were "world class," and to say otherwise is "demeaning to the uniqueness and wonder Chicago has to offer."[36] Burgess' many letter to Kramer and Petkus went unanswered, further fueling his, and the Committee's, frustration and anger.

On April 22, 1983, that anger erupted in the form of a protest outside of a World's Fair Corp. and Chicago Central Area Committee event outside of the University of Chicago. In an interview, Ayers responded to historian Evelyn Wilbanks' inquiry about the protest in his August 1983 interview for the Chicago Historical Society. Wilbanks noted that, "there was some opposition down at the University of Chicago," and asked, "what do you feel about community opposition and what other ways you see you channel that into positive participation?" Ayers responded that they had

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[35] Chris Burgess letter to Mayor Harold Washington, February 21, 1984. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[36] Chris Burgess letter to John Kramer, undated. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Chicago History Museum.

> worked hard on this. You can't do anything of significance in the city…without having some people who have a different idea. So, opposition doesn't bother me. Now we have talked with every group that ever raised questions…We've just tried ever so hard to work with them…And it's, you know……but I haven't yet found any real opposition.[37]

Ira Bach similarly dismissed the picketers. He "didn't mean to diminish their interest," noting that they were the kind of people who liked to picket anything, and that the symposium was not the best type of event to protest.[38] Except for the American Indian Center, no community groups actively engaged with the Chicago 1992 Committee had been invited. Art Vasquez spoke at a press conference after the hearing, stating that, "A fair will benefit Chicago if we use it to plan creatively and responsibly for the future of Chicago. We can no longer afford to create a future planned and developed by only a few."[39] Perhaps direct action was not the best method for the Chicago 1992 Committee; the few people picketing the event were in fact the only reference to any non-violent direct action protests that I found. The demonstration, whose size I could not determine, didn't make the press; the papers that week were preoccupied with the Washington's election, fighting in Central America, the newly discovered and newly debunked "lost diaries" of Hitler, and a psychotherapist sex abuse scandal.

A May 3 and May 13, 1983 exchange of letters between Bernadette Tramm, secretary of the Corporation, and Lew Kreinberg demonstrated the entity's frustration with the tactics of the 1992 Committee and the Corporation's generally condescending attitude. Additionally, the letters show the Committee's refusal to accept answers to their

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[37] Tom Ayers, interviewed by Evelyn Wilbanks.
[38] Ibid.
[39] McClory, 18.

questions that they did not like. Kreinberg persisted in demanding discussion for a site change in spite of clear regulations preventing one; he also asked the Corporation if they had designated the Fair Review Council the "only watch-dog/monitoring group concerned with the fair," and, if not, asked for a list of other organizations "having that monitoring function," forcing the Corporation to officially recognize the Committee.[40] Kreinberg requested answers, in writing, to a list of six questions about the fair site before committing to a meeting between the two groups.

Petkus responded ten days later with a ten-page letter answering the Kreinberg's questions point-by-point (and sent a copy of the letter to The City News Bureau of Chicago). In response to Kreinberg's last question, Petkus wrote, "The Fair Review Council has not been designated the "Fair monitoring organization," nor do we regard it as the "only watch-dog/monitoring group concerned about the fair." He then listed ten organizations the Corp. had worked with; he did not, however, name the Chicago 1992 Committee. Petkus ends the letter, striking a passive aggressive tone:

> In closing, Lew, let me just note for the record that the only discussions we have been able to conduct with your committee thus far have been initiated by the 1992 Corporation…Unfortunately, you have chosen to disregard our invitation to enter into more substantive discussions, choosing instead to raise questions through the media where a productive exchange of information in precluded… In your closing paragraph, Lew, you appear to expect that the answers to your six questions would "clear up any Fair-related issues…We strongly disagree, because we are fully committed to an on-going dialogue with you…[41]

[40] Lew Kreinberg letter to Don Petkus, May 3, 1983. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Papers, Chicago History Museum.
[41] Don Petkus letter to Lew Kreinberg, May 13, 1983, Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority Papers, Chicago History Museum.

The Committee was not to be placated, however. In a letter to the Corp., delivered in November, the Committee re-asserted that they would, "work strenuously to involve the public," and complained of a disturbing pattern of, "short and inadequate public notice given public hearings" by the Corporation/Authority. According to the letter, even some Fair Authority members had not received a copy of the budget under review at a December 30 meeting. The Committee accused the Authority of being both flippant and casual about an "extremely complicated" project, and demanded that a court reporter be present at budget meetings that discussed the use of public funds. The letter concludes with the contention that the, "Environmental Impact Statement will be a pivotal document…we request that a mechanism be established making these documents easily accessible to the general public."[42]

In the end, the Committee chose to devote its time to letter writing and engaging in the political processes – addressed in the following sections – rather than direct action. As historian Bradford Martin notes, in *The Other Eighties*, "1980s activists were as likely to try to influence established institutions as to undermine the foundations of their authority…[like] Black mayor's initiatives to make municipal government more responsive to their constituencies."[43] In this context, the Committee's methods – letter writing, testifying at public hearings, and working closely with John McCarron at the *Tribune* – make sense.

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[42] Mary Nelson letter to Chicago World's Fair Authority, December 22, 1983, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[43] Bradford Martin, *The Other Eighties*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011) xiv, xii.

A press release from July 12, 1983 stated that the Committee "reluctantly but firmly" opposed any governmental funding for the fair, arguing that public funding for the fair would drain funds from more necessary projects. And that the fair was a

> private business venture, benefiting private interests, in which the totality of the business risk is borne by the public…the infrastructure will then be in place to accommodate a proposed new city of 100,000 primarily white, middle- and upper- income residents…and will cause major dislocations to the nearby communities. These subsidies, moreover, will come at the expense of Chicago's existing neighborhoods…Its development scheme represents the creation of public policy without the consent of the governed…the effects will be to perpetuate and expand Chicago as a city of ghettos and Gold Coasts.[44]

In an open letter to the World's Fair Corp, Committee Chair Mary Nelson defined the group as, "a broad-based coalition of community groups which has been working for public disclosure…for almost two years, [and] has succeeded in meeting with and mobilizing over 30 community organizations." Her language throughout the two-page document bars no holds: the Committee is "disturbed by the persistent pattern of short and inadequate notice" for public hearings; contended that budget meetings with no public input were "a waste of your [the World Fair Corp.'s] time;" and stated that the Corp. was dealing with the budget "flippantly and casually."[45]

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[44] "Proposed Statement of the Chicago 1992 Committee" Internal Draft, July 12, 1983, Chicago 1992 Committee, Chicago 1992 Committee collection, Chicago History Museum.

[45] Mary Nelson, Chicago 1992 Committee letter to Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation, December 22, 1983. Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.

Interactions with Local Government and the City Council Wars

Chicago has a reputation for contentious machine politics; for a century and a half, it has earned that reputation. The City Council is composed of elected aldermen from the city's 50 wards.[46] Since the late nineteenth century, Chicago's aldermen have governed – though some would say ruled – through political patronage. According to historian Donald Miller in *City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America*, "Quid pro quo was the operating principle of Chicago politics, and the master dealmakers were the aldermen."[47] Although all of Chicago's mayors were American Anglo-Saxons in the last half of the century, aldermen were often of foreign birth, and worked within their communities and neighborhoods as independent proprietors of essential businesses (especially saloons).

One hundred years later, much about the city had changed: the city continued to grow for the first half of the twentieth century, peaking in 1950 at about three and a half million. The Great Migration (1910-1970) brought hundreds of thousands of African Americans to the city in search of both industrial and domestic work, and those emigrants established a vibrant cultural life.

Until the Depression, Chicago was a Republican stronghold. "Big Bill" Thompson (who was mayor twice, from 1915-1923 and 1927-1931) was elected alderman after handily leading the Chicago Athletic Association football team to victories against Princeton, Dartmouth, and the Boston Athletic Association. As a

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[46] www.cityofchicago.org.
[47] Donald Miller, *City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America,* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 452.

Progressive Republican, he went after, and got, black votes and accordingly rewarded those wards with patronage positions, angering white Catholics. He further angered white ethnic voters in his refusal to support unions and his anti-war stance in World War I. In the midst of ethnic and labor violence, he lost the mayoralty, but soon regained it. Although he tried to re-build his Republican machine, his constituents blamed the party for the Depression; the fact that he stated that the economic depression was "all psychological" alienated a city with massive numbers of unemployed people.[48] One his several rivals for the mayoralty, Anton Cermak had spent the last decade garnering support among the white ethnic wards and was elected in 1931 by a city with a large immigrant base eager to support a fellow Eastern European (Cermak was Czech) who supported labor unions. In the depths of the Depression, the Democratic machine was born.

White ethnic immigrants continued to cluster together in wards, and the city was roughly divided between the mostly Catholic immigrant wards along the river (which were Cermak machine strongholds) and Protestant middle class wards on the city's rim. During the Cermak (1931-1933) and Edward Kelly (1933-1947) administrations, the machine remained more or less divided along religious and white ethnic lines, and Cermak managed to fill City Hall with cronies. Cermak died taking a bullet for President Franklin Roosevelt in 1933, but his machine – which was rumored to be supported by gangsters – held fast. In the following decade, Edmund Kelly developed machine politics into an art.

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[48] Pacgya, 256.

The black wards, however, were not unified. "The great electoral anomaly," says Grimshaw, "was the black voter,"[49] who generally gave much less support to the machine, or indeed any one political faction. The blacks and Irish together were a population that the Kelly-Nash machine could not control. By the time Richard J. Daley was elected in 1955, however, the demographics of the city had changed considerably. White Protestants left the city for better housing in the suburbs after World War II, and the Supreme Court's decision to overturn racist housing ordinances fundamentally changed the nature of ward politics. Those two events left the city with a much weaker Republican Party, and Daley secured the place of the Democratic machine.

William Grimshaw notes that "[m]achines see to live off exchange. Small favors and friendships are the machine's stock in trade. It is the only form of relationship the machine willingly enters into with constituents, because it costs nothing in terms of power. It is at the point when groups start demanding collective representation that the machine begins experiencing difficulties."[50] Although most of Daley's favors went to white Irish patrons, Black wards, "emerged as the machine's most productive electoral units…[the machine] was primarily paramilitary organization, in which compliance was compelled through coercion."[51] Daley rewarded absolute loyalty from black alderman with patronage positions, and when the Civil Rights movement took hold of the city on the 1960s, they remained loyal even as their wards roiled with unrest. Daley's strategy of promoting black politicians with little political skill or expertise meant that their power was forever precarious and that they were always replaceable. His response to the race

[49] Grimshaw, 19.
[50] Grimshaw, 12.
[51] Grimshaw, 95.

riots of 1968 – he instructed his police officers to shoot to kill – and the violence of the Democratic convention began to break the machine.

In 1976, the year of Mayor Richard J. Daley's death in office, blacks comprised 40% of the Chicago voting population.[52] In the 1980s the city was still one of the most racially segregated in the country; crime and unemployment soared (up to 90% in Bronzeville, an exclusively Black neighborhood), especially among minorities.[53] Daley's death left a political vacuum in the city, first filled by Bilandic, and then by Byrne (as described in Chapter One). Neither was successful at keeping the machine working, however, and the City Council began to fracture. Long silent aldermen wanted to flex their political muscle. Washington's election reified splits in the Democratic Party, and from 1982 to 1985, the City Council engaged in a series of arguments and stalemates that the press called a war.

Expectations for Washington were unreasonably high: *Tribune* journalist R.C. Longworth stated that the most important post-election voice was the quietest, that of 15-year-old Caroll Welch, from a "no-hope neighborhood on the West Side," who said "Maybe now we'll have an equal chance. Maybe now blacks will have the same equal chance that whites do."[54] Born on the South Side in 1922, Washington came by politics naturally: his father was an attorney for the city and a Democratic precinct captain. He stopped going to DuSable High School after three years, and, with his father's help, passed the Civil Service Exam. After his service in World War II, he went to Roosevelt College and began his career as a lawyer for the city and "a product of the Democratic

[52] Grimshaw, 134.
[53] Moore, 88.
[54] R.C. Longworth, "New Mayor Facing Old Problem – Money," *Chicago Tribune,* April 17, 1983.

Party Machine in Chicago."[55] By the time he was elected as state representative in 1964, however, he was beginning to question that political system, and, within a few years, he had broken with the Democratic Party machine completely.[56]

Immediately following Daley's death, the 'Young Turks,' a group of ambitious young aldermen led by Edward Vrdolyak and Edward Burke challenged the bloc of politicians still loyal to the Daley system (including Mayor Bilandic). Partly through the Young Turks' efforts, centers of power in the machine multiplied, and, "the ethnic rivalry that Mayor Daley had managed to hold in check for over two decades was in full flower again."[57] Future mayor Jane Byrne famously referred to them as an "evil cabal" in 1977, effectively destroying her chance for reelection in 1983. In short, the ethnic split within the Democratic Party remained until the 1983 election. Although many blacks had voted for Byrne in 1979, her widely perceived adherence to the Daley machine alienated many voters. Washington won the Democratic primary, beating out Byrne and Richard M Daley (Richard J. Daley's son). In Chicago, the Democratic primary had long been the only election that mattered, but in this case, the Republican candidate attracted some Democrats who wanted to remain loyal to the Byrne/Daley camp or the Young Turks, or were racist. Washington won the hard-fought race against Bernard Epton, who played to the public's fears of a black mayor and was surreptitiously supported by Young Turks. From the beginning of his first term, City Council was more than viciously divided amongst themselves; the "Vrdolyak 29" stood viciously against Mayor Washington.

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[55] Peter Nolan. *Campaign!: The 1983 Election that Rocked Chicago* (Northfield, Illinois: Amika Press, 2011), 68-73.
[56] Ibid., 74-75.
[57] Grimshaw, 144.

The Wars not only touched every aspect of governance; according to John McCarron, they affected Chicago's relationship with national and international real estate investors. McCarron argued that the Vrdolyak 29's decision to kill negotiations between the city and a well-known company to develop Navy Pier would discourage out-of-towners from investing in Chicago's municipal projects. Vrdolyak's supporters, "mustered like soldiers," offered alternatives and obstacles that commissioner of economic development Robert Mier asserted were designed to "show prospective developers that they, not the mayor, [held] the reins of power in Chicago."[58] McCarron pointed to Vrdolyak's reversal on the proposed development as evidence of his single-minded refusal to work with Washington. An unnamed "Loop real estate operative familiar with the ways of City Hall" explained that, "[u]nder Byrne, Vrdolyak had a voice in who was going to get what – the legal work on the bonds, the construction, the maintenance…Why should he do anything to make Washington look good."[59]

The City Council and the mayor were still at odds in 1985: in February, Washington filed suit against the Chicago Park District Board for their continued failure to confirm any of his appointees. Two appointee confirmations had been pending for over a year. Washington's supporters accused Vrdolyak and Burke of engaging in a conspiracy to block nominees in order to foul Washington's pledge to dismantle Superintendent Kelly's "patronage empire."[60]

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[58] John McCarron, "Navy Pier Becoming a Memorial to City Council Wars" *Chicago Tribune*, February 12, 1984.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Steve Neal, "Mayor Takes on Park District in Suit for Appointee Hearings," *Chicago Tribune,* February 7, 1985.

Barbara Flynn Currie, Representative, 26th Illinois District and member of the Governor's task force, voiced what many in state government were thinking about the Council Wars. In a *Tribune* op-ed, she declared that, "there's no doubt that the infighting over the 1992 World's Fair among Chicago's political factions could jeopardize plans for the lakefront extravaganza. No one wants to lose any worthwhile project to extraneous political squabbles."[61] In late March, Governor Thompson intervened, demanding that Chicago officials stop their "fooling around."[62] David Axelrod, the *Tribune*'s political reporter, contended that Ald. Burke was engaged in, as Washington aide Joseph Gardner put it, "a long range strategy to by Washington's opponents to embarrass the administration repeatedly so that in 1987 they can claim that the mayor has not been effective."[63] Axelrod referred to the infighting as "Chicago's year-old run of political theater," and reported that Ald. Burke's latest tactic to undermine the mayor may have backfired. Burke proclaimed in a City Council meeting that Washington mayoralty was illegal because he had filed his required financial disclosure with the city three weeks late. "Burke," Axelrod said,

> may have led his troops across the political Rubicon…beyond which the only strategy is to frustrate the Mayor at every turn for the next three years. Burke and Vrdolyak could then point to four years of chaos and claim that the only way to restore order would be to elect a regular Democrat as mayor.

A circuit court judge temporarily affirmed Washington's position, but Burke

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[61] Barbara Flynn Currie, "Infighting Over the 1992 World's Fair" *Chicago Tribune,* March 24, 1984.
[62] John McCarron and Daniel Egler, "Thompson Intervenes in Dispute Over Fair," *Chicago Tribune,* March 29, 1984.
[63] David Axelrod and John McCarron, "City Council Wars Threaten to Shake Financial Footing," *Chicago Tribune,* May 27, 1984.

made the accusation again on the June 23rd City Council meeting. The first attempt to oust Washington was, according to Mary Decker (executive director of the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council), "[a]n aggressive act by Burke, a cold a calculated political gesture aimed at stopping the work of government."[64] The second, said Axelrod, was "a banana republic-style coup d'état…in the ongoing guerilla war in City Hall."[65] The mayor and his administration were so concerned that, "his more zealous supporters in Chicago's black community might take to the streets," that Washington appeared on seven black-oriented radio stations to urge calm.[66]

The fighting continued to escalate, and by the end of the year, Washington publicly wondered, "Is this a question of analysis, power, or race?...What the hell's this all about? And you begin to talk to the other black mayors [i.e., in Atlanta, New Orleans, and Detroit], and you find the same crap that went on there."[67] Washington argued against the perception that black mayors were only interested in the black community, and noted that industrial cities only have black mayors when there is already an "economic slide" in the city: "white flight…a dwindling tax base…the whole string of disorganization and urban blight" that goes on in every city.[68] Vrdolyak responded the next day, suggesting that people, "stop saying there are White Hopes and Black Messiahs. There are neither. Let's start talking about how we're going to get some money and jobs into this city."[69] He argued that Washington's allegations of racism were untrue,

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[64] Ibid.
[65] David Axelrod, "Latest City Hall Antics – Who's the Mayor?" *Chicago Tribune,* June 24, 1984.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Steve Neal, "Washington Attacks Doomsayers: City Still Works," *Chicago Tribune,* December 9, 1984.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Steve Neal, "Vrdolyak Urges End to City's Racial Strife," *Chicago Tribune,* December 10, 1984.

and commented that, "you can't keep going around hollering wolf and throwing race up as a defense against inadequacy and incompetence."[70] Despite his call for unity, however, "he indicated that he was not ready to compromise by lifting the majority bloc's hold on about 80 of the mayor's appointments."[71]

The Chicago 1992 Committee used the animosity among City Council members to their advantage from the beginning, giving their citizen's resolution to Byrne critic Alderman Clifford Kelly, virtually guaranteeing "that the matter would get some kind of attention soon, and not be buried in the recesses of City Hall."[72] Alderman Oberman, of the 43rd ward, opposed the fair fairly early on. He published a seventeen-page public statement to accompany his press conferences in both Springfield and Chicago of "firm opposition" to the fair, in spite of the fact that it, "would be more pleasant to join the civic boosters" supporting the fair, on May 22, 1984.[73] He argued that contemporary fairs "run into difficulty" because of the plethora of other options like Disneyland, EPCOT Center, and Great America. He also noted that the population of Chicago had decreased considerably in the last twenty-five years, leaving many jobless and homeless, and "large tracts of property…vacant or burned out." What the city needs, he said, "is not the glittering predictions of revitalization from the fair, but a hard look at the financial risk and the prospects of success." Oberman took up the protests of the Committee, stating that funding would be better spent to improve infrastructure throughout the city; that it was unfair that the taxpayers would have to stand behind bonds even though the

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[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.
[72] McClory, 13.
[73] "Statement of Martin J. Oberman, Alderman, 43rd Ward, in Opposition to the Chicago 1992 World's Fair," May 22, 1984, Municipal Reference Collection, Harold Washington Public Library.

Authority claimed the fair would pay for itself; and that attendance projections were questionable. He took the further step of comparing the cost of the fair to operating costs of the city and state, and concluded that it was an unwise investment.

Alderman Bernard Stone [50th], who was appointed chairman of Washington's World's Fair Advisory Committee, supported the idea of a fair but fought for a site near Lake Calumet rather than Burnham Harbor. He and Ald. Percy H Hutchinson [9th] enthusiastically led city council field trips to the site, a marshy lake most Chicagoans saw "only when whizzing by on the Calumet Expressway."[74] Vrdolyak also preferred the Calumet site, and agreed with assessments that the Calumet site would require far less capital investment than Burnham Harbor. Calumet was not an easy sell: it was muddy, smelly, and afforded a view of a steel mill; it was, however, within Hutchinson's ward and abutted Vrdolyak's.

As chairman of the city council committee investigating the fair, Stone was adamant that there wouldn't be a fair until the city council had thorough data on the fair's cost and impact. *Crain's Chicago Business*' alleged that the fair was being held up by "opportunistic aldermen, self-styled community activists and hustler with sweaty palms," and called the idea that the fair should be moved into the neighborhoods "half-witted" because no one would want to invest in a fair "situated among the derelicts of Uptown or Humbolt Park."[75] In general, though, the Vrdolyak 29, like Stone, supported the fair in spirit, if not always in practical matters.

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[74] John McCarron, "Pitch for Fair Runs into Mud, Then Thud," *Chicago Tribune*, March 27, 1984.
[75] John McCarron, "Council's Fair Chief Demands Cost Figures," *Chicago Tribune*, October 20, 1983.

Environmental Impact Statement

Created in 1969, the National Environmental Protection Act legislated that would require the government to consider the effects on the environment of any federally funded project. Any project that used public funds or required federal permits required a NEPA investigation; in the case of the World's Fair, the necessary approval of the Department of Commerce triggered NEPA procedures. The Chicago 1992 World's Fair Corporation would have to complete an environmental assessment (EA); after a review to determine if further research was necessary, the Committee would then have to complete an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS would provide more detailed information on environmental impacts, and, by law, included input from the public. [76] That input could be in two different forms: letters from the public that commented on the project, or, at the discretion of the government in conjunction with the private interest, a public hearing to address the proposed scope of the EIS. In the case of the 1992 Chicago World's Fair, the government concluded that the public response to the EA warranted a scoping hearing prior to planning the studies necessary for the EIS.

Some called the act an environmental Magna Carta, certain that the legislation would ensure that the environment deserved protection in all endeavors by requiring "federal agencies to integrate environmental analysis into their decision making process…and weighing reasonable alternatives."[77] The language of NEPA itself is broad, encouraging that proposed projects; "create and maintain conditions under which man

[76] Douglass F. Rohrman. "NEPA's Continuing Impact." *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, Vol 3 no 5 (June 2005): 285.
[77] Ibid.

and nature can exist in productive harmony;" "assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings," and preserve the environment for succeeding generations.[78] Such language opened the door to a wide variety of interpretations. In his 1983 *Columbia Law Review* essay, for example, George J. Skelly suggested that psychological effects could and should be considered in the Environmental Impact Statement. He concludes that, "NEPA's central concept, the "human environment," comprises the reciprocal interactions between people and the physical environment. Effects on people, including psychological effects attributable to the changes in the physical environment, come within the…concept."[79] Published just before the EIS Scoping Hearing, the note reflects the growing awareness of the long term effects of the environmental catastrophes of the 1960s and 1970s, and foreshadows the environmental justice movements of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

> The requirements of the EIS are more specific. It should include discussions of:
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> the environmental impact of the proposed action; any adverse environmental effects that cannot be remedied should the proposal be implemented; alternatives to the proposed action; the relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity; and any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources involved in the proposed action should it be implemented.[80]

If the scoping resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FOSNI), the planned work could continue, but if the scoping deemed an EIS necessary, the planning entity would

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[78] Dinah Bear, "The National Environmental Policy Act: Its Origins and Evolutions," *Natural Resources & Environment,* Vol.10, No. 2 (Fall 1995), 5.
[79] George J. Skelly, "Psychological Effects at NEPA's Threshold," *Columbia Law Review*, Vol. 83, no.2 (March 1983), 336.
[80] Bear, 6.

have to forestall continued work until all aspects of the EIS could be sufficiently addressed.[81]

In practice, however, NEPA, "does not dictate a certain result," including environmental protection.[82] Lynton K. Caldwell, one of the drafters of NEPA, contends that "[t]his innovative statute in many ways may be counted a success, and yet its principle accomplishments have not been those most sought after during the course of its initial formulation…[the statute may be regarded as] essentially procedural..."[83] Furthermore, "courts often figure in NEPA…Federal judges are not environmental experts…and so are not qualified to judge such cases."[84] Black's article quotes attorney John Narayan, who contends that, "Courts don't like science – that, to me, is really the problem. Courts are not willing to say an agency is making the wrong scientific judgement."[85] Thus, many argue that the law had (and has) no teeth; those caught in the quagmire of procedural bureaucracy and lawsuits might argue that the toothless law could gum them to death. Since its inception, many community organizations had used NEPA to indefinitely stall projects that they believed would compromise the integrity of the balance of nature.

As the meaning and uses of the "environment" changed over time – from a resource to tourist space – so did the meaning of the Lake Michigan shore in Chicago. In fact, Chicago's waterways hadn't been 'natural' spaces for many years. The Chicago

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[81] Bear, 70.
[82] Harvey Black, "Imperfect Protection: NEPA at 35 Years," *Environmental Health Perspectives*, Vol.112, No. 5 (April 2004), A294.
[83] Lynton K. Caldwell, "NEPA at Twenty: A Retrospective Critique," *Natural Resources & Environment,* Vol. 5, No. 1, Two Decades of Environmental Law (Summer 1990), 6.
[84] Black, 3.
[85] Black, 3.

River was widened in 1855 to accommodate increased traffic. Grant Park, part of and adjacent to the 1992 Fair site, had been created in the 1870s with debris from the 1871 Chicago fire as landfill. By 1900, the city had built several canals in the region and reversed the flow of the Chicago River. The space had been a human space for over a century; to argue against the fair solely on the grounds of a natural space was impossible, but the aforementioned environmental movements of the 1960s and 1970s left the city (and country) with legislation that would protect the lakefront as it was.

The Chicago 1992 Committee commissioned its own statement regarding the EIS scope of work, and delivered it to the World's Fair Authority on February 3, 1983. The authors included professionals in water resources planning, civil engineering, urban affairs, transportation, and finance. In it, they noted that, because there was no good attendance estimate, the EIS could not accurately predict the "sizes of services and facilities – e.g., landfill or sewers."[86] They also note that the "off-site impacts" were not adequately discussed. Additionally, the diversion of infrastructure dollars from the neighborhoods would result in a decline of quality of life; the diversion of tourist dollars would result in merely a shift, not a net increase, of funds; the diversion of police and emergency services would result in a decline in quality of life in the neighborhoods, and the long term impact of "boom-bust" employment hadn't been considered. Whether consciously or not, the Chicago 1992 Committee participated in the ongoing conversation about the legal, social, and cultural definitions of environment, asserting that, "[t]hese

[86] "Critique of the Chicago World's Fair Environmental Impact Statement Scope of Work," Chicago 1992 Committee, March, 1984, 2.Chicago 1992 Collection, Chicago History Museum.

types of impacts are no less environmental than many of the impacts which are proposed to be addressed."[87]

In their discussion of impacts on natural resources, and working with the scientific definitions of environment, the Chicago 1992 Committee point to the fact that the proposed biodiversity sampling was so limited as to be useless; that fish spawning on the new lakefill would be unlikely; that bird nesting on the artificial shoreline would be unlikely; that several lakefill materials listed in the scope of work would break state and federal water quality control laws; that there were not adequate provisions to study new lake currents and erosion patterns; that potential pollution was not fully considered; that the source of landfill had not been referenced; that air quality data during the construction period had not been considered; that noise impacts had not been considered; that the assumptions relating to highway and transit improvements had not been well documented; that the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) capacity estimate lacked credibility; and that little consideration has been paid to sewage waste disposal.[88] The veritable litany of complaints was designed to overwhelm the World's Fair Authority, and it succeeded.

The testimonies of three witnesses at the hearings indicate three different ways of resisting the proposed fair: one pointed to the NEPA provision that federal projects must preserve safe and healthful surroundings, one argued that the project would prevent man and nature from existing in harmony, and one sought to preserve the intrinsic value

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[87] Ibid., 3

[88] "Critique of the Chicago World's Fair Environmental Impact Statement Scope of Work," Chicago 1992 Committee, March, 1984, 10-11, Chicago 1992 Collection, Chicago History Museum.

lakefront environment for future generations. People who held any point of view were equally incredulous of Burke and Petkus' insistence that there would be no environmental damages. In his interview with Wilbanks, Rauschenberg noted that the comment provoked, "ripples of laughter all through the back of the room."[89]

Architect Harry Weese filed a report with the US Secretary of Commerce, calling the Fair Corp's Environmental Assessment "selective in its viewpoint and cursory in its treatment of alternatives." As one of the architects of Lincoln Park and the Lincoln Park Zoo, Weese had a particular interest in the quality of the city's parks. He brought many of the issues of the park system to light, asking the public, and the fair planners, who should determine how to weigh the social, environmental, and economic costs and benefits of investing in large city parks. He questioned the kind of park the Fair would leave behind, asking if, considering the conditions of large parks around the city, another large park would be folly.

Chicago's parks were meant to be the jewels in the City's Garden, but they had long been symbols of Chicago's openly corrupt patronage system. In *Forever Open, Clear, and Free: The Struggle for Chicago's Lakefront*, journalist and environmentalist Lois Wille recounts the history of the lakefront from the city's birth to 1970. In it, she notes that the Park District commissioners and administrators had been patronage positions since Mayor Ed Kelly's decision, in 1934, to appoint "men he could trust implicitly"[90] to the park board as part of his growing Democratic machine. For the remainder of the twentieth century, Chicago's lakefront parks would be highly contested

[89] Rauschenberger interview.
[90] Lois Wille, *Forever Open. Clear, and Free: The Struggle for Chicago's Lakefront,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 100.

spaces where the needs of the machine clashed with the needs of the people; Wille's history is a narrative of communities' quest for public spaces, environmentalists' hopes of keeping the lakefront pristine, the city's ever increasing need for infrastructure, and planner's needs for bigger and better projects.

Harold Washington's election catalyzed reformers, and the public's increasing vocal frustrations with city management extended to the Park District. The *Tribune*'s coverage of Washington's transition notes that "[m]any inner city parks suffer from poor maintenance, inadequate programs and insufficient acreage. The district spends several times the amount per acre than is spent in other major cities…A top-to-bottom review of management practices is needed."[91] At the end of 1983, public interest groups claimed that the new parks budget was being "railroaded" with few comments from residents "because the only public hearing was scheduled less than five hours before" the district board meeting was to begin.[92] They succeeded in scheduling a public hearing at which Members of Friends of the Parks questioned how the annual budget was distributed, and questioned why only 45 percent of park employees had "never taken…examinations to determine if they are qualified…This leaves the district open to the charge that 45 percent of its employees are patronage employees."[93]

Dreck Wilson, a civilian representative of the First Congressional District (that of Harold Washington) and landscape architect called the Environmental Impact Assessment dutiful in its use of data, but not its qualitative analysis, and pointed out that any negative changes in air quality would affect primarily black neighborhoods, like the

[91] "Highlights of Report from Mayor's Transition Team," *Chicago Tribune*. June 3, 1983.
[92] Manuel Galvan, "Park Board Defers Vote on Budget," *Chicago Tribune,* December 12, 1983.
[93] Ibid.

Lake Grove and Oakwood housing projects in Bronzeville. Quoting Aristotle, he pointed out a "tyranny of the majority over the minority," stating that "the tyranny was perpetrated by the technical experts at the expense of the black community."[94] He further pointed to a history of white planners and engineers ignoring the human cost of environmental degradation because those that it affects are black. Additionally, he notes that the plans require breaking up the contiguous park on the lakefront. Although he doesn't say so, that would isolate the black community, and dis-allow free movement from Bronzeville north to more affluent white neighborhoods during the construction and course of the Fair. In the end, he called for a Social Impact Assessment.

While the Chicago Park District and the Open Lands Project had supported the fair fully in the early planning stages, the Friends of the Parks and the Lake Michigan Federation felt strongly that the fair would be too disruptive of the natural environment. One citizen, Shirley Wolf, expressed her concern in a letter, noting that the "purpose of the Lakefront Protection Ordinance…is to involve the public early on in any programs proposed for the alteration of the Lakefront."[95] The ordinance, passed in 1973, "recognizes that the City's Lake Michigan shoreline possesses special environmental, recreational, cultural, historical, community, and aesthetic interests and values that require protection and preservation."[96] Several months later, some were concerned that any powers of eminent domain granted to the World's Fair Corp. would result in infringing upon the public's right, guaranteed by the Lakefront Protection Ordinance, to

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[94] "Dreck Wilson testimony at Environmental Impact Statement Public Hearing," February 28, 1983, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[95] Shirley Wolf letter to Lew Kreinberg, November 30, 1983, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[96] www.cityofchicago.org.

be involved in any alteration of the lakefront.[97] Judith Kiriazis, of the Lake Michigan Federation, testified that the landfill required by the lakefront site, and the subsequent six-month Fair, would do more than damage water quality; it would disrupt lake currents, change erosion and deposit patterns, damage fish spawning and feeding areas. She concludes that, "this fair is too big, too important, and happening too soon to apply the usual rules regarding the drafting of an environmental impact statement. We can't sit and wait for two years to have the EIS draft presented to us…we request that the Department of Commerce make an exception to the rules and build into the scope of work for this document provision for ongoing and continuous official public participation, review, and input."[98] She also noted that the fair planners were "backing [themselves] into a corner gambling on the landfill," warning that the Lake Michigan Federation and other environmental groups "might file a lawsuit to stop the landfill if the environmental study…shows it would endanger the lake."[99]

Harold Washington's Advisory Committee

A few days after the Mayoral primary, a March 1983 *Tribune* article quoted Mosi Katwana, a Harold Washington aide, who claimed the representative "ha[d] been unable to get adequate information" about the fair.[100] As noted in Chapter One, Washington remained ambivalent about the fair until its demise; but, as a mayor confronting a divided city, he had to make sure to appease any possible constituent, so his response to the

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[98] Judith Kiriazis, testimony at Environmental Impact Statement Public Hearing," February 28, 1983, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[99] John McCarron, "1992 Group Dampens Parade of Fair Site Plans," *Chicago Tribune*, March 24, 1983.
[100] John McCarron, "More Data Asked on World's Fair," *Chicago Tribune,* March 1, 1983.

concerns of the Chicago 1992 Committee was to create World's Fair Advisory Committee in July 1983.[101]

The new Advisory Committee held a series of public hearings during the first week of October to "provide a proper evaluation by citizens" of their report. The hearings were held in schools in the neighborhoods (Illinois Institute of Technology, Jones Commercial High School, Northeastern Illinois University, Daley College), rather than Loop office buildings and museums, signaling Washington's populist approach to city planning.[102] Their report detailing the administration's problems with the planning process to date foreshadows the demands of the city's draft on an Intergovernmental Agreement of 1984. The introduction to the report called Chicago the "City of Neighborhoods," and the committee proceeded to treat the city as a collection of discrete units rather than a cohesive whole: no monies could be reallocated from the neighborhoods to the fair.

Although the fair planners maintained that the event would benefit the neighborhoods as well as the Loop, because it would benefit the city as a whole, the Washington Advisory Committee acknowledged the huge disparity in wealth and quality of life in different areas of the city. They defined two concerns about the impact of the fair on the neighborhoods: World's fair funds would "reduce or eliminate" funding from the neighborhoods, and, "in the battle for consumer dollars, existing businesses, entertainment, and cultural institutions will lose out to the World's Fair, resulting in their

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[101] McClory, 18.
[102] "Notice of Public Hearings flyer," World's Fair Advisory Committee, undated. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Special Collections, Harold Washington Public Library.

possible closure and a permanent loss to the City in jobs and tax revenues."[103] To address the issue of the fair as a one-time marketing and "entertainment event," the committee suggested a "market strategy promoting the neighborhoods themselves as fair attractions."[104] The Committee's overarching concern regarding the neighborhoods was fear of gentrification, especially in fair-adjacent neighborhoods (Chinatown and Pilsen). They suggest that transportation planners and housing planners "jointly design projections"[105] Such a suggestion must have rankled the likes of Bruce Graham, Stanley Tigerman, and Bertrand Goldberg, who saw their roles as more than mere architects. Each city planner would no doubt argue that the result of the Committee's suggestion would be a city whose aesthetic was designed by committee, devoid of a cohesive form or function that is the hallmark of great cities. Graham pejoratively defined such design processes "bureaucratic meritocracy."[106]

The middle sections of the Advisory Committee report re-hash many of the Chicago 1992 Committee's arguments about the fair: the need for affirmative action employment programs, city-wide distribution of economic benefits, and maximized residuals. The report summarized a series of public hearings about the fair site.[107] The report included comments in favor of the Lakefront Site, against the lakefront site, for the lakefront site with caveats, and arguments for and against the Lake Calumet Site. Again,

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[103] "Executive Summary: A Report to Mayor Harold Washington," World's Fair Advisory Committee, Chicago: October 1983.
[104] Ibid., 4
[105] Ibid., 5
[106] Bruce Graham, Speech, "Chicago Architects and Their Impact," at the Museum of Science and Industry, October 13, 1985, Bruce Graham papers, Art Institute of Chicago.
[107] Of course, at this point, the fair site was set. The World's Fair Corporation had been saying so for over a year, as had the commerce department and the BIE. Fair protestors, however, stubbornly refused to accept the fact.

most of the comments are predictable, given the criticisms of the Chicago 1992 Committee, but one comment stands out. A main argument in favor of the Lake Calumet Site stated that a fair there would "revive the region economically and thus spiritually."[108] The comment reflected some of the testimonies at the EIS scoping hearing, and calls to mind the notion that the psychological effects of a construction project can, and should, be considered in an EA or EIS. Another comment in favor of the Lake Calumet site notes that it is the only way to save the wetlands (curiously, however, some people said that the Lake Calumet site would destroy the wetlands).[109] Other general statements included that the site could be changed "without humiliation," and that City money should be for "those projects which result in direct public benefit."[110] It also questions if the fair is "a smokescreen for black urban removal."[111]

The "Citizen Advisors" of the Advisory Committee made sure to include information for the public about how they could be involved during and after the initial October hearings. They established rules, concluding that each speaker would have five minutes for her testimony, and that each speaker would provide a written copy of her statement to the committee to remain in the public record – first available from the members of the advisory committee, then by request from Elizabeth Hollander in the Department of Planning. Gail Weisberg in the Department of Neighborhoods scheduled

[108] "Executive Summary," 10.
[109] Ibid., 11.
[110] Ibid., 11.
[111] Ibid., 12.

the testimony. Reports on all of the issues under discussion were available to the public at the Main Branch of the Public Library.[112]

The Chicago 1992 Committee made an unpublished opinion column by Chicago 1992 Committee chairperson and Latino community organizer Art Vasquez available to the general public at the hearings. In it, Vasquez praised Mayor Washington for initiating a study, summarized the statements of the "watch-dog" Committee to date, encouraged the advisory body to take its time and not "respond to the time deadlines of the World's Fair Corporation…made up of private interests, which has not felt the need for close public scrutiny," and contended that the city should not have to commit to the fair until after the Environmental Impact Statement had been presented.[113] While Byrne committed enthusiastically to the fair, and made sure that people in her administration did as well, Washington was clearly much more cautious.

"I think the Mayor has been making a very careful strong effort to put very responsive people who come from strong community oriented backgrounds at the heads of his departments," commented Susan Catania in her interview. "He's appointed a whole group of civic leaders, community people." She confirmed the general opinion that the Fair Corp. was interested in "making money for itself," but that the Advisory Committee's interest was the welfare of the city. Catania briefly interrupted her comments about the Fair Corp.'s manipulation of the press to confirm with Wilbanks that

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[112] "Chicago – 1992 World's Fair Public Hearing" Summary of Issues, City of Chicago Department of Neighborhoods, undated (probably November 1983). Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.

[113] Art Vasquez, Unpublished "Personal View" Column, September 7, 1983, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.

no one would hear the interview tape; Wilbanks responded that "we [the CHS] may put away anything that sounds to you like it's an accusation and put a hold on it…"

For the Chicago 1992 Committee, the Mayor was too cautious. In a February 1984 letter, the Committee "express[ed] disappointment in the Advisory Committee," and their concern that there was no real partnership between the Mayor's committee and the neighborhoods.[114] (The Advisory Committee, however, was quiet large an included representatives from most established community groups.)[115] Their greatest concern was the language of the proposed Intergovernmental Agreement.

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[114] Chicago 1992 Committee, open letter to Mayor Harold Washington, February 10, 1983, Special Collection, Harold Washington Public Library.

[115] The Advisory Committee consisted of 2 representatives from citywide civic organizations (James Bidwell from Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry and George Hemmens from the Fair Review Council), 2 representatives from statewide civic organizations (Doris Harris from Illinois 4-H Clubs and Anthony Mandolini, Chairman of the board of the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce), 8 reps from community/neighborhood organizations (Dr. Donn Bailey from Center for Inner City Studies, Kenneth Brace from Calumet Area Industrial Development Commission, Ivan Dee from South Side Planning Board, Thomas Gray from Greater Chicago Neighborhoods Inc., Fred Montejano from Pilsen Neighbors Community Council, Theodore Swigon of the Polish Museum, Joe Woo from the Chinese American Civic Council), 8 reps from neighborhood organizations outside of Chicago (Mayor Sandra Birdall of DuPage County Mayor's & Managers Conference, Lawrence Christmas of the Northeast Illinois Planning Commission, Thomas Geselbracht from Village of Oak Park/Discover Oak Park 1992 Committee, Kris Howard from the Women's Committee of the 1992 Chicago World's Fair, Beth Ruyle of South Suburban Mayor's and Manager's Association, Jack Wayland from Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, and Mayor Robert Weiling from Will County Municipal League) 2 reps from Business Organizations (Frank Brooks, president of Chicago Economic Development Corporation, and Carl Bufalini of North Business & Industrial Council), 2 reps from Environmental or Preservation Groups (Susan Jantorni of Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois, and George Overton of Upper Illinois Valley Association), 2 reps from labor organizations (Clara Day from Coalition of Labor Union Women, and Thomas Nayder of Chicago and Cook County Building Trades Council), 2 reps from agricultural groups (Donald Holt from the Illinois College of Agriculture, and Anthony Ward from Chicago Mercantile Exchange) 4 reps from Architectural or Planning Professionals (Thomas Eyerman American Institute of Architects Chicago Chapter, Nicole Williams Foster from Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council, Kenneth Gerler from Western Society of Engineers, and Jacquelyne Harder of Cook County Office of Economic Development) 4 others (Dorothy McConner director and vice president Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Corporation, Shirley Madigan from Illinois Art Council, Nicholas Melas Metropolitan Sanitary District, and Bernie Rekus from the Save the Lakefront Committee). "Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Authority World's Fair Advisory Committee Sept 12 1984, Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Authority Collection, Chicago History Museum.

Intergovernmental Agreement

Chapter One notes that the restrictions of the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) hindered the Fair Authority's ability to plan the fair; in light of Chicago 1992 Committee's ardent resistance to the fair, the failure of the proposed intergovernmental agreement was a rousing success. Several people suspected that was the case: Commissioner Mier addressed the issue in a March, 1984 memo to several members of the advisory committee and members of the city's planning department. "There is a suggestion," he wrote, "that some aspects of the City's approach to the Intergovernmental Agreement represents an attempt to 'hold up' the World's Fair Authority and the State."[116] But he was adamant that was not the case; rather, the city was being prudent. Mier pointed to the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee agreement with the city that stipulated that the organizing committee provide a trust fund to provide for "discretionary services." Mier concluded that he hoped the city would not get "bullied into backing down on the idea of funds" for neighborhood development.[117]

With the new city administration came a more open planning process, and the city held a public hearing about the IGA in early April. The city and state's deadline for signing the agreement was April 30 (with a few weeks left in the legislation). One can imagine that the preparations for negotiations would have gone very differently during the Byrne administration. Under Washington's watch, however, Frankie Knibb and others testified before the March meeting of the Committee of Special Events and the

[116] Robert Mier, "Memorandum. Subject: World's Fair Intergovernmental Agreement." March 19, 1984. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Special Collection, Harold Washington Public Library.
[117] Ibid.

World's Fair that the Fair Corp.'s "history of avoiding and dismissing public bodies that questioned their plans…[was] not the stuff of good government."[118] Knibb continued that she, and Chicago 1992 Committee, did not resent being called activists, but did resent "being characterized as harping naysayers when we have a constant record of asking prudent questions…Fair promoters ultimately only hurt themselves by mudslinging."[119] Given that the general public had not yet seen a draft of the IGA at the time, the chances of a positive outcome during the negotiations were slim.

The public did have a chance to review the city's and the Fair Authority's IGA draft before another public hearing on April 3, 1984. Chicago 1992 Committee attorney Marc Gaynes commended the city's team, who had "produced an 85-page comprehensive draft that reflect[ed] the input of many," but admonished the World's Fair Authority, which had presented "eighteen pages of lawyer produced, lawyer sanctioned non-positions that ring hollow at every word…"[120] Gaynes also noted marked changes in revenue estimates from early projections to the projections cited in the Authority's draft IGA. The 1982 projection was $750 million; the September 1983 projection was $840 million; the October 1983 projection was $893 million; and by December 1983, the Authority estimated 1.525 billion in revenue. Meanwhile, he, said, expenses increased from $670 million in 1981 to 1.447 billion in December 1984. "Either the Authority is confused," he said, "or they are making up the numbers they think the legislature wants

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[118] Frankie Knibb, "Testimony Before the Committee on Special Events and the World's Fair." Frankie Knibb. March 14, 1984. Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Marc Gaynes, "Testimony before the committee on special events and the world's fair," April 24, 1984. Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.

to hear."[121] At the same hearing, Frankie Knibb accused the Authority of having a "decided air of: trust us, we'll work it out later." [122] She too contended that the Authority has not spent sufficient thought and time constructing their draft, noting that the city had held several meetings across the city while the "Authority's committee of eight [had] met twice."[123]

Unsurprisingly, Chicago 1992 Committee announced it was "unable to endorse the…Intergovernmental Agreement" in April 1984, and claimed that it merely paid "lip service" to the stipulation that the World's Fair Authority work with the neighborhoods.[124] Furthermore, they argued that "[t]he reluctance on the part of the Authority to meet with the public must be viewed with suspicion." At that time, according to this document, the proposed budget was $1.445 billion, but none of that money had been allocated to the business economic development fund or the neighborhood development fund, both stipulated by the city's draft IGA.[125] Their May press release called the Authority's plan "the most blatant landgrab this city has seen."[126] They extended their criticism to Washington's advisory committee as well, contended that it had "no real independence from the Authority."[127]

While other community groups were disappointed in the Authority's draft IGA, few were quite as rancorous in their criticisms. Those groups were more likely to express

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[121] Ibid.
[122] Frankie Knibb, "Testimony before the committee on special events and the world's fair," April 24, 1984. Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[123] Ibid.
[124] "Position of the Chicago 1992 Committee on the Proposed World's Fair Intergovernmental Agreement," draft, April 24 1984, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[125] Ibid., 2.
[126] Press Release, May 21, 1984, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[127] Ibid.

their disapproval of the selected site than accuse the Authority of manipulation and lying. The South Chicago Development Commission, for example, was one of the groups frustrated that the Intergovernmental Agreement did not address alternate Fair sites. In a June 8, 1984, letter to Harold Washington, that group's president, James Fitch, encouraged the Mayor not to give in to pressure to fully support the fair before the end of the Illinois legislative session that month. Fitch speculates that Springfield lawmakers, "[m]ay well shy away from being the one that steps forth to declare "the emperor has no clothes," they may be very sympathetic to including a site review as a condition of future Fair funding." He concluded that he would not give up, because, "I know that we are right."[128]

The city, state, and Fair Authority failed to find common ground before the April 30 deadline, and negotiations dragged on until May 31, 1984, when the parties reached a compromise that no one particularly liked. It included the stipulation that Fair Authority was required to have a separate contract with the Chicago Park District, and the two parties began negotiating without any input from the city. That move exacerbated the existing enmity between Washington and the Park District.

The Authority and the Park District commenced their negotiations at the beginning of the next legislative session in October, but the mid-January, 1985 deadline was not met, indicating to John McCarron that "the fair effort may be losing momentum

[128] James Fitch, open letter to South Chicago Development Commission and Chicago City Council, June 8, 1984. Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.

for lack of political and public support."[129] The parties never reached an agreement; the plans for the fair fell apart before they could find common ground.

A number of negative reports reassessing the feasibility of the fair were released in 1984 and 1985; those reports had a decided impact on both the city council and the park district's decisions.

Counter-reports

In a 1983 open letter to "friends of the 1992 Committee," *The Neighborhood Works* editor Thom Clark and Public Issues Coordinator Kathryn Tholin contended that their newsletter was "one of the very few publications which has regularly featured in-depth reports" on the fair plans. They included with the letter a copy of the April issue of the newsletter, and encouraged the reader to subscribe for $18. They add, however, that, "[i]f your budget is stretched right now," the reader could receive their Fair updates, including summaries of counter-reports, for $3.[130] This kind of coverage, easily available to the public, was the opposite of the tactic of the World's Fair Corp., who regularly claimed that their official reports were confidential and, when they did release them, released full copies rather than summaries translated into accessible language. Finding the reports and truly understanding their consequences was a full time job for Knibb, Kreinberg, Burgess, Vasquez, and other volunteers.[131]

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[129] John McCarron, "Deadline missed; Fair Plans Stalled: Lack of Political and Public Support Blamed," *Chicago Tribune,* January 16, 1985.
[130] The Neighborhood Works, Open letter to "Friends of the 1992 Committee," 29 April 1983, Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[131] I can attest to the density of such reports – often, after reading only a few pages of feasibility or financial studies, my eyes would glaze and my mind would wander.

May 25 1985 "The independent consultant hired to advise the Illinois General Assembly on whether Chicago's billion dollar 1992 World's Fair in financially feasible declared Friday that there "is no clear cut answer." The report predicted anything from a $350 million loss to a $191 million profit. The authority put the total cost of the fair at $928 billion, A.D. Little at $1.27 billion.[132]

The Fair is Dead…Chicago's Alive!

As the 1984-1985 legislative session drew to a close, Chicago alderman addressed the legislature about the fair for what would be the last time. Oberman released two statements in June (just prior to the end of the legislative session, and just prior to the deadline for the state to approve continued funding for the fair), urging "the General Assembly…to eliminate immediately all funding" for the fair, contending that the Fair Authority intentionally withheld their funding proposals until "the 11th hour" in the hopes that their numbers would not be scrutinized.[133] He proposed a resolution to the Assembly "to provide no further direct or indirect funding for the proposed Chicago World's Fair."[134]

13th Ward Alderman Michael Madigan was elected House Speaker in 1983 after years of being an important cog in the Daley machine (much like his father before him and his daughter after him). He too appointed a task force to look into the fair, and that

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[132] Daniel Egler, "Fair Feasibility Study is Fairly Inconclusive" *Chicago Tribune,* May 25, 1985.
[133] Oberman press release, June 6 1985. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Special Collections, Harold Washington Public Library.
[134] Oberman press release, June 13, 1985. Chicago 1992 World's Fair Collection, Special Collections, Harold Washington Public Library.

group, appointed in January 1985 and chaired by Adlai Stevenson III, concluded that the fair

> as planned will not meet the expectations of the original visionaries and should not go forward as planned….the Fair, as planned, is fatally flawed…and is not financially sound…Many members of your committee believe that the Fair Authority cannot overcome these problems and that further state funding of the Fair Authority is not desirable.[135]

Thus, on June 20, 1985, Madigan stated in a press release that he could not support permanent funding for the 1992 World's Fair.[136] (Pilsen resident says we might be poor but we're not stupid[137]) In the end, in part because of the Arthur D. Little feasibility study, the state did not renew funds for fair planning.

By the time the fair was nearly dead in 1985, the Committee included 47 community and civic groups in addition to concerned individuals.[138,139] A May 10 announcement exhorted "all Fair watchers" to write to Mayor Washington, Governor

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[135] "Final Report," June 11 1985, from Adlai E. Stevenson, Chairman, Speaker's Advisory Committee on the 1992 Chicago World's Fair to Honorable Michael J. Madigan, Speaker of Illinois House of Representatives.

[136] Press release from Illinois House of Representatives, "Speaker Madigan comments on world's fair funding legislation," June 20 1985, Municipal Reference Collection, Harold Washington Public Library.

[137] Pat Wright and Terri Medina, "World's Fair Post Mortem: A Report from Pilsen," undated. Chicago 1992 Committee Collection, Chicago History Museum.

[138] Flora Skelly, "Nonprofit Organization and the World's Fair," *Forum*, Winter, 1985. 4.

[139] Association for Fair Alternatives, Bethel New Life Inc., Bickerdike Development Corp, Center for Neighborhood Technology, Central Community Neighbors, Chicago Associates, Chicago Black United Community, Chicago Children's Museum, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, Chicago Jobs Council, Chicago Workshop on Economic Development, Community Awareness and Scholastic Achievement, Community Emergency Shelter Organization, Community Renewal Society, Concerned Allied Neighbors, Eighteenth Street Development Corp, First Ward Development Organization, Forty-eighth Ward Progressive Network, Grand Boulevard Community 76, Great Community Coalition, Grosse Pointe Voyageurs, Housing Agenda, Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, Lakeview Citizens Council, Lakeview Evangelical Fellowship, League of Women Voters Chicago, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Long Grove Tenants Association, Metro Seniors in Action, Neighborhood Institute, Neighbors in Action, North River Commission, Nortown Civic League, Organization of New City, People's Employment Project – Henry Booth House, Presbytery of Chicago, Pullman Civic Organization, Saint Luke United Methodist Church, Save the Lakefront Committee, Search for Truth, Inc., South Austin Coalition Community Council, South Chicago Development Corporation, South East Welfare Concerned Recipients Organization, Southwest Community Congress, Taxpayers Against the Burnham Harbor Site, 23rd Legislative District Senior Citizens Organization, Woodstock Institute.

Thompson, and Representatives and Senators to oppose any more funding before the end of the legislative session in June. The Committee Steering Committee, who authored the announcement, pointed out that, "The Chicago World's Fair 1992 Authority received $8.8 million last year to answer serious questions…and they still don't have acceptable answers."[140] Acceptable answers were never to come, and, after celebrating the death of the fair on June 30, 1985, the Chicago 1992 Committee struggled to maintain momentum as a community organization devoted to policy reform – a topic which will be addressed later in this chapter. Before that, however, the "Wail at the Wake" on the 30th was held at Andy's Jazz Club. The Committee's theme for the event was New Orleans funeral procession. (Fig. 3.1) Andy's, on the edge of River North and just west of the Magnificent Mile, opened in 1951 as a "newspaper pub" for the men who worked nearby for the *Chicago Tribune*. The original Andy sold the bar in 1975 to a group of investors, and Scott Chisholm took over. In 1977, jazz promoters moved the Marina Towers lunchtime jazz sessions to Andy's, and musicians great and small have been performing at the club ever since.[141] By 1985, Andy's was "always jammed" with people from all walks of life, according to the *Great Chicago Bar and Saloon Guide*.[142] In choosing Andy's, the Committee chose a well-established place that was easily accessible via transit where many people would feel comfortable. They chose a celebratory/funereal theme that drew from a longstanding Black community tradition. They called it "a musical celebration," emphasizing jazz and Black Chicago culture. The fact that the bar

[140] Chicago 1992 Steering Committee, letter to "All Fair Watchers," May 10, 1985, Chicago 1992 Collection, Chicago History Museum.
[141] "History of Andy's," www.andysjazzclub.com/History_Of_Andys.
[142] "Chicago Bar Project: Andy's," www.chibarproject.com/Reviews/Andy's.

had once been the haunt of newspaper men like George Burke, and sat in the shadow of the *Tribune* Tower, where the Chicago 1992 Authority held many of their meetings, was icing on the cake.

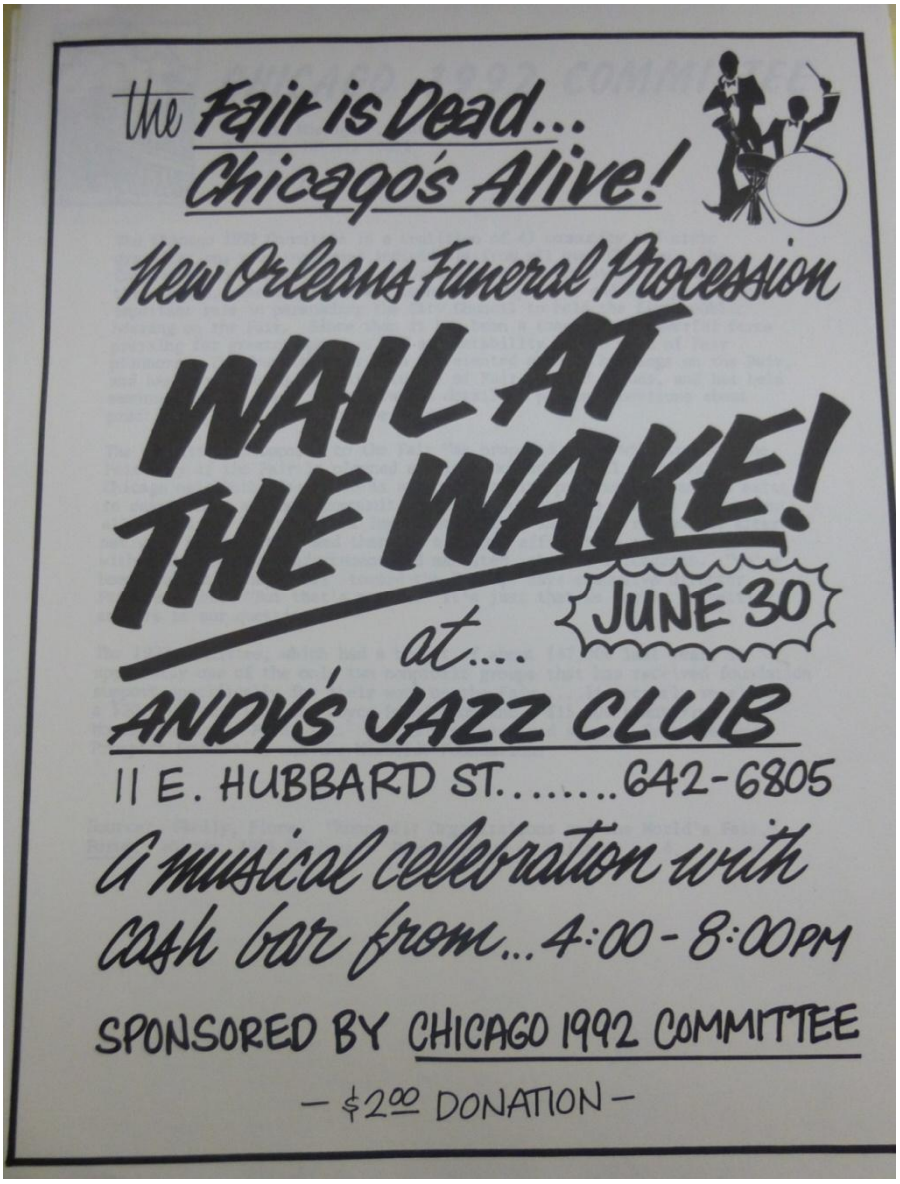

Figure: 16: The Fair is Dead…Chicago's Alive!

ARCHIVING THE NON-FAIR

My Archive Story

There is a tradition among researchers to share their archive stories. Antoinette Farge, in *The Allure of the Archives*, intersperses dramatized archive anecdotes throughout her meditation on the process of archival research and writing history. Anyone who has spent much time in the archives will recognize her observation of the minutiae of archive visits ballooning far larger than their actual importance: the compelling desire to get the best seat in the reading room and the loathing of the researcher who gets there before you; the simultaneous startled jump of the researchers when a door is unexpectedly slammed, and, perhaps most significantly, the uncertainty about, fear of, and frustration with the opaque process of getting the documents you need. Knowing the call number is never enough: the searcher needs to know the correct color of call slip, the correct bin to place it in, the correct seat number, the correct mode for handling the documents, and the correct questions to ask the librarian to get useful answers. In Farge, the archive is always opaquely silent. The researcher seeks for silences wrapped in silences in silence.

Historian Carolyn Steedman, in *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*, delves into Derrida's *Archive Fever*. She engages with Derrida's post-structuralist approach, but first notes that very little in *Archive Fever* has anything to do with the archive. And, while the text has undoubtedly influenced a generation of historians, Steedman points out that the most common take-away is far more vaudevillian than Derrida intended:

"Archive Fever, Indeed?," she quotes many of her colleagues, "I can tell you *all about* archive fever!"[1] It manifests in a variety of ways: perhaps the unspeakable rage at the researcher who got the best seat; perhaps the frozen shoulder –and fingers – acquired during long days hunched over endless papers; perhaps, even, an actual fever caused by the dust and microorganisms disturbed when very old papers and books are opened for the first time in hundreds of years.

Before my first visit to the archive, I had decided what my experience would be. Perhaps too enamored of the fictions associated with the archive – Eco's *The Name of the Rose*, Saramago's *All the Names*, Foer's *Everything is Illuminated* – I expected something rather magical, or at least poetic. Words like 'allure' and 'fever' certainly imply that archives, and archival research, are somehow mystical or ineffable. As my experience, confirmed, however, there are few experiences less romantic (at least as they happen, rather than with hindsight) than conducting archival research.

Over the course of two years, I spent about eight weeks in Chicago. For my longer summer stay, I rented a dorm room in a building that usually housed students of the universities in the Loop. The L was very convenient, and, while the noise was romantic at first, it soon tedious, as the L doesn't stop running. On my shorter trips I stayed in a converted Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotel that had been upgraded into a hostel in the early 2010s.[2] As is true of so many researchers' archive stories, completing

[1] Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002) 17.

[2] The physical space that the hostel occupies could very easily fit into my brief foray into the politics of gentrification. It was just the sort of place that housing advocates wanted to maintain for low income residents. The neighborhood, Wicker Park, began the gentrification process a decade or so ago, and I noticed changes from visit to visit.

my research was a "deeply *uncomfortable* quest."[3] I slept in a dorm bed and ate a terrible diet of prepackaged food. I shared a bathroom with any number of strangers, and occupied a room sandwiched between a young, loudly enthusiastic couple traveling together for what I expect was the first time and a group of young German men on a gap year adventure. It was not a space conducive to deep thought, and even less conducive to what I hoped would be the production of knowledge.

According to Derrida and those who follow in a post-structuralist philosophical tradition, nearly every philosophical discussion of the archive acknowledges the quest for completion – the monomaniacal desire for a true encyclopedia, and a concurrent desire to possess knowledge as "possessors of a secret treasure."[4] Our collective *mal d'archive* is rooted in our urge to:

> never rest, interminably, from searching for the archive right where it slips away. It is to run after the archive, even if there's too much of it, right where something in it anarchives itself. It is to have a compulsive, repetitive, and nostalgic desire for the archive, and irrepressible desire to return to the origin, a homesickness, a nostalgia for the return to the most archaic place of absolute commencement.[5]

According to Steedman and Derrida, we create the archive with the foreknowledge that it will one day be history; simultaneously, in creating an archive, we continue our search for our own sublime origins. As Proust's narrator encounters "the immense edifice of memory" upon dipping his madeleine into his lime-blossom tea, so too the historian in the archive hopes to find the one document that will somehow clarify

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[33] Steedman, 9.
[4] Borges, "The Library of Babel" in *Jorge Luis Borges: Collected Fictions. Trans. Andrew Hurley*. (New York: Penguin Book, 1998). 115.
[5] Derrida, Jacques. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Trans. Eric Prenowitz. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. 91.

everything, and will be the key that opens a complete world.[6] Like Proust's narrator, however, the archivist and historian seek to impose order on the chaos and violence of history, "[f]or only in recollection does an experience become fully significant, as we arrange it in a meaningful pattern…"[7]

The archive "gives rise to particular practices of reading. If you are a historian, you nearly always read something that was not intended for your eyes..."[8] Steedman is commenting upon the secretive nature of so many archives. Similarly, Farge describes the nearly erotic act of untying the string that holds papers together and seeing what was never meant to be seen. She finds, for example, a letter from one policeman to another describing his lust for the latter's wife, and a bag of seeds that allegedly poured out of the breasts of a young, honest woman. These tidbits are indeed tantalizing, and Farge and Steedman have both created compelling histories of their chosen fields (the lives of the poor in pre-Revolutionary France and the lives of nineteenth century women, respectively). But what to do, then, with an archive that was consciously created? And what to do with the archive of an event that didn't happen?

Evelyn Rivers Wilbanks' Archive Story

Evelyn Rivers Wilbanks came to her career as an archivist later in life than many; she was middle-aged in 1977 when she completed her doctorate at the University of Chicago. She was very nearly the archivist of what could have been one of the most

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[6] Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*, Trans. Lydia Davis (New York: Penguin Books, 2003). 47.
[7] Lydia Davis, introduction to *Swann's Way* in Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*, Trans. Lydia Davis. (New York: Penguin Books, 2003). xi.
[8] Steedman, 150.

important events in twentieth century Chicago, and the archive of it would have been one of the most thorough of a world' fair to date. Through her collecting practices, and whether consciously or not, Wilbanks challenged traditional theories of the archive: in her oral histories she chose which stories were retained, and in soliciting materials she filled some silences that would otherwise appear as a result of existing power structures. Additionally, a look at the Wilbanks archive allows a peek into the contest over the ownership of ideas. Documents from the Chicago History Museum (donated by the Chicago 1992 Corporation, Chicago 1992 Committee, and other individuals involved with the fair) were collected by Wilbanks and organized by several archivists and librarians over the years. The Wilbanks archive contains her personal documents, including correspondences and her own notes on how best to organize the collection.

Wilbanks was an assiduous collector, and beginning in 1983 she actively pursued materials about the fair for the Chicago Historical Society (now Chicago History Museum).[9] In general though, and despite what I expect were Wilbanks' best hopes, the 1992 World's Fair collection is a bit of a mess. Folders have been mis-labeled, and then re-labeled incorrectly. Someone unfamiliar with the names of the various groups involved confused several different committees and incorrectly labeled their documents. The folders and boxes are labeled with the handwriting of no fewer than four people. Copies of many documents were in several different places but were not cross-listed in the finding aid; indeed, the finding aid was often altogether wrong. It feels like the collection of an event that didn't happen: without the hindsight of history, how could the archivist

[9] The name was changed in 2006. www.chicagohistory.org/about-the-building.

or librarian know what was important? How could she impose a narrative structure on a non-narrative?

While Don Petkus, a creator or the Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Authority and Ellsworth Brown, then-president of the Chicago Historical Society (CHS), had a "handshake agreement" in 1983 that the CHS would be the repository of all official documents related to the fair, the two groups did not formalize their relationship until August 1984. [10] After a slew of contractual "whereas-as" (whereas the Authority has been created, whereas the Society serves the city, whereas as the Society desires to be the official repository, etc.), the Authority appointed the Society "as the sole official Archives of the Authority and of the Chicago Exposition…[and] The Society may represent itself to others as the Official Archives of the Authority and the Chicago Exposition."[11] Thus, the Museum now houses dozens of boxes of documents of the fair that didn't happen. Because so many groups were involved the planning, however, different institutions have bits and pieces in their collections as well: the University of Illinois at Chicago library has fair guidebooks and documents pertaining to a proposed affirmative action agreement in its collection of Chicago Urban League papers; the special collections at the Harold Washington Public Library hold all of the former mayor's official statements regarding the fair, and the Burnham and Rearson Library at the Art Institute of Chicago has a collection of potential plans for possible fair sites in the collections of the papers of several major architects.

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[10] Ellsworth Brown, letter to Don Petkus, August 3. 1983.
[11] "Agreement between Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Authority and Chicago Historical Society," Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority and Chicago Historical Society, August 1984.

The collection of Wilbanks' personal papers about the world's fair is much more streamlined than the general 1992 World's Fair collection, first because it is quite slim (every folder fits in one box), and second because it was arranged by Wilbanks herself in real time. Unlike the general collection, which is intended to house anything and everything about the fair, the Wilbanks collection is perhaps closer to self-reflexive autobiography. Its concern is with the process of collecting, not the collection itself. Unless otherwise noted, all citations in this chapter are from the Evelyn Wilbanks collection at the Chicago History Museum.

The use of the Wilbanks archive requires the express permission of the president of the museum. Neither I nor any of the librarians could identify why the Wilbanks archive was restricted; perhaps she, in the past, expected the inclusion of sensitive papers that never materialized. A few documents were even kept in the vault in the museum; disappointingly, they were only more copies of official incorporation papers and copies of the state legislature's approval, which are also housed in half a dozen other boxes as well as in other institutions.

By 1984, the Chicago 1992 World's Fair Authority was an official state agency. It had the approval of the legislature, and the power to levy taxes and exercise eminent domain; it was officially sanctioned by the federal government, and it had official approval of the BIE. So, the contract between the state and the (publicly funded) museum put Wilbanks in the interesting position of working for two public institutions – the state and the museum – simultaneously. Her position was officially recognized by other public institutions as well. In a 1984 letter, president of the Field Museum Willard Boyd

requested that Sidley & Austin, the law firm for the fair, provide the appropriate papers to "confirm Evelyn's standing with the [World's Fair] Corporation…we need to include her in all of our official meetings. She needs to have her standing formalized."[12] Most of Chicago's public institutions were eager to work with Wilbanks, as were the citizens' groups that opposed the fair. In her role as archivist, she was imagined to be neutral.

The official contract between the CHS and the World's Fair Authority was far longer and more complex than one might assume it needs to be. In addition to confirming the Society as the home of all the Authority's materials, the twelve-page document includes paragraphs regarding staff, maintenance, confidentially, copyright, and access. Curiously, the contract stipulates that the Society may use the Trademarks of the Authority but that the Society cannot gain income from its use. Because "the Society recognizes the great value and goodwill of the Trademarks…[and] in the event the Society is permitted to use the Trademarks in any fund-raising or income-generating effort, the income therefrom shall become the property of the Authority unless otherwise agreed in writing…"[13] There are also several paragraphs stipulating that the definition of 'public' would be defined solely by the Authority (who could deem some financial records private and not available for archiving). It seems the Authority was eager to retain as much control as possible over their materials.

The contract included a paragraph regarding oral history in addition to the paragraphs about physical materials. Of oral history, Wilbanks wrote to a potential interviewee, "[It] is a rich tradition which has not gained full recognition, but it is a

[12] William Boyd, letter to Sidley & Austin, October 1, 1984.
[13] "Agreement between Chicago World's Fair – 1992 Authority and Chicago Historical Society."

natural supplement to urban history in our contemporary world since much decisive action takes place on the telephone, in hallways, or in small working groups."[14] Beginning in 1983, she began to interview all of the main players in the fair story, and soon compiled over 500 tapes. That Wilbanks included oral history in her project in 1983 is perhaps telling of her intentions. In their introduction to *The Collective Memory Reader*, Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy note that oral history "was often, though not exclusively, motivated by Marxist politics," and that, while it developed "steadily since the Second World War," its usefulness as a methodology was often suspect. Placed at "the margins of traditional history," oral history "ascribes more importance to the "evidence" of individual memory than many "scientific" historians are capable of doing…"[15] That many historians were (and perhaps still are) skeptical of oral history is not surprising, then. It necessarily complicates any discourse or narrative, addressing silences in the most literal way, by filling them with voices. In doing so, it can fundamentally undermine the authority of the historian. While Wilbanks claimed that the use of oral history is to include ex-parte communication, it was highly unlikely that she was unaware of the historiographical implications of her choice.

Although she amassed more than 500 tapes, I had access to the interview transcripts of 26 subjects. Some subjects had failed to sign or return an oral history consent form, and can no longer consent to the tapes' release because they are now deceased. Others had stipulated that their interviews not be available to the public until after the fair. One can see the problem. The Chicago History Museum is now storing

[14] Wilbanks, letter to Malott, July 12, 1985.
[15] Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy, "Introduction" in *The Collective Memory Reader.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 27.

boxes of cassette tapes that, through quirks of policies and procedures, and according to a contract between two entities that no longer exist, will never be heard.

In the 26 interviews available to the public, Wilbanks engaged with both drives of the archivist: to find beginnings, and to be absolutely complete. She asked each of her interview subjects about their very first encounter with world's fairs, and about their very first encounter with the Chicago 1992 World's Fair. She asked all of them about Montreal's Expo 67, the most recent universal class exposition in North or South America, and drew stories from some of her subjects about visiting the Brussels fair in 1958, and even the 1933 Chicago Fair. Her interviews were Freudian fact-finding missions as much as they were meant to record the history of the fair planning. She assumed that childhood memories and unconscious drives were essential to the story that the archives would one day tell.

Wilbanks drew a clear distinction between a historian and an archivist, and classified herself as the latter. In a late 1984 letter to Deputy Governor Gayle Cozens, she stated:

> An archivist is not a historian, who has a selected point of view, but is neutral and objective in collecting all documents of substance. Being open to all points of view allows one to include a total spectrum so that the papers will allow the individual (or institution) to speak to historians of various disciplines in the fullest possible manner in future years.[16]

This brief statement about the functions of historians and archivists illustrates the complicated way the scholars of history have to present themselves to the world. The public has an expectation that archives are neutral spaces, and that historians are neutral purveyors of fact. The most important prerequisite to becoming a professional historian is

[16] Wilbanks Letter to Gayle Couzens, December 10, 1984.

to produce a historical narrative culled from archival sources, a process that can remove lived experiences – of both subjects and writers – from narratives. With the professionalization of the field in the nineteenth century, history became a positivist, empirical enterprise, requiring that historians use a scientific method to collect facts; in the twentieth century, demographic data supplied by the social sciences further confirmed the historian's scientific, detached objectivity. This worldview was part and parcel of the philosophical bases for the great world's fairs of the long nineteenth century. Fairs and national archives sought to systematize knowledge in a way that confirmed the hegemony of the nation state. As modernity evolved to post-modernity, historians learned to acknowledge both biases and agendas. The difference between memory, the manifestation of a subjective experience, and written history, with its veneer of objectivity and production by an educated elite, was made clear.

Wilbanks acknowledged the subjectivity of the historian, but failed to see that the compilation of the archive – Trouillot's moment of fact assembly – was a crucial point where silences enter the production of history. Furthermore, in her solicitation of fair materials she was undoubtedly acting the historian. At times, Wilbanks acknowledged that her collection was not neutral, admitting that she was, "guilty of some historic editing just by the interviewees I have selected [to conduct]. However, I have tried to maintain the neutrality required to compile complete archives, gathering as much material as possible with as wide a range as possible."[17]

"It is, in fact, the historian who makes the stuff of the past (Everything) into a structure or event, a happening or a thing, through the activities of thought and

[17] Wilbanks, letter to Robert H. Malott, July 12, 1985.

writing…" claims Steeedman.[18] In her work, Wilbanks maintained a double consciousness: she attempted to be impartial while being aware of what 'history' would need in the future. For several years she seemed to inhabit the present as well as the future perfect. She argued that a good history of the fair (whatever that would mean to future historian) will have been possible because of her actions in the present.

The large bulk of the Wilbanks collection consists of letters to fair planners, fair protestors, and politicians arguing that she needed to archive their documents for the sake of (future) history. In a letter to Frankie Knibb thanking her for her interview, Wilbanks noted, "[y]ou and your Committee played a key role in evaluating the process of community participation, and your thoughts will be helpful to future historians in piecing together the story."[19] This letter was very similar to her comments to nearly every other person with whom she communicated over the course of the three years that she was officially collecting fair materials. She frequently reminded people that she was seeking materials from them for history – telling them that they will one day be historical. In appealing to their sense of history, she allowed them to be historical agents and see themselves in a large historical context. It seems that most people were happy to comply. Knibb, for example, donated all of her papers to the Society in 1988.

Wilbanks engaged in the work of creating tradition and sustaining collective memories, "retain[ing] from the past only what still lives or is capable of living in the consciousness of the groups keeping the memory alive."[20] Following from Foucault's

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[18] Steedman, 154.
[19] Wilbanks letter to Frankie Knibb, August 6, 1985.
[20] Maurice Halbwachs, from *The Collective Memory* in Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy, *The Collective Memory Reader.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 143.

suggestion that late twentieth century is micro-history, rather than macro-history, I read Wilbanks' suggestion to Governor Thompson's press secretary Prescott that the Governor, "think about talking to Samantha's children and grandchildren…to think about past and future…"[21] as reflecting Halbwachs' suggestion that memories are sustained over generations, "like a thread that is made from a series of…fibers intertwined at regular intervals; or, rather, it resembles the cloth made from weaving these threads together."[22]

In addition to the papers that make up a traditional archive, Wilbanks (and the Society) accessioned a few objects into the collection. Records show the donation of one button reading "Stop the World's Fair For a Better Chicago" gifted by Frankie Knibb, on behalf of the Chicago 1992 Committee on August 8, 1985 (a few weeks after Knibb's interview).[23] The Society also accessioned a collection of pens that Governor Thompson used to sign legislation approving the fair. Wilbanks seems to have had a cordial relationship with the Governor, handwriting his first name – "Jim!" – on one of her letters. In this April 10, 1984 correspondence, she seemed to let her usually unflappably polite guard down a bit, telling Thompson that his

> [s]tatement that "all government is open" is a terrific philosophy but one that challenges the capabilities and customs of some officials. May your leadership in this approach be rewarded…The Fair demands that the people of Chicago and Illinois co-operate on a new level…Since everyone has been so busy planning for the city's problems, they have not thought about the global impact. In order for Illinois to realize its full potential, its leaders and citizens must overcome parochialism and think of their contribution to other countries. You are conscious of world vision…I hope

[21] Wilbanks, letter to Prescott, 15 August 1985
[23] Ibid., 143.

[23] "Deed of Gift to The Chicago Historical Society," August 12th 1985.

> you remember all the intricacies so that we can put them down on tape for future historians of government affairs. Again, thank you for your good faith. The tapes are in the vault until 1993. Please keep me posted if you know of any other meetings that are important for history.[24]

Perhaps Wilbanks was referring to the sometime petty squabbles of the Chicago City Council and their efforts to oppose any attempts by Mayor Harold Washington's administration to do almost anything in order to maintain their established Democratic Party power structures, or perhaps she was referring to her tense relationship with architect Bruce Graham, which will be addressed later in this chapter. Either way, Wilbanks' formulation of herself (and Thompson) as truly interested in the global impact of the fair and everyone else as primarily interested in the impact on themselves points to a difference in the way historians and the general public might view an event such as a world's fair. As Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen suggest in their study *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life*, most white Americans tend to view history in personal terms, looking for connections with the past in family histories and genealogies. It should be no surprise, then, that few people had taken time to think about a 'global impact.' It was far more important – and likely – for them to consider the direct impact the fair would have on their community rather than think in global, globalized terms.

In 1984, Thompson (or his office) gifted several pens to the Society's collection; on June 1, 1984, Wilbanks thanked Thompson for the most recent gift, the pen used to sign the Intergovernmental Agreement between the city, the state, and the World's Fair Authority. She stated, "[w]e may have a whole case of pens you will have used by 1992

[24] Letter from Wilbanks to Thompson, April 10, 1984.

to get the Fair opened, but that in itself is historically remarkable."[25] On July 5, Wilbanks sent Thompson another letter of thanks for, "one of the pens which you used to sign Senate Bill 1893 into law last Tuesday……I hope you will be able to donate another one at this time next spring on the Big Bill which will be required to set the bonding mechanism in place."[26] The last in a trio of letters regarding pens was sent from Wilbanks to Jim Prescott, the Assistant Press Secretary of the Office of the Governor on December 17, 1985. By that time, the fair had lost funding from both the state and the city, and was considered dead by all but a few stalwart supporters. Wilbanks offered,

> many thanks for the pen used to sign Bill 1036…While it is very nostalgic now, it will be a fascinating study for historians to try to understand the interactions in urban planning which took place around the project…thank you again for helping us add a small three-dimensional touch to the memorabilia.[27]

The museum now houses several pens used to sign documents formalizing legislative support for an event that didn't happen.

There was, however, one person who refused to work with Wilbanks. Renowned architect Bruce Graham did not believe that his papers, or any of the papers from architectural firm Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill (SOM) belonged in the CHS collection, nor did he want Wilbanks present at any design work meetings. Their first correspondences have merely a veneer of politeness, and quickly lose that. A CHS interoffice memo from Society President Brown to Wilbanks stated, "I spoke with Bill Drake, whose response to my news about Bruce Graham's comments re: the fair & U of I/Chicago was "Oh my God, I hope not." He immediately offered to set up a meeting…"

[25] Wilbanks, letter to Thompson, June 1, 1984.
[26] Wilbanks, letter to Thompson, July 5, 1984.
[27] Wilbanks, letter to Prescott, December 17, 1985.

Wilbanks made a follow-up note, in pencil, one week later, on November 14, 1983: "Ellsworth said Drake talked with Graham. Graham hates Park District, CHS new bldg, says we are not large enough, etc. Drake said to work through Authority people after contract is signed."[28] Wilbanks' and Brown's frustrations continued for the next year and a half.

Even if Graham was dissatisfied with the CHS facility and had ongoing arguments with the Parks Department, it seems that Wilbanks and Graham's relationship started cordially enough: in a November 8, 1983 letter, Wilbanks commented to Graham that he must be proud of the design charrettes SOM had organized, suggested that he read an enclosed EPCOT brochure (it had opened in October 1982), and asked if he would participate in an oral history interview.[29] On December 2, Graham complied, and sat with Wilbanks to discuss the fair's design process. By March, however, their relationship was clearly unfriendly.

As with so many letters in the archive, this exchange starts in the middle of things: "I regret that you were not willing for me to attend the in-house seminar," Wilbanks wrote.

> I do hope you have a record…because it will be important in the years to come. However, it will be more in balance in the Archives if you will permit me to attend…if you would like for me to tape a session and seal the record until 1992 or 2002, that is possible. But your work…is too important not to be represented at the Society in proportion to other people in the community. Our goal is to remain neutral, but we are enthusiastic over nurturing your image for generations to enjoy…[we] hope you will come to trust us…[30]

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[28] Brown, Memo to Wilbanks, November 8, 1983.
[29] Wilbanks, letter to Graham, November 8, 1983.
[30] Wilbanks, letter to Graham, March 6, 1984.

In this text, Wilbanks once again makes clear her role as a historian seeking to shape the narrative of the archive by thinking its balance.

To Wilbanks' request that she attend planning and design meetings at SOM, Graham was both pedantic and patronizing.

> I don't know how many times I have to repeat…about this…but, it is impossible to work with an audience…I cannot believe any architect in the world would allow that to happen. We do not have seminars when we draw…Some people are bothered by just having someone reading over their shoulder. It is much worse when one is trying to draw. Sincerely and apologetically-- [elipses around "about this" in original][31]

In response, Wilbanks continued her campaign to kill Graham with kindness, telling him "the last thing I want to do is interfere. Is there any way we can get the basis for the genius of the planning of the fair?...see if there is any way that will be completely acceptable to you. I am in your hands and dependent on your brains…"[32] Graham was not convinced; very few SOM papers, and no drawings, are in the collection. (I contacted SOM's Chicago office several times with a request to look through their archives, but received no response.) His contentious relationship with Wilbanks was partly a clash of personalities, but was also about ownership of information.

On October 16, 1984, Jack Cornelius, executive director of the Chicago Central Area Committee (CCAC, a coalition of businesses and institutions with an interest in spearheading and supporting successful city planning) wrote to Wilbanks to request the return of "drawings and pieces concerning the Chicago 1992 World's Fair Symposium

[31] Graham, letter to Wilbanks March 19, 1984.
[32] Wilbanks, letter to Graham March 20, 1984.

that the CCAC held in June, September, and November of 1983 in different locations across the country" because of a "heightened interest" in the materials. He thanked her for her "tender loving care" of the drawings, and encouraged her to make copies before returning the originals.[33] A week and a half later, Wilbanks wrote to Cornelius, "distressed to learn" that the CCAC wanted the drawings back, and offered to set up a meeting with Wim deWit (Curator of Architectural Collections in the CHS) and Ellsworth Brown. Wilbanks emphasized that the CHS was the "official Archives;" "not only do we have a contractural agreement…but we also have growing collections" concerning the fair. "This will enable future students and scholars to study architectural, urban, and exposition history in one location."[34] Shortly thereafter, Bruce Graham got involved, writinhg to Wilbanks that, "the drawings for the symposiums do not belong to the World's Fair. The [CCAC] sponsored and paid for them. There is no commitment from the [CCAC] to the [CHS], a fact that I have been persistently and clearly defining to you from the inception"[35] Wilbanks quickly contacted Don Petkus, chairman of the World's Fair Authority, and sent a copy of Graham's letter. In her note to Petkus, she states,

> [t]his is the kind of attitude towards the Archives which I find regrettable. Of course, the statement that Bruce has "persistently and clearly defined" anything to me is inaccurate, also…We met with Jack Cornelius. He prefers phone calls to letters…I do hope that this particular problem can be smoothed out so that the Authority owns its own heritage. But I also hope that you can make some further suggestions or solicit some advice from others to help the Authority gain a sense of pride and become conscious of the length of its shadow.[36]

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[33] Cornelius, letter to Wilbanks, October 16, 1984.
[34] Wilbanks, letter to Cornelius October 25, 1984.
[35] Graham, letter to Wilbanks, November 1, 1984.
[36] Wilbanks, letter to Petkus, November 6, 1984.

Here, Wilbanks is privileging the importance of a comprehensive archive over the rights of artists to own their creative output. It's curious to note that Wilbanks believes that the Authority should own its heritage, and begs the question: to whom does heritage belong?

Clearly, the interested parties could not agree; the next document in the collection pertaining to the issue is from July 1, 1985. In it, CCAC Acting Secretary Frank van der Kemp thanked Wilbanks for her, "prompt answer in sending back to the CCAC documents pertaining to [the symposium]. We are delighted about the way the [CHS] took care…and are very grateful for their preservation."[37]

It was not long, however, before Wilbanks and Graham once again butted heads, this time over drawing produced by California architectural illustrator Carlos Diniz. A handwritten letter from Wilbanks summarized the situation to Brown. The World's Fair Authority had, at some point, paid $60,000 for a set of drawing from Diniz. As of July 26, 1985, they were stored at SOM, and SOM partner Rob Hutchings, "clearly stated that these will go to the Art Institute and privately has made clear to others that they [SOM] will go above the Archives and to other Agencies to fight for them." Wilbanks, Brown, and the Chicago Historical Society contended that the drawings should be "preserved as part of the Authority material." The letter reveals the layers of contested authority; Wilbanks reports that she has heard from Manker Harris, a state records archivist, that, "without <u>real</u> pull, the drawings can be removed to another repository unless we insist that the Authority's agreement with CHS – which has the effect of Law – be honored."[38] She concludes with the note that she and Brown should send another letter

[37] ven der Kemp, letter to Wilbanks, July 1, 1985.
[38] Wilbanks, letter to Brown, July 26, 1985.

to CCAC regarding the drawings: "They are still at SOM, so we may have a chance. Don Petkus again urged all haste on that effort."[39] For extra measure, Wilbanks included a copy of House Bill 2313, which "reinforces the Archives at CHS."[40]

In short order, Brown enlisted the help of the Governor, telling him that the drawings, "like many materials…[are] in the hands of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill."[41] His language – "in the hands of" – implied some sort of nefarious plot on the part of SOM, as if the drawings were kidnap victims that needed rescuing. He asked the governor to help make the state's position clear to SOM regarding fair documents.

What is perhaps most curious about this exchange is that, by summer 1985, when these contentious exchanges took place, the fair planning had come to a halt. The legislature had voted to stop providing funds for the project, and the World's Fair Authority, the state agency created to plan the fair, was dissolved on August 6. Why would Wilbanks and CHS still fight so tenaciously for fair documents after it was clear that it was not going to happen?

In mid-August, Wilbanks once again sent a letter to James Prescott, surely one of her last as the Archivist for the 1992 Chicago World's Fair. It was a final appeal to conduct an oral interview with the Governor, adamant about his, "obligations to the citizens of the state to tape an interview." She concluded that storing the records of the Chicago World's Fair 1992 Authority "[was] a sad task, but we hope to have a collection

[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Brown, letter to Thompson, July 29, 1985.

which will enable scholars to understand the many interactions in the planning not only for a World's Fair but also for any large urban project."[42]

I felt, upon reading this letter, that Evelyn Rivers Wilbanks and her concern for a consciousness for both the past and the future, that she was perhaps talking to me. Wilbanks' overriding concern was for future historians, and I am one of the few people (that I have found) who has used the 1992 World's Fair Archive.

[42] Wilbanks, letter to Prescott, August 15 1985.

CONCLUSION

As Chicagoans argued about the Chicago 1992 fair, the city of Seville planned its sister fair, ExpoSevilla92. Unlike most American fairs, including Chicago's planned fair, Spain's "State-owned organizing body [was] responsible for…activities to be developed inside…the fair site, while Seville City Hall concentrate[ed] on the immediate vicinity…[and] the Regional Government of Andalusia assum[ed] full responsibility for larger-scale, regional problems such as infrastructure, etc."[1] The 530-acre site on the island of La Cartuja was chosen in part to revitalize the region, and $10 billion of public funds were used to improve infrastructure in the form of new roads, a rapid-rail transit system, and airport. According to the *Encyclopedia of World's Fairs and Expositions*, it "broke all previous records for participation with 111 countries, 23 international organizations, and 30 multinational companies, five of which had their own pavilions."[2] As in Chicago, there were those who protested that the expense of the fair was not worthwhile; in the end, the fair broke even.

So why did the Seville fair progress as planned while the Chicago fair faltered? Besides the reasons this dissertation has laid out, many American fair critics argued that the age of fairs was over. The argument was not new: people had been arguing that fairs were obsolete ventures for a century. In a US consular report regarding the Zurich fair in 1883, the consulate noted, "[t]here is a feeling creeping into men's minds that exhibitions are becoming too common and too frequent to serve any good end, considering the loss

[1] "Expo Sevilla 92 – Sociedad Estatal del V Centenario," Marzo 1985.
[2] Findling and Pelle, 383.

of money and time connected with them."[3] Consulate Byers was concerned that too many fairs would lessen their importance. While that is no longer the case because BIE regulations allow large universal class fairs every ten years, his argument that neither the time nor money spent warranted fairs is echoed today. Fairs were (and are) rarely money-making propositions. Furthermore, many people wonder what an expensive fair can show the world that radio, television, amusement parks, and tourism cannot.

In the early 1980s, the Walt Disney Company opened EPCOT Center and bolstered arguments that claimed that fairs were unnecessary in an age of amusement parks. The acronym stands for Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow, and its design was strikingly similar to that of an exposition; indeed, many people called it a permanent world's fair. Chicago 1992 Fair protestors often asked how the Chicago Fair would be different from EPCOT. Evelyn Wilbanks asked many of her interview subjects if they had been to Disney World and EPCOT Center, making clear that EPCOT was the yardstick by which the Chicago fair would be judged. That EPCOT resembled a fair was not surprising: Walt Disney lived a world of fairs, and wanted to replicate the optimism with which they were embued.

In late 1981, the *Tribune's* Horace Sutton reported that "[t]he world in which our grandchildren will live is rising out of the earth in Central Florida. It is spreading like a futuristic vision over some 600 acres of scrub oak and pine…three miles from the Magic Kingdom, but a thousand leagues from the frivolity of that joy park…[it is] a sort of

[3] "The Swiss National Exhibition. Report by Consul Byers of Zurich," 1883. Quoted in Coletta, AMD digital archive

World's Fair that has no closing date."[4] By April 1982, reporter Stephen Birnbaum had been to a press preview of EPCOT exhibits in California. The "imagineers" had created, according to Birnbau, "one of the most entertaining, captivating entities anywhere…equal parts of entertainment, amusement, awe and wonder."[5] The park opened in October 1982 to positive reviews. Alfred Borcover of the *Tribune* wrote that "…there's showmanship laced with education and a bit of whimsy…EPCOT really is a permanent world's fair amusement park…nobody does this project better than the 'imgagineers.'"[6]

As they engaged in their post-mortem assessment of their fair, Chicago fair planners believed that while EPCOT could provide awe and whimsy, their plans could salvage some of the civic spirit associated with the medium of the world's fair. In December 1985, the *Tribune* asked: "Got a better idea? Chicago's 1992 World Fair may be dead, but you can keep its spirit alive; propose an alternative and win"! The *Tribune* came "not to praise the fair, nor to bury it. Somebody already beat us to that." Instead, it encouraged readers to send in their best designs to "make the city shine."[7]

John D. Kramer addressed the demise of the fair with a more somber tone. With the demise of the fair, he argued, "Chicago lost a rare opportunity to diversify its economy and restore the vision, unity and sense of purpose that made it the premier city of the American heartland…It's still possible for the 1992 World's Fair – the fair that never happened – to have important lasting benefits for the Chicago area." Some projects,

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[4] Horace Sutton, "Disney's World of Tomorrow Coming Alive in Florida," *Chicago Tribune* , November 8, 1981.
[5]Stephen Birnbaum, *Chicago Tribune* "Disney's EPCOT: 21st Century Preview," *Chicago Tribune*, April 1982.
[6] Alfred Borcover, "Epcot Center: New Disney Creation Innovative, Magical, and Very Big," *Chicago Tribune,* October 17, 1982.
[7] "Got a better idea? Chicago's 1992 World Fair May Be Dead, but You Can Keep Its Spirit Alive; Propose an Alternative and Win," *Chicago Tribune,* December 12, 1985.

especially improved roads and parks, could still be completed to "create excitement and civic pride, and they show the rest of the world that the spirit of Chicago is very much on the rebound."[8]

Chicago 1992 was America's last real attempt at organizing world's fair. Its demise, along with the financial difficulties of fairs in Knoxville and New Orleans, further convinced the U.S. government not to commit to any more fairs, so, while the Chicago fair did not leave a physical legacy, it left an administrative one: the U.S. withdrew its membership from the BIE in 2001. But in spite of this, and a near-guarantee of barely breaking even, major American cities still seek approval to host a world's fair.

Minneapolis, for example, has been pushing since 2014 for a fair in 2023, and the city hosted a BIE delegation in late March, 2017. The city has decided on a theme, "Wellness and Well-Being for all: Healthy People, Healthy Planet," and a site.[9] President Barack Obama officially approved granting federal recognition to the Exposition in December 2016.[10] However, Minneapolis planners want the fair to be sanctioned by the BIE; on March 22, 2017, the BIE delegation accompanied Minneapolis fair planner to Washington, D.C., to meet with representatives from the Departments of Commerce and State to discuss re-entering the BIE.[11] The Minneapolis team hopes that President Donald J. Trump support their proposal that BIE membership fees will be paid by private sponsors. As of April 7, 2017, several cities are in contention to host a 2023 special

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[8] John D. Kramer, "Worthy Plans Outlive Fair," *Chicago Tribune,* September 6, 1985.
[9] Home page, http://expo2023.info/.
[10] "Presidential Support for World's Fair," http://expo2023.info.
[11] "BIE completes Enquiry Mission to the United States," March 27, 2017, http://www.bie-paris.org/site/en/news/87-news-announcements/bie-activity/1295-expo-2022-23-bie-completes-enquiry-mission-to-the-united-states.

category fair, and Congress has yet to approve plans for the US to rejoin the BIE. While they wait, it would behoove Minneapolis fair planners to look at the Chicago 1992 World's Fair. Its records reveal missteps in the planning process that are often forgotten in the wake of fair exhibits and performances. While I focus on the ideas about non-events and the archive, this dissertation also provides a history of two events: a planning process and a protest process.

My investigation of the event (planning and protest) paired with the non-event (the fair) also contributes to the field of American Studies in several ways. American Studies tends to forget some of the nuts-and-bolts of history. In this project, my attention to planning the Fair provides a procedural history that was part of the larger design plans for the exposition. Furthermore, the sections of my dissertation about overlapping city plans enhance our understanding of the importance of community organizations. My focus on efforts to protest the fair describes a successful protest strategy, and challenges the myth that there was not a strong tradition of local activism in the early 1980s.

Most fundamentally, my analysis show how groups of people in a particular place and time – Chicago in 1980-1985 – created and fought over cultural identities. The planners framed themselves as city fathers. Their conviction that they knew what was best for the city allowed them to identify with great men of the past and be assured of their predicted outcome. When that conviction was threatened, they only tightened the reins to control their fair plans and further isolated themselves in administrative enclaves from local communities within Chicago who mobilized opposition.

The collective identity of the Chicago 1992 Committee was similarly based in traditions, though of a different sort. Kreinberg used organizing skills developed over several generations of Chicago community activism, and he continued those traditions into the twenty-first century. The Committee consistently highlighted a binary power structure, and even encouraged an "us-vs-them" attitude. Ironically, their David-and-Goliath narrative confirmed the power of the planners even as they sought to undermine it.

Rather than calling the story of the fair a narrative of failure, as existing references to the fair do, I propose that the words "success" and "failure" cannot take into account the complexities of history. Planners' and protestors' competing narratives require a deep consideration of contingency. That those narratives exist in archives invites us to question how we measure the past: do we measure quantifiable outcomes or qualifiable absences? The existence of the archive tells us that events that don't happen may still have a presence.

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