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Imagined Networks: Affect, Infrastructure and Governance in Chicago's Far South Side

By

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Introduction:

On September 28th, 1969, Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley unveiled the result of a $51,700,000 extension of the "L", Chicago's rapid transit system, down the median of the Dan Ryan Expressway. The Dan Ryan line, also known as the Dan Ryan branch, ran from Chicago's Loop to 95th street, serving to connect Chicago's majority-black South Side with the city's center. The ceremonial dedication of the line, officiated by Mayor Daley, included speeches from the United States Secretary of Transportation, the Governor of Illinois, Illinois' two Senators, and various city transit officials. Beyond merely illustrating Chicago's capacity to develop modern public transportation, the line's inauguration represented a triumph of coordination between local, state, and federal authorities. Photos of the event (Figure 1) published by the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) create the sense that a unity exists among the men standing on the podium, that what is being celebrated is the victory of a singular system of governance. At the core of this victory, that which constituted its affective center, was a promise; the inauguration of the Dan Ryan line produced a vision of governance that extended into and organized the future. Although implicit at every level of the ceremony, this promise was made explicit when Mayor Daley, addressing the South Side residents in attendance, declared his ambitions to extend the line well past 95th street and into the heart of Chicago's Far South Side. The Dan Ryan line, acting as a material representation of Daley's promise, was transformed into an incomplete project serving as the link between the present and an unfulfilled vision of the future.

Half a century later, Daley's promise remains unfulfilled. The Dan Ryan line, now part of Chicago's Red Line, only runs as far south as 95th street. Despite the existence of CTA "L" lines running to the edges of Chicago's northern, western, and eastern boundaries, no such line runs to Chicago's southern border (see Figure 2). Instead, the Red Line, Chicago's most heavily

trafficked “L” line, “ends abruptly five miles from the city’s southern limits” (Lynch 2016) limiting public transit for a large portion of Chicago’s majority black Far South Side residents. In the thirty years after the Dan Ryan branch entered into service, plans to extend the line to the city’s southern boundary, although continually resurfacing in transit agencies’ thirty-year plans as a project of the future, failed to materialize. It was not until the early 2000s, through the monumental efforts of Far South Side residents and community groups, that the Red Line Extension (RLE) project became a reality.

Currently, the RLE is in its “project development phase” which calls for a preliminary design and a finalized environmental impact report. Construction is not expected to begin until the end of 2023, and, as such, attempts to locate the RLE as a concrete and material structure will find no trace of its existence. However, beyond their material existences, infrastructures can be understood as “semiotic and aesthetic vehicles” (Larkin 2018, 175) that articulate affectively invested political rationalities; infrastructures, although inextricably linked to their materiality, are made intelligible, effective, and, thus, real, through the discursive networks and affective imaginaries that underlie them. Infrastructures, in turn, act upon these imaginaries and networks, and, thus, become unstable objects whose meanings are continually contested and remade. The RLE is a non-material object located solely within technical blueprints and personal imaginaries. It exists, fundamentally, in a productive tension between these two sites, constituted by both calculative transit planning and affectively vibrant emotional resonances. The RLE, thus, must be read both discursively, revealing its underlying regimes of truth and conditions of intelligibility, and affectively, uncovering those affective investments through which discursive political rationalities are made “palpable” (Larkin 2018, 175).

The Promise of Infrastructure

In its essence, I argue, the RLE's generative capacity, its ability to continually produce and remake representations of governance, city, and state, must be located in the concept of the "promise." Following Larkin, I posit that infrastructures "emerge out of and store within them forms of desire and fantasy" (Larkin 2013, 329). Infrastructures are essentially grounded in "expectation, desire, temporal deferral, sacrifice, and frustration" (ibid., 178). Thus, they are located within "dynamic temporal environment[s]" (Appel, Anand, and Gupta 2018, 12) and serve as links between affectively invested understandings of the past, present, and future. Insofar as it does not materially exist, the RLE can only be studied as a container of expectations, fantasies, and desires. The RLE, then, is a promise for the future. Furthermore, it promises a future made intelligible within temporalities that extend across affectively resonant pasts and presents. This is to say, the project is made into a promise by fulfilling desires and rectifying lacks located within the past and present.

The RLE, thus, can only be understood alongside historical memories of disinvestment, isolation, and ghettoization of the majority-black Far South Side communities it plans to serve. The neighborhoods composing the Far South Side consistently rank as Chicago's poorest and most isolated areas. For many community residents, the significance of the RLE, its promise, is not an abstraction; it is constituted by continually reproduced memories of neglect and isolation. For some residents I spoke to, the lack of infrastructure on the Far South Side can be explained by a racially motivated form of governmental neglect; this neglect, in turn, extends far beyond transit and links the RLE to the historical disinvestment of the Far South Side more generally. For many community residents, these affectively charged histories of intentional isolation and abandonment, operationalized by the RLE, stimulate hopes, doubts, and fears; the RLE, an

unfulfilled promise from over half a century ago, represents the possibility of economic development, mobility, displacement, and gentrification. Critically, the potential benefits of the RLE are framed as being the long-overdue fulfillment of the basic obligations of a governmental body to its citizens. Articulating the RLE as an unfulfilled promise transforms the project into both a condemnation of failed governance and a representation of hope for a better future.

Furthermore, I argue that city planners and officials also engage the RLE as a promised future. For transit officials, the significance of the RLE lies in its actualization of their agency's mission and purpose. Specifically, the RLE is justified through notions of equity, economic revitalization, and connectivity. These concepts serve to connect the RLE to an agency's more general guiding principles and, thus, allow the RLE to be seen as a materialization of these principles. The RLE represents, in other words, the fulfillment of an agency's vision for the future and the historically-situated realization of its obligations.

Affect and the State

For both residents and transit officials, then, the forms of desire and fantasy carried in the RLE, constitutive of its promise, are directly related to questions of governance. The RLE is a contested site in which the relationship between state, governance, and subject is continually remade. Collier (2011), analyzing the neo-liberalization of electrical infrastructure in the wake of the USSR's dissolution, and Schnitzler (2008), investigating the production of prepaid water meters in South Africa through the lens of the biopolitical, illustrate the possibility of tying the infrastructural to more general modes of power and subjectification. Schnitzler (2008) demonstrates that infrastructural projects "actively participate in the construction of particular subjectivities" (ibid., 916) while presupposing the very existence of such subjectivities. Infrastructure, thus, simultaneously "interpellate[s] specific types of subjects" and acts as an

"intimate form of contact, presence, and potential…that serves as an important locus for the evaluation of the morality and ethics of…the state." (Appel, Anand, and Gupta 2018, 22).

I argue that, through the RLE, community residents, elected officials, and transit agency bureaucrats generate and deploy conceptualizations of the subject, the state, and the relationship between the two; this is to say, the RLE serves as a point of mediation between representations of the state and those who produce them. Fundamentally, I argue, the RLE acts as a site in which multiple and, oftentimes, contradictory representations of the state coexist. For both community residents and governmental employees, the state is simultaneously treated as both a single unified actor and a disaggregated disunified fiction. Furthermore, these representations of the state exist in an interdependent relationship with the temporally extended hopes and expectations stored within the RLE. This is to say, representations of the state are operationalized by a heterogeneous set of actors to make claims regarding the purpose and promise of the RLE; at the same time, those representations are grounded in and coextensive with the affectively invested promise and historical framing of the RLE. In other words, representations of the state, produced in relation to the RLE, become possible only insofar as they are affectively resonant.

I follow Navaro-Yashin (2013) in understanding the affective as a set of "properties, forces, or potentialities" (ibid., 27) actualized in the dynamic interaction between human beings and their "natural, built, and material environments" (ibid.). The affective, in this framing, does not necessarily exist *prior* to a differentiated subjectivity, but rather, is understood as co-constitutive with the subject, existing on what Navaro-Yashin terms the "affect-subjectivity continuum." As noted by Seigworth and Gregg (2010), the affective is constituted by "forces of encounter" (ibid., 3) which transform mere matter into ethically, aesthetically, and politically charged bodies and objects. Political subjectivities, thus, take form, become meaningful, not only

through discursive representation; categories of subjectivity, and social projects more generally, "must be affective in order to be effective" (Mazzarella 2012, 299). The relationship between "state" and citizen, or city and resident for that matter, is necessarily constituted by an ever-present reciprocal exchange between the affective and the discursive. Beyond traditional Foucauldian conceptions of governmentality, governance must be understood to operate through its capacity for "exuding affect and potency" (Navaro-Yashin 2013, 33). Governmental practices, in turn, produce a "state-effect," serving to "continually [reproduce] the ghost-like abstraction of the state" (Mitchell 2018, 85). This is to say, the fiction of the "state" is made "affectively real" (Larkin 2018, 185), structuring action and meaning, through everyday practices of governance (Laszczkowski and Reeves 2017).

Thus, the RLE, an infrastructural container of desire and fantasy, can be seen as a vital source of those affective energies that underlie the state fiction. These representations of the state, furthermore, come to sustain the very affective energies from which they were born. Actors, both community-based and governmental, operationalize particular representations of the state not only to make political claims, but also to sustain and reproduce affective imaginaries of the past, present, and future. Representations of the state generated within discourses surrounding the RLE, thus, are unstable and are continually transforming, being made and unmade, in relation to those affective energies and potentials that ground them. Critically, this means that actors, to a certain limit, are not bound to single representations of the state. Instead, depending on the claim being made or strategy being pursued, contradictory representations of the state, simultaneously unified and disunified, can be held.

I argue that, for residents, representations of a unified state link the RLE with governmental neglect and abandonment of the Far South Side more generally. The absence of

light rail infrastructure on the Far South Side becomes one among many failures of a single and unified state system. Demands for the construction of the RLE, thus, are transformed into more general demands for the state to fulfill the entirety of its obligation to the Far South Side. Representations of a unified and antagonistic state actor sustain community mobilization of the RLE by linking it to the affects generated by failed governance more generally; the promise of the RLE can be seen as a much broader political re-ordering. Simultaneously, however, successful political pressure in support of the RLE requires that residents disaggregate the state, that they understand the conflicting interests, statutory powers, and individual dispositions of a disunified set of politicians, agencies, and bureaucrats.

Similarly, governmental actors operationalize both unified and disunified representations of the state. At times, an agency can appear as a representative of a single state rationality; its success or failure, thus, is not that of a particular agency but government more generally. The RLE, in this way, is a symbolic triumph and fulfillment of the state's obligation to its citizens. The promise of the RLE is that of victorious and righteous state power. In the next moment, however, the state might appear as a disunified and uncoordinated set of isolated agencies and institutions. Such representations serve to deny that the RLE is a promise of anything but infrastructure; questions of economic, cultural, and political development, thus, are located outside the statutory powers and purpose of transit agencies.

In both these cases, the co-existence of contradictory representations of the state is not an instance of cognitive dissonance. Rather, I argue, the state, understood as an affective object, exists as a ghostly and flickering entity; its essence, unified or disunified, is continually remade through moments of encounter and affective resonances. Pinker and Harvey (2018) offer a fitting description of the state as an object "that teeters between determinacy and indeterminacy" (ibid.,

19) and which is "neither exactly absent nor present" (ibid., 29). Representations of the state, thus, exist as a "virtual presence, a potential force held in abeyance" (ibid., 29). The state phases in and out of existence, a stable unity at one moment and a pluricentered disunity at the next, according to the actualization of certain affective potentials. The flickering existence of these representations, continually coming in and out of focus, can be thought of, I argue, as the result of the state's dependence on moments of affective encounter.

Infrastructures, insofar as they are dynamic sites in which affective energies are constantly generated and transformed, are bound to contain correspondingly dynamic representations of the state. In this project, most importantly, I seek to move beyond the question of whether the state ought to be understood as a unity or disunity. Instead, I argue that studying the state through the RLE, an affectively resonant collection of desires and fantasies, relocates the state's existence into moments of encounter. The state, thus, is something that can be strategically created or destroyed from moment to moment, operationalized to direct fleeting affective potentials towards political ends.

Method

This project draws, generally speaking, from two sources of data. Primarily, I analyze a series of virtual interviews I conducted between the winter and spring of 2022. During this period, I was able to have conversations with both Far South Side community organizers and Chicago transit agency employees. Collectively, my interviewees' participation and engagement with the RLE extends to its very inception, and, thus, I have had the opportunity to get first-hand accounts of the RLE's development since the early 2000s. Supplementing these interviews, I conducted archival research to document the appearance and absence of the RLE in the planning documents of Chicago transit agencies throughout the late 20th century.

Studying affect, even in ideal conditions, is a difficult task. Affect, a "force of encounter," is fleeting, subjective, and ephemeral. Locating affect within technical documents, then, may seem to be a fruitless endeavor. However, following Navaro-Yashin, I argue that "state" documents are necessarily "charged with affect" (Navaro-Yashin 2013, 33). The production and dissemination of these transit documents, in other words, can be understood to be co-constitutive with the fears, desires, hopes, and imaginaries they invoke; they too are a facet of the RLE's promise. Similarly, I take the maps, photographs, and videos produced by Chicago's transit agencies as unstable and contested materials, continually remade and reinterpreted in relation to the RLE's affective dynamism.

Background:

A Brief History of the "Dan Ryan Branch"

The Dan Ryan branch, what now constitutes the southern section of the Red Line, became operational in 1969. Seven years before, the Dan Ryan expressway, constructed to serve as the main arterial link between Chicago and its southern suburbs, had entered into service. The expressway runs south until 95th street at which point it splits off into I-57 and I-94, leading to the southwestern and south-central suburbs respectively. Even before the completion of the expressway, there were proposals for the construction of a light rail line down its median. The CTA's 1958 metropolitan area plan, for example, contains blueprints for the development of an "L" branch running down the median of the yet-to-be-constructed expressway. The CTA's proposal, furthermore, details this line running well past 95th street, splitting and continuing down the medians of both the I-57 and I-94. If constructed, this line would have extended the "L" to 130th street, the city's southern limits (CTA 1958). Eventually, however, the CTA's ambitions were scaled back and the construction of "L" branches down the I-57 and I-94 was put

off indefinitely. Thus, when the Dan Ryan branch entered into service, its southernmost station, also the "L"'s southernmost station, was located at 95th street.

Over the next thirty years, proposals to extend the Red Line farther south would sporadically appear in city and regional long-term transportation plans. Generally speaking, discussions of the extension were limited to plans released by the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS), Chicago's Metropolitan Planning Organization. The plans, published throughout the latter half of the 20th century, detailed the agency's long-term, often 30-year, ambitions for regional transportation. As such, the inclusion of the Red Line extension did not necessarily represent or require meaningful or immediate political commitments to its construction. For example, when, in 1990, CATS released its *2010 Transportation System Development Plan*, a planned extension of the Red Line was detailed in less than a full paragraph and categorized as a "corridor of the future." Such a designation did little more than act as a recommendation for "preservation of right-of-way for potential use beyond 2010" (CATS 1990, 36). Furthermore, CATS' 1990 proposal presented a significantly scaled-back version of the extension, only running to 103rd street. Effectively, the plan served as a weak recommendation to reserve land, no more than seven blocks, for transit development at an undefined future point. CATS noted that it would require "large scale development" of the surrounding region, Chicago's Far South Side, to "significantly increase this project's attractiveness" (ibid., 38). In a tragic case of irony, the region's lack of infrastructural development precluded the possibility of future development. Despite the isolation of nearly the entire Far South Side from the "L" system, plans to extend the Red Line were deemed worthy of barely a single paragraph.

During the same thirty-year period, a southern extension of the "L" was continually sidelined in favor of the development of infrastructure with greater political and institutional

support. Despite the increasing isolation and ghettoization of the Far South Side, residents' calls for extending the Red Line went unheard. A southern extension of the "L" was repeatedly dismissed in favor of "projects in the Loop and suburbs" (DCP 2005) with more political-institutional backing and community mobilization behind them. In the early 1980s, for example, the CTA undertook the massive project of extending the Blue Line to O'Hare International airport; furthermore, the construction of the Orange Line, amounting to an investment of over half a billion dollars, was completed in 1993. Over this same period, extending the Red Line to the city's southern limits was continually said to require "more study" (DCP 2005). This disparity in infrastructural development, importantly, fell along Chicago's preexisting racial boundaries; infrastructure for the Far South Side's majority black population was, effectively, deemed secondary to continued investments into Chicago's majority-white communities.

Over time, as the project was forgotten and ignored, the RLE became something of an urban legend for Far South Side residents, representative of both their isolation and exclusion from the city system. For city and regional planners, the extension became akin to an abandoned pipe dream, the traces of past proposals tucked away in the dense technical documents of Chicago's transit agencies. Lacking political or community support, the CTA's 1958 plans for a rail line extending to Chicago's southern limits were left unfulfilled. Thus, understanding the transformation of the RLE from an ignored and overlooked project to its contemporary status as what CTA President Carter termed a "priority project" (Spielman 2021) is critically important.

The Developing Communities Project and the Origins of the Red Line Extension

In 1998, the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), an agency under the direction of the city council, conducted what they termed the *Chicago Far South Transportation Study*. Although very little documentation exists regarding this project, it appears that CDOT

was analyzing three possible alternatives to increase transit ridership in the Far South Side; (1) an enhancement of the existing Metra commuter rail; (2) an extension of the Red Line to 130th street; and (3) an extension of the Red Line to 103rd street. The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), a state agency that oversees CTA, Metra, and Pace, released an associated report finding that a "Red Line Extension to 130th has the highest impact among the three alternatives" and would "attract more than 7,700 new transit linked trips" daily by 2010 (RTA 1998). Despite the city spending around $35,000 on the study, little came of it. In the course of my research, I was unable to find any records of the city issuing public statements regarding an extension of the Red Line from this period.

Still, the late 1990s seemed to mark a shift in the willingness of city and regional transit agencies to at least entertain the possibility of the RLE. Also in 1998, CATS released their *2020 Regional Plan* and, once again, included a possible extension of the Red Line. However, in contrast to their 1990 report, the RLE was included as one of only eight recommendations made by CATS for future development; furthermore, CATS, returning to previous plans, recommended that the extension run all the way south to 130th street. Even more significant, in their 2000 update to the report, CATS included a description of the project's "current status." This is in sharp contrast to the RLE's earlier inclusion as an ambiguous "corridor of the future"; the RLE, instead, was represented as a plan, albeit embryonic, in motion. Still, however, these developments were almost entirely unknown to residents as media coverage of the RLE was essentially non-existent during this period. However, the minor increase in recognition of the RLE did manage to spark the interest of a Roseland community organization called the Developing Communities Project (DCP).

The now-defunct DCP was founded in 1984 as a coalition of eight Catholic parishes in the Greater Roseland Area (Roseland, Pullman, and West Pullman). Under the guidance of its first executive director, Barack Obama, the DCP worked to create literacy and job training programs for the Far South Side (DCP 2011). By the turn of the millennium, the DCP had extended its mission to general economic development and revitalization of the Greater Roseland Area. Over the course of the next decade, however, the DCP, largely through chance circumstances, would arguably become the primary driving force behind the RLE. The ascendence of the RLE into public discourse and imagination is largely due to the efforts of the DCP to mobilize community, political, and institutional support for the RLE.

In 2002, CATS began the process of receiving public comments on its *2030 Regional Transportation Plan* (RTP) before publication. Part of this process entailed holding public meetings accessible to community residents seeking to give their input on projects included within the RTP. The history of the DCP's involvement with the RLE, then, can be traced to December 2002 when three DCP organizers happened to hear a radio advertisement publicizing such a meeting being held that same night. Arriving at the meeting, the three DCP organizers found only one other person in attendance, a representative from CATS; the CATS representative had organized the room such that maps and descriptions of the various projects detailed within the RTP were scattered about. The DCP organizers, arriving without a clear agenda or purpose in mind, perused the plans until they stumbled upon a description of the Red Line Extension tucked away in the corner of the room. The RLE, a project unknown to the organizers before that December meeting, immediately captured their imagination to such an extent that, in the following weeks and months, the project would come to occupy a central role in the DCP's organizing strategy. Having researched the continued historical abandonment of an

"L" extension running through the Far South Side, the DCP resolved to publicize existing plans for the RLE such that they could no longer be ignored or buried.

Although the DCP's specific tactics and practices will be analyzed in-depth in later sections, it is necessary to note that the DCP's core strategy revolved around three interrelated components; (1) the mobilization of the Far South Side community and development of public pressure; (2) lobbying for the support of politicians at various levels of government; and (3) the production of technical analyses supporting the development of the RLE in the very language utilized by city and regional transit agencies. As a result of these strategies, the DCP succeeded in getting the RLE included in the 2005 Federal Infrastructural Bill (SAFETEA-LU) as part of the FTA's "New Starts" program. Essentially, this served as the first step in securing federal funding for a project now estimated to cost $2.3 billion (CTA 2019). To receive federal funding, projects included in the New Starts program are required to go through a series of phases and receive federal approval at each stage. From 2006 to 2009, the CTA, as required by federal law, considered various potential alternatives for improving transit in the Far South Side; in 2009, the Chicago Transit Board, CTA's governing council, adopted what was termed the "Locally Preferred Alternative." From 2009 to 2018, the CTA analyzed the proposed alternative's environmental impact to produce a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) presented to the FTA. In December 2020, the RLE entered into New Start's "Project Development" phase during which a final EIS and preliminary engineering designs for the project must be completed. The CTA anticipates that it will receive full federal funding and begin construction by the end of 2023, with the RLE predicted to enter into service by mid-2029 (FTA 2020).

Due to the length and complexity of the RLE's history, I cannot hope to provide a full account of its development. Instead, by looking at the RLE in two distinct historical periods, I

aim to bring out the shifting affective imaginaries, representations of state and governance, and understandings of history that constitute the RLE as such. Furthermore, unpacking the relationship between these historical moments, the ways that they are understood in reference to each other, allows us to position historical memory as an object of study itself. In the following sections, I will conduct a dual analysis of the RLE's beginnings (2002 to 2005) and the contemporary RLE.

The RLE and the State:

"Playing the Game"

By early 2003, just a few months after their December meeting with CATS, the DCP began organizing to develop community support around the RLE. The driving force behind the DCP's organizing strategy was their Director of Research and Public Policy, Gordon Smith. Gordon, now working as a professor of urban planning, has been involved in the RLE for twenty years and currently sits on several advisory boards for city and regional transit agencies. Given the highly technical nature of his work, I have to admit that I came into our first interview expecting a dry, but highly informative, conversation regarding the benefits of the RLE. It was a surprise, then, to be greeted by a man who, although clearly well versed in the specialized language of planning, seemed to care little about justifying the RLE through statistics and numerical predictions. Instead, Gordon told me a narrativized history of the RLE's development, a history, as he would often point out, that was as absurd as it was important.

In early 2003, the idea that a group like the DCP could make a meaningful impact on city transit policy was almost unthinkable. Trying to illustrate this point, Gordon recounted when, in the early days of the RLE, the executive director of the DCP came to him and said,

"Gordon, don't you know that transportation ain't a black issue?" The highly technical nature of transportation, instead, meant that it was largely impenetrable for local community groups. Infrastructural decisions were, Gordon told me, thought to be the responsibility of "mostly white" transit officials. Unlike other local groups, however, the DCP, as Gordon put it, "just so happened to have a Director of Research and Public Policy" well versed in the technical jargon of transportation. Whereas most community groups didn't have the resources or expertise to conduct technical analyses ("They couldn't afford a guy like me!"), Gordon, supplementing his income with teaching, was able to make the DCP uniquely well-positioned to organize in support of the RLE. Thus, despite its unprecedented nature, the RLE became one of the DCP's core projects. Time and time again, Gordon credited the success of the DCP's organizing to what he called, "knowing how to play the game." This is to say, the DCP was effectively able to navigate and penetrate the political, technical, and bureaucratic networks constitutive of infrastructural projects. I argue that "playing the game" involved the operationalization of diverse, and sometimes contradictory, representations of the state; to "play the game," in other words, is to operationalize the (dis)unity of the state.

Historical Memory and Affective Resonance

First and foremost, the DCP's strategy involved the mobilization of community support. For Gordon and the DCP, this was a direct response to what they saw as the repeated burying of the RLE. Time and time again, "the move, as always in Chicago, was to act like it doesn't exist." The goal, then, was to generate enough public support and media attention that the RLE would be impossible for city authorities to ignore. Framing the DCP's entire strategy, then, was building community support within the Greater Roseland Area; as Gordon told me, it's "only by virtue of people, mobilizing people and knocking on doors, that you win."

By the spring of 2003, the DCP had successfully pressured CATS to hold a public meeting concerning the RLE in Roseland. In sharp contrast to the one held in December 2002, nearly 200 residents attended this public meeting, an attendance unseen in any previous CATS public meeting. By September 2003, the DCP also successfully pressured the Northern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC), a sister agency of CATS and predecessor of CMAP, to hold a public meeting. Not only did this meeting achieve a similar attendance, but the DCP was able to present NIPC with a petition containing over 1400 signatures in support of the RLE. The success of the DCP's mobilization of community support, however, would be most clearly seen in November of 2004. Gordon, through what he described as a "bootlegging of the legal stuff," had successfully gotten a referendum concerning the RLE on the November election ballots of both the 9th and 34th Wards of Chicago, the two wards that the RLE would run through. The nearly 39,000 votes cast in favor of the referendum, a margin of roughly 93%, represented, Gordon recalled, "the largest vote total of any referendum in Chicago." The November referendum, thus, made ignoring or burying community demands for the RLE impossible.

In describing community mobilization, however, Gordon minimized the role that the DCP played in generating community support. The DCP, importantly, did not get people to care about the RLE; mobilizing the community, in other words, was not a matter of helping residents understand the importance of the project. Instead, Gordon told me, residents, informed by their lived experience, understood how the lack of transportation "cut them off from jobs and education." Many residents, he continued, had lived through urban renewal and "actually saw the segregated Chicago being constructed anew…They understood, through that experience, that they lost their right to the city…. that their community was quarantined from the rest of the city." The DCP, he said, "didn't spend a lot of time making that point." The RLE, for Gordon, served

as a point of what I will call, drawing from Mazzarella (2017), "affective resonance"; the RLE actualized certain affective potentials for residents, connecting historical legacies of abandonment, isolation, and neglect to the present.

Mazzarella (2017) posits that grounding meaningful social life, that which allows "meaning that matters" (ibid., 3), is a series of affective "encounters." These encounters, put simply, are the actualizations of potentials contained within a "mimetic archive." The mimetic archive, Mazzarella writes, is "the residue, embedded not only in explicitly articulated forms commonly recognized as cultural discourses but also in built environments and material forms, in the concrete history of the senses, and in the habits of our shared embodiment" (ibid., 8). An affective encounter, thus, is the actualization of affective potentials latent within the mimetic archive; these actualizations are generated through the resonance of particular objects with the potentials contained in the mimetic archive. These affectively resonant objects, in turn, appear to exert a force, pull, or power in excess of their materiality. In the case of the RLE, this process appears in the evocation of affectively invested representations of both the past and future. As Gordon told me, in one of the rare moments where humor was entirely absent from his voice, "I always thought that the dignity that community residents brought to this work and struggle around the RLE was part of their historical memory."

Disaggregating the State

Rather than generating community support, then, the DCP's primary role was to aid community residents in navigating the complex bureaucratic network that governed transportation inside city limits. The DCP, Gordon explained, aimed to use "the very tools that segregated black people in the city….to flip the script." Effectively, this meant running workshops where community residents were taught urban planning policy; in other words,

residents learned the very language that made transportation policy inaccessible in the first place. Gordon made clear, however, that this was not a process of rationalization or formalization. The affective investments that drove community engagement remained central. He told me, "All along the line, the community, its own knowledge, went into its new knowledge about transportation planning." The DCP's hope, then, was that the "community would testify on its own behalf. Demand its right to the city." This process, beyond simply providing technical language to residents, involved what Gordon described as "disaggregating government agencies." Part of "playing the game," Gordon told me, involved understanding the relations, interdependencies, and tensions between different state agencies. Gordon made clear that, in refusing to recognize the state as a unified and rational actor, there was the political potential of exploiting gaps and contradictions between and within regional and city transit agencies; there was a politically necessary recognition of what Abrams (1988) terms the "state fiction."

Abrams (1988) proposes that the state, insofar as it is posited as a real-existing entity, is nothing more than an ideological construction. The state, in Abrams' view, "is the distinctive collective *mis*representation of capitalist societies" (Abrams 1988, 75). It is an ideological object that, essentially, functions to legitimate domination through an act of concealment. Intolerable exercises of power are presented "as something other than themselves, namely, legitimate, disinterested domination" (ibid., 76). The supposed unity, singular rationality, of the state serves as "an a-historical mask" (ibid., 77) that obscures the "actual disunity of political power" (ibid., 79). In truth, political institutions "fail to display a unity of practice" and "are divided against one another, volatile and confused" (ibid., 79). There does not exist, nor did there ever exist, a coherent logic, actor, or rationality that, as one theorist put it, "[concentrated] all political existence…within itself" (Lefebvre 1991, 280). Instead, the perceived unity of political practice

results from "external economic, fiscal, and military organizations and interests" (ibid.) instrumentally unifying distinct institutions towards their own ends. This is to say, "the only unity that can actually be discerned behind the spurious unity of the idea of the state is the unity of commitment to the maintenance, at any price, of an essentially capitalist economy" (ibid.). Above all else, then, the state is a "mask which prevents our seeing political practice as it is" (ibid., 82). Concealing its own non-existence, the state idea transforms arbitrary and class-aligned applications of political power into the legitimate exercise of sovereign authority.

Thus, Abrams argues that the production and employment of the state idea, its reification and structurization of political practice, must form the starting point of any investigation into the "state." Recognizing the state as an ideological construct makes the ubiquitous instrumentalization of the state idea, its omnipresent structuring of interactions between individuals, institutions, and classes, a central question of political analysis. Gupta (2012), building on Abrams, describes this methodological orientation as such: "rather than taking the unified, coherent state as a point of departure for social analysis, the conjunctural conditions that enable any particular state to be successfully represented as such should be treated as an analytical problem requiring explanation" (Gupta 2012, 57).

This discussion suggests that possibilities for political action are "opened up by the divergent agendas of different organizations and agencies that make up the state at multiple levels" (ibid., 69). Policy, rather than being disseminated "down the hierarchy to lower levels and peripheral locations" (ibid), is "made at all levels where the meaning of the state is constructed and where the implementation of policy takes place" (ibid.). Challenging "state" authority, thus, involves finding gaps, inconsistencies, and vulnerabilities in hegemonic narratives of unity and coherence; it involves searching for and exploiting vulnerabilities at

different levels of the state. This, then, is the very same political strategy recognized by Gordon when he said it was necessary to "disaggregate government agencies."

Thus, in addition to teaching urban planning policy, the DCP would oftentimes hold informational sessions detailing the governmental agencies, regulations, and guiding organizational principles relevant to the RLE's development. Furthermore, these sessions oftentimes included "power analyses" that organized agencies, and even individual transit officials, by their utility and amenability to community goals. This process, then, fundamentally involved a disaggregation of the state. The DCP did not aim to engage with a unified or cohesive state entity; instead, the DCP understood the RLE as the collective product of various, overlapping, and sometimes contradictory agencies and institutions. Ferguson and Gupta (2002) would treat this process as a refusal to recognize "images of state vertical encompassment" (Ferguson and Gupta 2002, 983). State vertical encompassment refers to the "commonsense state that simply *is* 'up there' somewhere, operating at a 'higher level'' (ibid.). This imagined topography, furthermore, simultaneously conceptualizes political struggle as coming from below, the state as "reaching down into communities" (ibid.) in a top-down manner, and civil society as a middle ground and point of contact "between the 'up there' state and the 'on the ground' people" (ibid.). Taking a state's spatialization for granted, then, conceals the processes that allow for its continual reproduction. Fundamentally, they argue, these processes are "embedded in the everyday practice of state institutions and from the fact that the routine operation of state institutions produces spatial and scalar hierarchies" (ibid., 984). This is to say, particular practices and representations spatialize some state institutions or frameworks in relation to society; for example, local agencies are oftentimes understood as closer to communities, residents, and citizens than regional or national institutions. Importantly, then, representing an

agency as "local" or conceptualizing the "local" in opposition to the regional or national is accomplished through everyday social action. Thus, "instead of opposing the state to something called 'society'" (ibid. 992), states must be understood to be "composed of bundles of social practices, every bit as local in their materiality and social situatedness as any other" (ibid.). For Gordon, the efficacy of the DCP's political mobilization was, in part, due to the recognition that the state was not an immaterial or inaccessible object. It was, instead, constituted by material and local practices and individuals.

Seeing the state as disunified and pluricentered, critically, meant that tensions between and even within agencies could be exploited and instrumentalized by community residents. For example, the CTA was, in Gordon's view, antagonistic to the RLE from its inception. Gordon believed that the CTA, or its leadership structure, viewed the RLE as drawing away resources from projects backed by more political capital. He pointed to Mayor Daley's proposed "circle line" as one explanation for the CTA's lack of support for the RLE. NIPC and CATS, in contrast, were metropolitan agencies, and, as such, were more isolated from the influence of Daley's supporters. Thus, the DCP organized the aforementioned community meetings with NIPC and CATS as an effort to, essentially, mobilize support for the RLE without going through the CTA.

Flexible Resonance

The DCP's operationalization of historical memory and disaggregation, I posit, implicates two distinct representations of the state; these representations, furthermore, coexist in a relation of indeterminacy and flux dependent upon moments of affective resonance. The vital energy that drove community mobilization, based in "historical memory," was directed antagonistically towards a unified governing body; an actor, some unified rationality, was assigned responsibility for the "quarantining" of the Far South Side. Simultaneously, disaggregating the state, rejecting

the possibility of an insidious and singularly directed state rationality, was integral to effectively exploiting gaps and contradictions between governmental agencies. Reconciling these representations, thus, requires tying them to particular moments of affective encounter. I argue that discursive representations of the state exist only as virtual residues until actualized through some resonant encounter. Contradictory representations of the state, thus, come in and out of being depending on their capacity to affectively resonate in any given moment. The mimetic archive, and the state itself, "exists virtually yet immanently in the nonsignifying yet palpably sensuous dimensions of collective life" (Mazzarella 2017, 7). Furthermore, far from posing an issue of contradiction, these divergent representations of the state allowed the DCP to remain flexible and successfully "play the game."

What Gordon called, "historical memory," might also be thought of as the actualization of a historically generated potential within the mimetic archive. The mimetic archive "embeds latent histories of encounter," and "its actualization is constitutive resonance awakened between these embedded encounters-histories and the triggers of the present" (ibid., 9). For residents, experiences of segregation and isolation, what Gordon described as the experience of losing "their right to the city," left virtual traces and latent potentials. The RLE, thus, can be thought of as a point of resonance, actualizing the affective potentials within residents' historical memory; as such, the RLE mattered in a way that went beyond just transportation. Gordon posited that the community "saw the RLE as a symbol of whether the city was going to do right." That is to say, the RLE, inextricably tied to the perceived abandonment of the Far South Side, served as an entry point into discussions of governance more broadly. The project's construction would serve as the fulfillment of the city's obligation to its residents more generally. Furthermore, insofar as "the city" referred to almost all organizations operating within its boundaries (Federal, State, and Local), the city, in

this case, can be thought of as representative of the state more generally. Key to this particular mode of resonance, then, was the existence of an actor who had failed to live up to their obligations. This is to say, residents, in particular moments of encounter with the RLE, were positioned in relation to a unified state actor assigned blame. Gordon recalled that at public meetings with a variety of state agencies, public officials were often "grilled" by residents and asked why "they" had failed the Greater Roseland community. Transit employees from a variety of agencies at differing levels of government (CMAP, CTA, RTA), were seen, in these moments, as representatives of a unified state that had failed to live up to its obligations.

However, that same agency employee could be seen as representative of a disaggregated state; this too, depended on particular moments of encounter, the actualization of certain affective potentials. As opposed to historical memory, however, these affects might be thought of on the level of the body itself. It was, as Gordon described, through the subtle eye movements, nervous laughs, and momentary lapses that representations of a disunified state appeared. Part of "playing the game," for Gordon, was refusing to treat agency employees as abstract representatives of the state. For example, describing his meeting with planners from the CTA, Gordon argued for the importance of seeing past the professional demeanor of agency employees. Far from being part of a single state rationality, CTA planners were individuals with ideals and aspirations apart from the agency. For Gordon, then, the question became, "how can you talk to the person in front of you in a way that effectuates some decision-making process on a higher level?" Gordon told me that noticing the subtle changes in tone, looks of sympathy, and signs of affection transformed certain CTA employees into "advocates over time." Fundamentally, then, this involved recognizing that, as Gordon put it, the "people you are talking to across the room who are talking like they have authority, actually don't have authority." Even

inside a site of officialdom, the boardroom of the CTA, gaps, disjunctions, and contradictions opened up within representations of the unified state. As Pinker and Harvey (2018) write, "affect emerges…in the play between determinacy and indeterminacy and in the sense of anticipation, uncertainty, and possibility that underwrite minor, mundane gestures, such as gestures of care, which open up a sense of potential" (ibid., 29).

Autonomous Agencies and Historical Narratives:

I now turn to how state "representatives" themselves may operationalize heterogeneous representations of the state. In the case of the RLE, such representations, although largely based on the statutory limitations of certain agencies, come into direct conflict with the historical narratives fueling the aforementioned community mobilization. Through a simultaneous denial of "state" power as such and recognition of statutory limitations on agency power, the lack of infrastructure in the Far South Side can be framed as the result of inter-agency friction between autonomous agents.

An Agency History of the RLE

Daniel is a former employee at the CTA, having been part of their strategic planning team during the early-mid 2000s. As such, he was directly involved in agency discussions concerning the RLE; Daniel, furthermore, also happened to be one of those agency "advocates" described to me by Gordon. In fact, it was Gordon who put me in contact with Daniel, once referring to him as DCP's "man on the inside." Thus, although certainly not representative of the CTA as a whole during that period, my conversations with Daniel revealed at least one way that planners associated with the early RLE produced representations of the state.

When describing the lack of infrastructural development in the Far South Side, Daniel began by referring to the historical development of the city as a whole. Although Daniel made clear that he believed racism certainly played a role "in how things get done and how development decisions are made," he wanted to show me that solely referring to racist policy-making did not tell the whole story. Instead, the contemporary transit isolation of the Far South Side, he argued, is largely due to city development patterns and the particular decisions of autonomous agencies. Key to understanding Chicago's contemporary transit network, he began, was seeing that the Far South Side was slightly unusual. Going back nearly 100 years, he explained, the city developed much more rapidly to the south; due to a corresponding lack of transit development, the Far South Side naturally developed into the transit desert it is today. Its isolation, thus, is due, in part, to the unusual growth pattern Chicago displayed almost a century ago. The "L," furthermore, was never extended south largely because the Far South Side was adequately served by the Illinois Central Railroad (the IC Electric). The IC Electric, a private commuter railroad, ran trains so often that it functioned almost as effectively as a light rail system. For Daniel, then, "a lot of the reason the "L" didn't get extended is because the Illinois Central Railroad had that market covered." The IC Electric, however, was eventually sold to Metra, a public transit agency, in 1987; although the line continues to run, service was substantially reduced by Metra, greatly diminishing the IC Electric's utility as a daily transportation option for Far South Side residents. Concluding, Daniel told me that "it wasn't that the infrastructure wasn't built…it's just that it wasn't operated that way." The contemporary transit isolation of the Far South Side, then, is not the result of the actions of a unified state actor; instead, it is largely the result of competition and lack of coordination *between* state agencies.

Inter-agency Friction

Daniel emphasized that, despite some representations to the contrary, infrastructure can never be thought of as the product of a single actor's will. In infrastructure, "the funding is found in the legislative branch, so you need support from federal, state, and local authorities, all three. It's not up to bureaucrats alone." Furthermore, even if funding is found, coordination between agencies is often a barrier to successful development. In the case of the RLE, this is most apparent in the lack of coordination between Metra and the CTA. Although ostensibly both under the authority of the RTA, Daniel made clear that both agencies, along with Pace, operate almost autonomously. "The RTA in Chicago is very weak…they have limited to no ability to tell Metra, CTA, or Pace what to do…when it comes to really making decisions about where and when to provide service and how to expand capital, those decisions really rest, almost 100%, with CTA, Metra, or Pace." Effectively, despite their shared goal of providing transit within Chicago's boundaries, these agencies rarely integrate their decision-making processes. Such an integration would, for example, require giving the RTA greater control over the CTA and Metra; as Daniel told me, "It would mean taking away powers from CTA and Metra." This is further complicated by the fact that the governing boards of Metra and the CTA are controlled by divergent political interests. Whereas the Chicago Mayor can appoint the majority of the CTA's governing board, Metra's board is majority non-mayor appointees. "The CTA," Daniel explained, "is really the mayor's agency so giving up power for the CTA means giving up power for the mayor."

Daniel's description of inter-agency friction illustrates an important point. As Gupta (2012) argues, "a notion of scale that consists of nested hierarchies, so that one level is seen as being encapsulated inside a higher level, is fundamentally mistaken" (Gupta 2012, 29). The

spatial position of one agency inside another, the subordination of the local, only exists through particular social practices that produce a representational subordination. In other words, while political organizational hierarchies certainly exist, certain institutions controlling the funding, actions, and personnel of others, one agency can never exist "inside" another. Despite the RTA's perceived authority over and subsumption of both the CTA and Metra, its place above the local is challenged and contested in everyday practice. Gupta writes, "the state at the local level is complexly mediated by regional, national, and transnational discourses and practices" (ibid.). "Local" state agencies, thus, are never subsumed by "higher" levels of the state. The appearance of the local's subordination, in other words, must be understood as a particular, but not all-encompassing, relationship between distinct institutions. Such an understanding transforms the state into "a translocal, multileveled, pluricentered, and ubiquitous phenomenon whose construction is critically dependent on representation and the signifying functions of everyday practice" (ibid., 69). Through particular bureaucratic and administrative practices, the state, at specific moments, is represented as a unified and hierarchically spatialized entity; this representation, in turn, is operationalized by particular actors and institutions in the exercise of political power. My conversation with Daniel, however, made clear that the dominance of such representations is oftentimes challenged or outright denied by supposedly "local" agencies. In fact, for Daniel, the "local" agencies', CTA and Metra, superiority over the "regional" agency, RTA, is not an exceptional situation; it is, in fact, produced by standard appointment procedures. The lack of coordination between regional and city transit agencies, then, is the result of normal, not failed, political processes.

Equity and Transit-Oriented Development

The implications of such a representation become exceedingly important in the case of conceptions of equity. For community residents described in the previous section, equity might be thought of as linked to a particular understanding of state responsibility; the RLE, in other words, increases equity insofar as it represents a fulfillment of guarantees made by the government to its citizens. Equity, in this sense, is an overarching concept that goes beyond transit. Equity in transit implicates equitable treatment by the state as a whole. This, then, relates directly to the concept of Transit Oriented Development (TOD). TOD, central to the technical arguments made by the DCP in favor of the RLE, understands transit as a catalyst for economic, cultural, and political development more generally. Transit equity, in this way, is thought of as one part of a larger project of community development. If, however, state agencies operate autonomously, lacking coordination, the relationship of transit development to other forms of development becomes unclear.

For Daniel, "the transit agency is in a difficult position when it comes to TOD. Is CTA the most appropriate party to plan capital expansion? Maybe it's a little bit unfair to task CTA with TOD. There needs to be coordination with the City of Chicago since there's all these other issues." The CTA, Daniel continued, "is not the best group of people to be dealing with all these other myriad issues that should probably be in the hand of other agencies of the city." Fundamentally, the CTA, from the perspective of its planners and officials, is meant to deal with transportation first and foremost. Issues of housing, economic, and cultural development, generally speaking, are not within the agency's scope or purview. The RLE, for Daniel, did not represent a fulfillment of the state's obligations; the RLE, critically, moved forward because it aligned with agency goals.

"There was," he explained, "a generalized feeling that extending the Red Line would reduce commute times and offer an opportunity to grow transit markets."

It's all Politics

Conceptualizing the representation of the state underlying the previous discussion proves difficult insofar as there seems to exist a tension between inter-agency friction and the state power that serves as its condition of possibility. This is to say, the possibility of contradictions and gaps between transit agencies relies on the recognition of statutes and laws governing agency behavior. There is no unified "state" power, yet the fact that agencies can do anything at all, that they have power, requires their existence to be justified by reference to some unified framework. In my conversations with Daniel, this framework was "politics." Ultimately, he told me, "When decisions are made, they're made in politics." I argue that invoking the abstract "political" generates a site of affective resonance capable of producing a particular representation of the state as both beyond and above particular governmental agencies.

On a few occasions throughout our conversations, Daniel, speaking about the CTA's relationships with other agencies or the mayor's office, would say "well…it's very political," while chuckling and telling me not "to even get him started." I would also chuckle and, despite my unfamiliarity with the intricacies of Chicago politics, feel like I understood what he was saying. These moments, drawing from representations of "the political" as a complex game of power and self-interest, created the feeling that whatever we were doing wasn't "politics." These affectively charged moments of intimacy generated the feeling that politics existed as a distant, impenetrable, yet all-determining process. In this way, a representation of the state was created in which state power can be understood as both isolated from and integral to the operation of state agencies. The bureaucratic transit agency, although empowered by the political process, is not part of "politics."

State power, the product of power invested in the political process, is always elsewhere. In this way, responsibility for TDO, coordination between agencies, and the fulfillment of state obligations is relocated to the political beyond.

Re-aggregating the State:

I now move to the contemporary RLE; although the project's transformation since the early 2000s is too extensive to discuss here, generally speaking, there is a feeling among both residents and transit officials that, as Gordon put it, "we are in as good a context to get something done as you can get." This changing context, in part, has involved shifting representations of the state on both the part of community organizations and the CTA. These transformations create both continuities and disjunctions with the past.

Demanding Unity

David is a community organizer currently working as the executive director of a Roseland community group. Since 2017, David has worked closely with both CTA representatives and other community organizations in developing plans for the RLE. Fundamentally, David's approach to the RLE is informed by the recent re-construction of the 95th/Dan Ryan Red Line station. Completed in 2019, the expansion of the 95th street station represented a $280 million capital investment project for the CTA; as such, it was one of the largest infrastructure projects ever undertaken in the South Side. As David described to me, there was great hope that the station would serve as a "catalyst" for more general economic development within the Roseland area. Three years later, however, and, as David told me, the feeling is that "$300 million was spent at the 95th street station and nothing was developed around it." The station, sleek and modern, is surrounded not by retail, but by low-density residences (see Figure 3). Now involved in the RLE,

David, informed by his experience with the 95th street station, asked me, "What confidence do we have that 103rd street isn't gonna have a new station and still be a desert? They'll stand there at the press conferences and talk about 'Oh yeah, they'll be retail that'll follow this,' and nothing ever happens…it never happens." David's central motivation for organizing around the RLE, then, is to ensure that it is constructed with TOD in mind. For the RLE to be a catalyst for broader development, for "the whole South Side to benefit from this thing," transit must be thought of as a single part of a larger whole. Fundamentally, then, this requires that the CTA develops the RLE in conjunction with other governmental agencies and departments.

Coordination between the CTA and other governmental agencies, David told me, is far from given. Instead, he described the existence of a differential level of coordination depending on the location of a given project. "The CTA," he told me, "operates almost independently…They've never seemed to be connected to the development side of things in our community…However, when they do a Red or Purple line modernization near Wrigleyville, it seems that all the department agencies are aligned…they're all standing behind the podium." In the case of the 95th street station, "you get something nice and shiny but you don't have all those departments standing behind the CTA." The central question, David explained, was "How do we get the transit agencies to stop working in silos in our community? They're not doing that in other communities." This unequal level of coordination, furthermore, can be thought of as the result of inequalities in power. In wealthier, white communities, coordination between agencies and departments is expected; if a community attempts to operate in a vacuum, residents "can make a call and raise holy hell." Through their access to powerful actors, wealthy communities can demand that agencies work in coordination with one another. The South Side, David explained,

"isn't valued to the level where they need to be held accountable for that…They aren't coming from that power dynamic."

Throughout our conversations, David continually referred to governmental agencies as a common "they." These agencies, furthermore, were sometimes referred to as "the powers that be." Despite their apparent disunity, then, there does exist a common actor or rationality behind their actions. This is to say, the disunity of the state, the lack of coordination between agencies, is interpreted as a bad faith justification for the state's inaction. Between the early RLE and the contemporary RLE, then, there exists a continuity of the role that historical memory plays in producing representations of a unified state. Such representations, furthermore, make it possible for the RLE to act as a more general demand for development in the Far South Side. The representation of a unified state actor, one that failed to fulfill its obligations, is entirely informed by a historical memory of neglect. David explained that "to see the possibility [of the RLE] start to crystalize, you welcome it of course, but it's tempered with that hurt…there's a wound. It's always there to remind you, just like a body wound. You move a certain way and see a blemish and you remember when you were injured and it never really goes away…you just keep moving on and if bigger and better things come out of it, it won't cover the wound." The body itself, then, is represented as a site of resonance, the Far South Side's historical memory of disinvestment becoming a wound inflicted by the state. Encounters with the RLE, then, act to activate these virtual pains, and, in so doing, lay the blame squarely at the feet of a "callous" state rationality.

Your Wait is Finally Over

I conclude with a discussion of a video released by the CTA in 2020 regarding the RLE. This video, centrally featured on the project website's home page, represents the most highly publicized and clearest declaration of support for the RLE by the CTA. Just over eight minutes

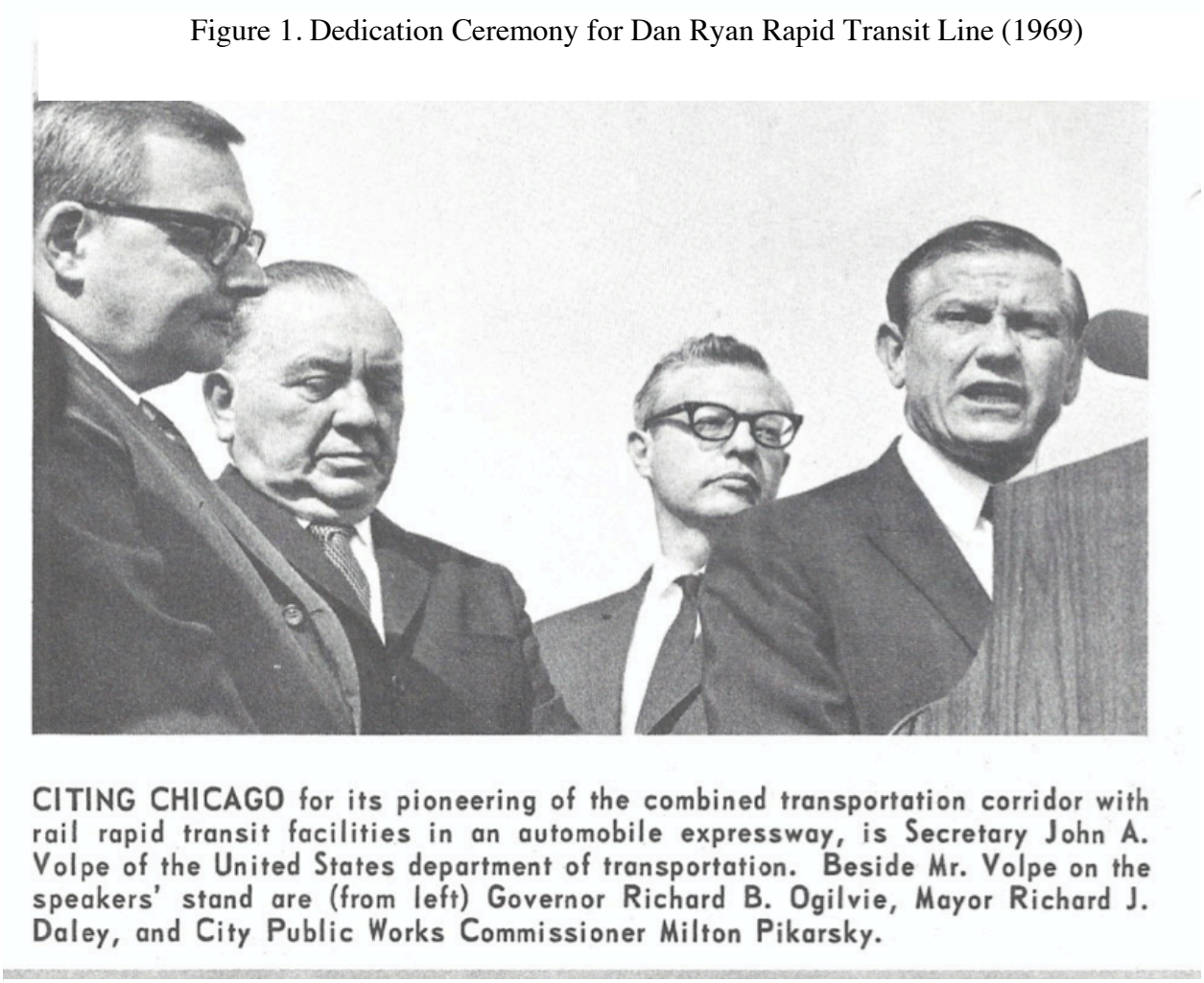
long, the video features a narrated description of the project's benefits, excerpts of interviews with Far South Side community leaders, and statements in support of the RLE by CTA President Carter. This video, I argue, represents a break with earlier, and even some contemporary, materials released by the CTA concerning the RLE. In particular, statements by President Carter can be read as echoing representations of the state articulated by some Far South Side residents. The CTA is portrayed as representative of the state more generally; the RLE, in turn, is presented as a long-awaited fulfillment of state obligations.

Segments of an interview with President Carter appear throughout the video, serving to inform its central themes and message; the very framing of the interview acts to blur the boundary between the CTA and the state. Carter is shown seated between two flags throughout his appearances: the U.S Flag to his left and the Illinois State Flag to his right. Left of the U.S. Flag, marking the CTA board room, is a wall on which "Chicago Transit Authority" is lettered in bronze (see Figure 4). The boundaries between the CTA, the State of Illinois, and the Federal government blur, allowing for their collapse into a unified actor; Carter, seated at the center of these blurring boundaries, becomes representative of not only the CTA but the state as a whole. With this in mind, Carter's closing remarks take on a critical significance. His remarks, serving as a conclusion for the video more generally, are aimed directly at Far South Side residents. He tells them, "Thank you for your patience. I know it's been a long time coming. I know you have heard about this project and promises about this project in the past. But I'm here to tell you, as a South Sider myself, I am committed to bringing this project home and show you that your wait is now finally over" (CTA 2020). Although indirect, Carter's statements gesture towards Mayor Daley's unfulfilled "promise" from over a half-century ago. To say that the RLE has been "a long time coming," is as close to an acknowledgment of the CTA's neglect and failure to serve the Far South Side as Carter

is capable of. Carter, furthermore, by asserting his identity as a "South Sider," positions himself within those very histories of neglect. There is, then, a way that the video acts as a redemptive act. It is as if, having recognized its failure, the state responds by transforming those it has harmed into its representative; the wound of the state's failure, described by David, is healed through an act of grace. Carter closes the video by stating, again speaking directly to South Side residents, that "the light you see at the end of the tunnel is a train that's coming to your community." Carter, thus, transforms the construction of the RLE into a transition from darkness to light. The promised future is finally arriving.

Appendix

Figure 1. Dedication Ceremony for Dan Ryan Rapid Transit Line (1969)



CITING CHICAGO for its pioneering of the combined transportation corridor with rail rapid transit facilities in an automobile expressway, is Secretary John A. Volpe of the United States department of transportation. Beside Mr. Volpe on the speakers' stand are (from left) Governor Richard B. Ogilvie, Mayor Richard J. Daley, and City Public Works Commissioner Milton Pikarsky.

Source: CTA (1969)

Figure 2. Map of CTA "L" Rail System

Source: CTA (2016)

Figure 4. 95th/Dan Ryan Station

Source: CTA, 2019

Figure 3. CTA President Carter As Shown in RLE Promotional Video

Source: CTA, 2020

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