Matthew J. Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006. 432pp. 14 illustrations. $42.40/£28.00 hbk; $22.50/£15.00 pbk.
James Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided. Race and Politics in the City of Brotherly Love*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007. 336pp. 24 illustrations, 6 tables, 6 maps. Bibliography. $49.95.
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The black freedom struggle and the white backlash knew no geographical bounds. While the civil rights movement blazed through southern towns, African Americans also struck at segregation in northern cities. Racial appeals to white voters coloured party politics not just in Dixie but across the nation. By the middle of the twentieth century, Philadelphia held a larger black population than any non-southern city except Chicago or New York. The 'city of brotherly love' thus paints a compelling backdrop behind these interrelated narratives of racial politics and civil rights. Matthew Countryman and James Wolfinger present complementary histories of a city fractured by race.

Wolfinger's *Philadelphia Divided* runs from the 1930s to the 1950s. It focuses on party politics at the local and national levels as well as racial dynamics at the workplace, housing segregation and suburbanization. Wolfinger argues that the Republican party built a cross-class coalition that spoke to white racial fears. Such a storyline sounds straightforward to anyone familiar with Richard Nixon's 'Southern Strategy' and the rise of modern conservatism. Yet Wolfinger charts these developments during the years of World War II. Here was a Northern Strategy of the 1940s. During the New Deal years, the party of Lincoln battled the party of Roosevelt for the votes of Philadelphia's working and middle classes – African American and white alike. As blacks moved solidly into the Democratic camp, Republicans glimpsed a new electoral strategy. The 1944 Philadelphia transit strike rests at the centre of this evolution, and at the crux of Wolfinger's book. Black transit workers, with the help of Roosevelt's Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC), secured positions as motormen and conductors. In response, white workers went on strike. Republican mayor Bernard Samuel took his cue from the strikers, attacking 'federal power' in the guise of the FEPC. In the coming years, Republican politicians denounced public housing when it was not confined to the ghettoes, winked at restrictive covenants and lambasted proposals for a municipal FEPC. Governor Edward Martin won election to the United States Senate on the basis of such issues. White Republican suburbs soon circled the racially mixed Democratic city. This convergence of race, space and party politics in Philadelphia anticipated national developments during later decades. 'Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan . . . sounded much like Bernard Samuel decrying federal power in 1943, Edward Martin opposing the FEPC in 1946, or Wilbur and William Hamilton challenging public housing sites in 1950.' As Republican politicians used race to rally white votes, Wolfinger's Philadelphia is a place where the liberal New Deal coalition barely existed. It had 'largely collapsed' by the early 1950s (p. 247).

Countryman's *Up South* portrays this same moment – the late 1940s and early 1950s – as the heyday of civil rights liberalism. In 1951, watershed anti-discrimination measures were added to the city charter and a liberal Democrat became mayor. Yet Philadelphia blacks soon found that liberalism's promises – embedded as they were in policies, rhetoric and charters – rang hollow. Segregation

and poverty persisted in this de-industrializing city. In response, African Americans rejected alliances with white liberals and developed a distinctive brand of civil rights activism. 'Civil rights protest meant something very different in a northern city like Philadelphia', Countryman demonstrates (p. 117). In the early 1960s, Leon Sullivan and the '400 Ministers' waged effective boycotts against discriminatory retailers. By 1963, blacks embraced more confrontational styles of protest. African Americans engaged in massive civil disobedience when the city contracted with all-white construction crews. This became 'the most explosive racial issue in the city' since the 1943 transit strike (p. 132). The construction protests finally unravelled the alliance between civil rights activists and Democratic liberals. The 1964 North Philadelphia riots punctuated that disenchantment. Turning further away from liberalism, Philadelphia residents formed the Black People's Unity Movement (BPUM) in February 1966 – months before Stokely Carmichael uttered the famous Black Power mantra. Local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People leader Cecil Moore towered over Philadelphia's black freedom struggle for the better part of the 1960s, and he stands as the most important single figure in Countryman's narrative. Moore melded elements of the southern 'organizing tradition' together with forms of black nationalism. This synthesis produced 'dramatic and compelling new forms of black protest' (p. 179). Countryman's book rises to its very best when it shows how the Philadelphia movement thus 'reinvented' black protest.

In the tortured logic of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Black Power struggle and the white backlash grew together, lifting one another to greater heights with each perceived excess of the other side. *Up South* illuminates this dynamic. Moore fashioned himself as a hero of the black working class; Deputy Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo was his antithesis. As the racial divide grew wider, Rizzo stoked the passions of a fearful white populace, helped mould a racially charged politics and became head of the police force. He clubbed protesting black high school students in 1967; in 1970 his officers dragged Black Panthers into the street and forced them to strip. In 1971, Rizzo rode racial tensions and a 'law and order' platform into the mayor's office. According to Wolfinger, the Republican strategies of the 1940s depended upon code words and subtext – a language obvious to those in Philadelphia but too nuanced to sound overtly racist. 'That is what made the racism of the urban North so hard to combat: at times it hid in plain sight' (Wolfinger, p. 213). In contrast, Frank Rizzo did not hide. On his watch, the 'city of brotherly love' became a vicious racial battleground. Countryman quotes a newspaper article that termed Philadelphia 'a racist city run by police Gestapo' (p. 206).

Countryman also quotes an activist who noted 'Black people are treated the same north, east, south, and west' (p. 199). This dichotomy between North and South, or the lack thereof, is central to both books. Wolfinger argues that the 'Southern Strategy' actually had earlier roots in a northern city. Countryman's very title juxtaposes the two regions. In general, he argues that extending the study of civil rights to the North has enormous implications for the field. Countryman shows that Philadelphia blacks developed a civil rights movement every bit as spirited and sophisticated as their counterparts further South. They also endured a violent sheriff who vaulted into City Hall. Yet Countryman notes that 'life in the urban North was vastly preferable to the segregated South' (p. 79). He briefly mentions areas like 'Germantown and neighboring Mount Airy – the city's only successful integrated neighborhoods', places that had no southern analogues

(p. 237). It remains unclear just how far one ought to take the meaning of his title. Wolfinger's handling of regional differences raises similar questions. Philadelphia Republicans did not completely write off black voters, and their racial rhetoric was a far cry from southerners who preached 'segregation forever'. Neither author articulates the precise dynamic between developments in Philadelphia and those further South. The phrase 'Up South' remains a powerful way to frame race and politics in Philadelphia. While the 'Up South' idea lurks through both of these books, it is never entirely explained.

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