

# “I’m a Cartoon!” The Jackson 5ive Cartoon as Comodified Civil Rights & Black Power Ideologies, 1971-1973

by

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## Abstract

With the December 2009 release of Disney’s *The Princess and the Frog* and the continued airing of the animated series *The Boondocks* (November 6, 2005-Present) and *Little Bill* (November 28, 1999-July 2, 2007), television viewers and movie goers seem to forget that just over forty year ago, it was rarely if ever a time when non-stereotypical, minstrel-type caricatures did not represent the only images of African Americans in animated film or television. The *Jackson 5ive* animated series (September 11, 1971 – September 1, 1973) became only the second animated television series starring more than one non-stereotypical African American character to air on a major television network, and was one of the longest running cartoons with non-stereotypical African Americans as title characters excluding *Fat Albert & the Cosby Kids* (September 9, 1973 – August 29, 1984) until 1999. In many ways, the *Jackson 5ive* animated series was to cartoons, what Michael Jackson was to MTV (Music Television). Rather than the first (MTV played Joan Armatrading, Gary Bonds, Tina Turner, and Prince before Jackson), both helped the Jackson 5 and Michael Jackson appear as creators of media equal opportunity for future Black entertainers while opening more doors for white and black media capitalists to profit from black cultural production and expression.

Motown and White television executives organized the idea of the series around at least three selling points: 1) young African Americans were a viable target audience; 2) “bubble gum” soul and soul music artists could have enough Black/White listener appeal to become pop artists; and 3) that Black cultural and economic power brokers and discourses whether defined as “cultural bargainers,” “moral crusaders,” “alienated reformers,” or “alienated revolutionaries” could be commodified in such a way that neoliberal White and Black audiences viewed the *Jackson Five* animated series as a fulfillment of Martin Luther King’s interracial dream. At the same time, parents who advocated popular Black cultural, social, or economic nationalism claimed the pioneering and non-stereotypical depictions of Black children on television as a positive affirmation of television presence as empowerment. In either case, the *Jackson Five* cartoon paved the way for *I Am the Greatest: The Adventures of Muhammad Ali*, *Mister T*, *Hammerman*, and a number of other animated series starring real and fictionalized animated Black characters.

This essay explores Motown Productions and Rankin/Bass Productions Incorporated collaboration to bring the *Jackson Five* cartoon to the American Broadcasting Company’s (ABC) Saturday morning line-up and the place of the *Jackson Five* cartoon in the history of Black characters in animated television and film. Because the *Jackson Five* series was one of the first animated series on Saturday morning television with a non-stereotypical all-Black title cast, Michael Jackson and his brothers hold a permanent place of importance in the public’s consciousness and the collective memory of those who were children and parents who struggled to understand Civil Rights and Black Power ideologies during a period when both were being increasingly commodified in popular culture.

## **The Jackson Five Cartoon Paved the Way**

I was already a devoted fan of film and animation by the time "The Jackson Five" Saturday morning cartoon show started appearing over network television in 1971 ... but being a cartoon character pushed me over the brink into a full-time love of the movies and the kind of animated motion pictures pioneered by Walt Disney. I have such admiration for Mr. Disney and what he accomplished with the help of so many talented artists...I loved being a cartoon. It was so much fun to get up on Saturday mornings to watch cartoons and look forward to seeing ourselves on the screen. It was like a fantasy come true for all of us. –Michael Jackson, *Moon Walk* (1988).<sup>1</sup>

With the December 2009 release of Disney’s *The Princess and the Frog* and the continued airing of the animated series *The Boondocks* (November 6, 2005-Present) and *Little Bill* (November 28, 1999-July 2, 2007), television viewers and movie goers seem to forget that just over forty year ago, it was rarely if ever a time when non-stereotypical, minstrel-type caricatures did not represent the only images of African Americans in animated film or television.<sup>2</sup>

The *Jackson 5ive* animated series (September 11, 1971 – September 1, 1973) became only the second animated television series starring more than one non-stereotypical African American character to air on a major television network, and was one of the longest running cartoons with non-stereotypical African Americans as title characters excluding *Fat Albert & the Cosby Kids* (September 9, 1973 – August 29, 1984) until 1999.<sup>3</sup> In many ways, the *Jackson 5ive* animated series was to cartoons, what Michael Jackson was to Music Television (MTV)? Rather than the first (MTV played Joan Armatrading, Gary Bonds, Tina Turner, and Prince before Jackson),<sup>4</sup> both helped the Jackson 5 and Michael Jackson appear as creators of media equal opportunity for future Black entertainers while opening more doors for white and Black media capitalists to profit from Black cultural production and expression. Motown and American Broadcasting Company (ABC) television executives like Vice President of Children’s Programming Michael D. Eisner, organized the idea of the series around at least three selling points: 1) young African Americans were a viable target audience; 2) “bubble gum” soul and soul music artists could have enough Black/white listener appeal to become pop artists; and 3) that Black cultural and economic power brokers and discourses whether defined as “cultural bargainers,” “moral crusaders,” “alienated reformers,” or “alienated revolutionaries”<sup>5</sup> could be commodified in such a way that neoliberal white and Black audiences viewed the *Jackson Five* animated series as a fulfillment of Martin Luther King’s interracial dream. At the same time, parents who advocated popular Black cultural, social, or economic nationalism claimed the pioneering and non-stereotypical depictions of Black children on television as a positive affirmation of their belief of presence as empowerment.<sup>6</sup> In either case, the *Jackson 5ive* cartoon paved the way for *Fat Albert & the Cosby Kids*, *I Am the Greatest: The Adventures of Muhammad Ali*, and a number of other animated series starring real and fictionalized animated Black characters.

The death of Michael Jackson has not only been shrouded in controversy and sparked a mad scramble for Jackson Five and Michael Jackson paraphernalia. Jackson’s death has forced scholars of African and African American popular culture to examine, explain, and reflect of the meaning of Michael Jackson’s career, which spanned from the Black Power Era to the first year of Barack Obama’s presidency. This essay explores Motown Productions and Rankin/Bass Productions Incorporated’s collaboration that brought the *Jackson 5ive* cartoon to the ABC’s Saturday morning line-up and the place of the *Jackson 5ive* cartoon in the history of Black characters in animated television and film. Because the *Jackson 5ive* series was one of the first animated series on Saturday morning television with a non-stereotypical all-Black title cast, Michael Jackson and his brothers hold a permanent place of importance in the public’s consciousness and the collective memory of those who were children and parents who struggled to understand Civil Rights and Black Power ideologies during a period when both were being increasingly commodified in popular culture.

## **Racists Animated Black Caricature in the Early Years, 1915-1960**

Stereotypical Black characters have shown up in their own animated movie short series since Pat Sullivan created *Sammy Johnsin* in 1915, the same year D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* premiered. Sullivan reportedly adapted William Marriner's Sambo character from the "Sambo and Funny Noises" newspaper comic strip after Marriner's death. The series lasted from 1916 to 1918.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Hugh Harman and Rudolf Ising created *Bosko* the "Black minstrel" and "his girlfriend, Honey" in 1930. Bosko first resembled characters like Oswald the Rabbit, the first Mickey Mouse, and Felix, later emerged as a definite Black pickaninny caricature.<sup>8</sup> Sammy Johnsin, Bosko, Jasper and Inki were total inventions and wholly stereotypical Black caricatures. Cartoonists caricatured a number of real Black jazz musicians and actors, their speech, facial features, and clothes were extremely exaggerated. Film Scholar Clyde Taylor's claim that Hollywood had an unwritten code the "thou shall not show Black people as human beings"<sup>9</sup> extended to animated film, comics, and children's toys and books well into the 1960s.

Animators regularly used Cab Calloway, Thomas "Fats" Waller, Louis Armstrong, Ethel Waters, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, and Lincoln "Stepin Fetchit" Perry as archetypes for a host of animals and people in animated features, but many of these caricatures reinforced stereotypes about Blacks' natural ability to dance and sing and their supposed animalistic nature. Cartoons that caricatured Cab Calloway began with David and Max Fleisher's Betty Boop- *Minnie the Moocher* (1932) and *The Old Man of the Mountain* (1933). Each contained live action footage of Cab Calloway and his Orchestra and caricatured ghost-walrus and cave hermit. Between 1932 and 1955 twenty different shorts featured a caricature of or reference to Cab Calloway. Other animated features like *The Old Mill Pond* (1936) included an ensemble of Frog caricatures such as Fats Waller, Bill Robinson, Louis Armstrong, Ethel Waters, Stepin Fetchit, and Cab Calloway and *Swing Wedding* (1937) contained all these except Waters. Racist and racialized caricatures of these entertainers appeared in at least a dozen films including: six with Fats Waller, six with Bill Robinson, seven with Louis Armstrong, two with Ethel Waters, and seven with Stepin Fetchit.<sup>10</sup>

In total, racist animated Black caricatures were ubiquitous before 1960 and protests by a civil rights groups brought this era in animation history to a close. Henry T. Sampson notes that over 400 animated cartoons with mostly racist Black caricatures were made between 1900 and 1960.<sup>11</sup>

## **Black Animated Television Characters in the Black Power Era**

Black literary, performing and visual arts emerged as a crucial form of cultural expression during the Black Power Movement. Known as the Black Arts Movement, African Americans mostly politically left and center produced poetry, theater, live-action film, visual arts, and other forms to spread their messages and influence.

Historians Komozi Woodard and Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar note that cultural nationalist institutions like Amiri Baraka's Harlem-based Black Arts Repertory Theater/School and similar organizations in the Midwest, South, and West proposed "acting, writing, directing, set design, production, and management," for Black youth and established artists.<sup>12</sup> While many Black Panthers, unlike Baraka, did not consider themselves cultural nationalists, their promotion of soul and R&B groups like the Lumpen and the Freedom Messengers affirms the tenuous relationship between Black cultural expression, Black economic power, and commodification of Black-nationalist iconography and rhetoric.<sup>13</sup> Many of these cultural forms were produced and for consumption by those adolescences and adults. Comic strips, panel cartoons, and editorial cartoons designed specifically for adults with cultural nationalist, interracialist, or revolutionary socialist ideas or icons appeared in a number of journals, magazines, and newspapers created to serve a Black readership. Emory Douglas (the Black Panther Party) and Eugene Majied (the Nation of Islam) were two cartoon artists, Black political satirists, and artists who also served as illustrators for their respective groups' newspapers and magazines – *The Black Panther* newspaper and *Muhammad Speaks*.<sup>14</sup> The point of these cartoons was to "deliver political commentary" or to "poke fun at the absurdities of racial bigotry."<sup>15</sup>

Not surprisingly the earliest televised animated series with a non-stereotypical, predominantly Black cast did not air until the Black Power Era, between 1965 and 1978. These series were largely apolitical and with one exception "avoided discussions of race," but did include rhythm and blues music, 1970s clothing styles and slang to give them a contemporary flair.<sup>16</sup> Unlike political cartoons, young children and adolescents were the intended consumers of animated film that appeared on network television. The only expression of Black Power politics to carry over into mainstream animation in the late 1960s and early 1970s was drawing African American characters with naturals or Afro hairstyles. Media scholar S. Craig Watkins rightly argues that "the manner in which Blacks politicized their hair and choice of clothing was crucial to cultural nationalism because it involved something Blacks could control: their bodies."<sup>17</sup> In televised animated film as in society as a whole, the Afro became less politicized and less about an expression of self-love than a mark or sign of youth and coolness that could be easily commodified.

Animated film absent of racist Black stereotypical characters entered the American mainstream in 1969, the year after Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. That's when on the small screen, *Hey, Hey, Hey, It's Fat Albert* premiered as a primetime special on the National Broadcasting Channel (NBC).<sup>18</sup> During the same year, the predominantly white *Hardy Boys* (September 6, 1969 – January 2, 1971) animated series on ABC included an African American male character named Pete Jones.<sup>19</sup> *The Hardy Boys* had evolved from a series of paperback mysteries in the 1920s which infamously included some of the most overtly racist representations of African Americans, Chinese Americans, and Native Americans in its pages. By the 1950s writers completely overhauled most of these caricatures and the popularity of the book series led to an animated television series.

In the Saturday morning cartoon, the Hardy Boys were members of a teenage rock and roll band; however, some of the more blatantly racist stereotypes of Native Americans from the older generations of books also appeared in the cartoon series although the overtly racist representation of Blacks were noticeably absent. Peter Jones appeared in most episodes as an active participant in solving the plot-centered mysteries. As a band member, Peter Jones was the stereotypical Black drummer in the band's rhythm section, but his speech, appearance, or dress was not exaggerated or subject to ridicule.

The Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) ran a short-lived thirty-minute cartoon on Wednesday evenings from July 1 through September 9, 1970 called *Where's Huddles* about a rag-tag football team that included an oft-times deferent, but physically large African American character named Freight Train.<sup>20</sup> Comments on the Internet Movie Database (imdb) note that Freight Train's character often morphed into an actual freight train during games against opponents.<sup>21</sup> Black film star Herb Jeffries, of *Harlem Rides the Range* and *Bronze Buckaroo* fame, voiced Freight Train.

*Josie and the Pussy Cats*, a series adapted from *The Archie Show*,<sup>22</sup> broke new ground when it aired on CBS in 1970. Valarie Smith, voiced by Patrice Holloway and Barbara Pariot, played the tambourine and maracas. As a member of the leopard leotard-wearing Pussy Cats, Valerie appeared regularly in almost of the sixteen episodes in the series' run from September 12, 1970 to January 2, 1971. Valerie became one of the earliest non-racist representations of an animated African American woman on network television.<sup>23</sup> After a brief hiatus a similar series *Josie and the Pussy Cats in Outer Space* ran from September 9, 1972 to January 20, 1974. The idea of using a real or fictional band as a basis for a cartoon, such as the Beatles or Josie and the Pussy Cats, would prove pivotal to the development of the *Jackson Five* cartoon series.<sup>24</sup>

Animated series that used real-life African American personalities almost always highlighted the lives of African American athletes, musicians, or comedians. For example, *The Harlem Globetrotters* (September 12, 1970 – September 2, 1972) aired on CBS and ran for two seasons and totaled twenty-two episodes. The players featured in the series were Freddie "Curly" Neal, Hubert "Geese" Ausbie, George "Meadowlark" Lemon, J.C. "Gip" Gipson, Pablo Robertson, and Bobby Joe Mason.<sup>25</sup> *The Super Harlem Globetrotters*, with Louis "Sweet Lou" Dunbar, Nate Branch, and James "Twiggy" Sanders as replacements for Lemon, Gipson, Robertson, and Mason, returned to NBC for a shorter, four-month stint in 1979, but the cartoon failed to amass a large following.<sup>26</sup>

Rankin/Bass Productions' second animated series to include primary characters who were African Americans was *Kid Power* (September 16, 1972 to September 1, 1974). It, like the *Jackson Five* animated series, aired on ABC. Adapted from African American cartoonist Morrie Turner's *Wee Pals* comic strip, the animated film series centered on the everyday lives and exploits of eleven children (four African Americans, six European Americans, and one Asian American) who addressed "environmental issues, racial prejudice, and personal growth."<sup>27</sup> Nine of the characters were boys and two were girls (one white, one Black).

The lead character, Oliver was white and was the constant target of harassment by another white child named Ralph. In most episodes Ralph played the typical class bully who teases chubby kids and has been socialized by his father to be racially prejudiced.<sup>28</sup> Of the African American characters who work with Ralph to unlearn his racial bias are Randy, who's athletic; the Confederate army hat-wearing Nipper, Sybil an African American girl whose best friend is Connie, and the beret and sunglass wearing Diz, a cross between creator Morrie Turner and Dizzy Gillespie. The premise of the series was that multiracial and multicultural kids who worked together had the power to change the world socially and politically. The idea of Kid Power reflected concepts of participatory democracy and bottom-up social movements of the 1960s and 1970s that emphasized ideals like Black Power, Brown Power, Red Power, Woman Power, and Power to the People. The series' theme song "Kid Power...Red, Yellow, Black, and White...White, Yellow, Black, and Red...It's up to Kid Power ... It's not a question of whether you belong, in the world today, in the world today ... It's up to Kid Power."<sup>29</sup>

*The Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids* series was both a product of the Black Power era and the longest running animated series with non-racist Black title characters. The main characters were eight black teenagers boys, Albert, Bill, Bucky, Donald, Harold, Mushroom, Rudy and Russell. Live-action recordings of Bill Crosby appeared at the beginning and end of each episode, adding a sense of big-brother-like moral authority to the show. Following the *Hardy Boys*, *Josie and the Pussy Cats*, the *Jackson Five* and a host of other animated series, *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids* played strung together musical instruments in the Junkyard Band. Unlike any televised animated cartoon series before it and like hundreds after it, *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids* included ten Black and white advisors who were degreed professional psychologists from UCLA. This series had clear educational elements and addressed issues of poverty, child abuse, kidnapping, teen parenting, smoking, bullying and vandalism. This series won mass parent approval and Cosby and Filmation Associates kept tight reins on the popular uses of the series, despite the uses of the characters in a board game, lunch boxes, comic books, and t-shirts. In 1973, the same year *Fat Albert* premiered, Filmation also produced *Star Trek* (September 8, 1973 to October 12, 1974) the animated series on NBC. The Starship Enterprise crew had one black English and Swahili-speaking character Lieutenant Nyota Uhura who was from the fictional United States of Africa. The short-lived animated series, based on the earlier live-action series, ran for twenty-two episodes and the Enterprise crew was to be voiced by the original actors, except George Takei's Lt. Hikaru Sulu and Nichelle Nichols' Lt. Nyota Uhura. According to Takei, Leonard Nimoy refused to lend his voice to the cartoon unless Takei and Nichols voiced their respective characters—Filmation later caved and included Nichols' and Takei's voices in the cartoon series.<sup>30</sup>

The brief thirteen-episode run of *I am the Greatest—The Adventures of Muhammad Ali* (September 10, 1977 to January 10, 1978) was perhaps the ultimate sign that Black Power icons, rhetoric, and symbols had been commodified and depoliticized in popular television animated form.<sup>31</sup> By September 1977, the boxer many people had come to know during his early career, friendship with Malcolm X, membership in the Nation of Islam, and refusal to join the United States military during the Vietnam War, had converted to Sunni Islam and regained the World Boxing Association heavyweight title for an unprecedented third time. Ali provided the voice for his own animated series character and successfully defended his title only once, against Earnie Shavers, during the series' run on CBS. One month and five days after CBS cancelled the series, Ali lost the World Boxing Association and World Boxing Conference titles to Leon Spinks. The *Space Sentinels* was also a thirteen-episode cartoon series that aired on NBC, *The Space Sentinels* aired during the same season as *I am the Greatest*. The trio of superheroes who included a black woman character named Astrea with the power to turn into any living animal. Astrea was one of the first black animated cartoon superheroes on television.<sup>32</sup>

The Saturday morning cartoon lineup in 1971 allowed young people to follow the exploits of the Harlem Globetrotters, the Jackson Five, and Josie and the Pussy Cats meaning that two series starred and all-Black main cast and one included an African American character as a primary member of the leading cast. African American animated television characters were in rare form; they appeared on the small-screen for at least one and one half hours every Saturday morning for four consecutive months, and some could argue that this was the golden age of Black animated characters. Despite this unprecedented presence, Christopher Lehman maintains that the apolitical content of the *Jackson Five* and later, *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids*, remained "consistent with the absence of social commentary from both Motown songs and the stand-up routines of Cosby."<sup>33</sup> Both the *Harlem Globetrotters* series and their live routine were equally apolitical.

As noted before, the sole/soul link to political or cultural expressions of the Black Power Movement and African American animated television characters was the depoliticized Afro hairstyle. Neither Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids nor any of the Harlem Globetrotters in the original series wore Afros, although all the title characters were drawn with neat well-kempt naturals. An oversized Afro which doubled as a comedic storage closet was the signature hallmark of Louis Dunbar's animated *Super Globetrotters* character; Peter Jones in the *Hardy Boys* series, Valerie from the *Josie and the Pussy Cats* series, and Astrea of the *Space Sentinels* series sported small Afros, as did all the Jacksons who wore slightly larger Afros in the *Jackson Five* animated series. In the *Jackson Five* episodes "Cinderjackson" and "Grove to the Chief" the laughable Hairy Godfather wears a large Afro, hence his name, and in the episode "Drafted" when Marlon and Michael are accidentally enlisted in the army paratroopers both characters narrowly escape having their Afros cut off claiming apolitically, "Do they know how long it takes to grow that stuff?" and "They sure know how to hurt a kid."<sup>34</sup>



Ironically, a number of sources including Berry Gordy and Michael Jackson made a point to note that when an African American reporter asked the Afro and Black Panther Party-like black leather jacket wearing Jackson 5 if their new look signaled an endorsement of Black Power ideologies, a Motown representative intervened quickly and remarked, “we [don’t] think about that stuff because we were a commercial product.” Nonetheless Michael recalled, “we winked and gave the power salute when we left, which seemed to thrill the guy.”<sup>35</sup>

The extent to which Motown Records Corporation was a Black capitalist or Black economic nationalist enterprise is outside the scope of this essay; but Motown certainly depoliticized the physical appearance of most of its artists and the content of their songs. Furthermore, most of Motown’s executives were white men. Some scholars and critics of Motown have argued that the company was not authentically Black for this reason. Even Motown’s Black Forum label which functioned from 1971 to 1973 and released recorded speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr., Stokely Carmichael, and Elaine Brown did not convince critics that the company was anything but commercial.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, Berry Gordy proved infamously resistant to requests from Marvin Gaye and Stevie Wonder to address socio-political topics in their music; he relented only as the mainstream political tide changed and songs like “What’s Going On” and “You Haven’t Done Nothin’” proved to be commercially successful.

The Black Power Era is important to animated television not just because of the unprecedented number of Black characters on the small screen, but because the era marked a break with the presence of stereotypical animated characters in general. Black animated characters were essential parts of the series stories and plots, appeared in title-roles in their own series, and animators defied the simple insertion of Black characters in historically white children’s stories, yet some critics may argue that this presence came at the expense of the commodification of Black cultural symbols, slang, and ideologies. In this regard, the *Jackson 5* animated series was the quintessential product of a political era in midstream.

## **The J5: An Interracial Multi-Media Collaboration**

Rankin/Bass Productions, which began as Videocraft International, Ltd. circa 1958, was a film production partnership between former ABC graphic designer Arthur Rankin, Jr., who worked for ABC from 1948 to 1952, and New York advertising agent Jules Bass. Rankin/Bass already had a storied history in its production of stop-motion animation holiday specials including *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* (1964), *The Little Drummer Boy* (1968), *Santa Claus is Comin’ to Town* (1970) and non-holiday films such as *Willie McBean and the Magic Machine* (1965) and *The Ballad of Smokey the Bear* (1966). It also produced six cel-animated series before 1971; its longest running was *The King Kong Show* (1966-1969).

Even in the late 1960s and early 1970s, cel-animated series by Rankin/Bass were international collaborations. Toei Animation and Mushi Productions in Japan penned most Rankin/Bass productions; The *Jackson Five Show*, however, was produced and animated by Halas & Batchelor in London. Romeo Muller lead a team of five series writers and Maury Laws transformed the lyric-less tunes from Jackson Five hits into background music. Rankin/Bass had one Japanese animator who assisted animators at Halas & Batchelor with the series and Animation Director Bob Balsler assembled a team of animators from England and Canada to work on the series.<sup>37</sup> Suzanne de Passe, then a creative consultant for Motown, flew to London to negotiate with collaborating studios on the *Jackson Five* cartoon, while Motown Vice President Jim White, worked on the two television specials *Going Back to Indiana* and *Diana!* Rankin/Bass teamed up with Halas & Batchelor, Pegbar Productions in Spain, and Motown Productions to create *The Jackson Five*, the first animated project for any of these companies with African American subjects.<sup>38</sup>

Motown Productions, a subsidiary company established by Berry Gordy to create television specials for his label's stars, produced its first specials in 1968 and 1969. Its television specials included *TCB (Taking Care of Business)*, *G.I.T. (Get It Together) on Broadway*, and *The Temptations Show* on NBC.<sup>39</sup> All these shows highlighted the talents of Diana Ross and The Temptations. In April 1971, Motown Productions produced *Diana!* A special where Diana Ross symbolically reintroduced the Jackson 5 and Michael and his brothers performed in a number of skits with Ross and Bill Cosby. During a time that historian Sharon Davis charges that Motown was at the "end of an era," the Jackson 5 re-popularized the Motown brand and name so much that in September 1971 it aired the first episode of *The Jackson Five* animated series and the television special *Going Back to Indiana*, starring the Jackson Five within five days of one another.<sup>40</sup> *The Jackson Five* cartoon was Motown Productions' first television series; its other series were *Motown Revue* (1985), *Motown on Showtime* (1985), and *Lonesome Dove* (1989). Several African American celebrities appeared on the *Going Back to Indiana* television special including Diana Ross, Rosey Grier, and Bill Cosby, who would launch his own animated series one year later. Motown Productions would go on to produce a number of other television specials including *Scott Joplin* (1977), *Motown 25: Yesterday, Today, Forever* (1983), *Motown Returns to the Apollo* (1985), and major motion pictures like *Lady Sings the Blues* (1972), *Mahogany* (1975), *The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings* (1976), *Almost Summer* (1978), *Thank God Its Friday* (1978), *The Wiz* (1978) and *The Last Dragon* (1985).<sup>41</sup>

Animator Jack Davis, of *TV Guide*, *Playboy* and *Mad* magazine fame, sketched and designed the Jackson Five characters from photographs and live-action film of the group, because he never personal met the group. His two most popular concept art illustrations of the Jackson Five, "The Jermaine Belt" and "The Performance line up" served as print advertising for the series in *TV Guide*, on *Ebony* magazine's September 1971 cover, and the group's 1971 concert tour program. The "Performance line up" print advertisement read, "Saturday Morning Comes Alive with the musical fun of the Jackson Five ... There's fun. There's music."

There's adventure. So come and watch this wacky, wonderful new animated series—based on the real-life personalities of The Jackson Five.” In 1972, Shadana Toys #5000, in conjunction with Motown Productions and Rankin/Bass released the Jackson Five board game based on the cartoon.<sup>42</sup>

The *Jackson Five* cartoon series premiered at 9:30 a.m. Eastern Standard Time, September 11, 1971, on ABC as the Jackson Five grew in popularity and maturity. Music and cultural critic Touré contends that many African Americans loved the Jackson Five because they emerged as a large, stable, talented two-parent Black family in an era when the *Moynihan Report* declared that Black families suffered from a cultural pathology and single-mother households contributed to increases in Black poverty, crime, and illegal drug use. Michael and his brothers with their “rich brown skin, broad noses and big halo of curls atop their heads at a time when the Afro was a symbol of Black pride” virtually brought young, Black consumers out into the open, rebranding Black Power as a form of capitalism.<sup>43</sup> Five months before the *Jackson Five* animated series aired, the group released their fifth album, *Maybe Tomorrow*, and four of their singles had reached the number one spot since their debut album, *Diana Ross Presents the Jackson Five*, hit shelves in 1969. In 1970, the title track of their second album, *ABC*, peaked at number one, the album reached number four on *Billboard's* Top 200, and two months later “I’ll Be There” from their “Third” album reached number one of *Billboard's* Hot 100 chart.

The series opened, as it would for two seasons, with a four-song medley of “I Want You Back,” “ABC,” “Stop the Love You Save,” and “Mama’s Pearl” playing as the merged still photographic positives and negatives of each of the Jackson Five members appeared in order by age (Michael, Marlon, Jermaine, Tito, and Jackie) and were converted to animated characters from photographs. The show’s introduction also included the frequently used dancing characters and silhouettes that became a series trademark. Each episode included some dilemma or problem usually caused by Michael or one of his three pets, an antagonist, and two songs performed by the Jackson Five.<sup>44</sup> The sun-up-to-sundown work schedules that Berry Gordy and Joe Jackson demanded of the group and the release of two solo albums by Michael, *Got to Be There* and *Ben* within seven months of each other in 1972 meant that the group could not contribute to the production of actual show. Animators often inserted recorded live-action film footage of past Jackson Five performances during an episodes’ two musical numbers, but the groups’ members were indistinguishable because of the imposition technique used in which people appear as silhouettes surrounded in high-definition patterns of color. Despite the claims to the contrary in a number of source, the Jackson Five did not provide voices for any of their animated characters instead Donald Fullilove performed voiceovers for Michael, Edmund Silvers for Marlon, Joel Cooper for Jermaine, Mike Martinez for Tito, and Craig Grandy for Jackie. Michael Jackson recalled, “We didn’t have to do anything. It was someone else’s voice. They just animated us and used our songs off the albums we recorded.”<sup>45</sup> Diana Ross performed her own voiceover in the first episode “It All Started With ...”<sup>46</sup> Although the members of the Jackson Five made no live appearances in the animated series, the Jackson Five appeared in at least five different commercials for Post Cereal’s *Alpha Bits* which aired during various commercial breaks in the course of the animated series’ two seasons.<sup>47</sup>

Since he was a child, Michael Jackson famously owned a number of pets and animators added several to the cartoon series. The family reportedly owned a number of dogs, a llama, and Michael owned a number of reptiles and rodents before he was fourteen. In the 1980s, Michael owned Bubbles the chimp, Louie the llama, Rikki the parrot, Muscles the python, a frog named Uncle Tookie, Jabbar the Giraffe, and a host of other animals including “an elephant, an alligator,” and spiders.<sup>48</sup> In the animated series Michael owned two mice, Ray and Charles (named for soul musician Ray Charles) and a pink snake named Rosie the Crusher with an affinity for Diana Ross’s music.<sup>49</sup>

A number of the cartoon’s storylines reviewed and foreshadowed events and memorable moments in the careers of Michael Jackson and/or the Jackson Five. For example, the first episode “It All Started With...” retold the Motown-manufactured story of Diana Ross’ discovery of the group with an animated twist. Michael’s snake Rosie, “who dug” Diana Ross’ music, ran away and hid in a bouquet of roses in Ross’ dressing room during her performance in Gary, Indiana. This created the opportunity for Michael and his brothers to sneak passed a security guard to find Rosie, eventually perform, and get discovered by Ross. This followed the revisionist storyline that Motown used to introduce and promote the group and explains the title of the Jackson Five’s first album, *Diana Ross Presents the Jackson Five*. As a former member of the Supremes, Ross was one of Motown’s most notable personalities however this obscures the role Gladys Knight and singer Bobby Taylor played in the groups rise to fame when Taylor introduced Joe Jackson and his sons to Motown executive Suzanne de Passe.<sup>50</sup> Episode eleven, “The Wizard of Soul,” found the Jackson 5 in a “soulful” version of L. Frank Baum’s 1900 classic *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, with Michael as the Dorothy character, Tito as the Tin Man, Marlon as the Scarecrow, Jermaine as the Lion, and Jackie as the Wizard. Michael uses his kite to drum up cheap advertising for the group and a strong wind comes along a carries him away to the Land of Soul. Michael’s pet snake Rosie stands in as a substitute for Toto and the music-hating Wicked Witch has two flying mice, Ray and Charles, which stand in for the flying monkeys.<sup>51</sup> Seven years later, in 1978, Michael Jackson, Diana Ross, Ted Ross, and Nipsey Russell starred in the film adaptation of the Broadway musical *The Wiz* produced by Motion Productions. When “Jackson Street, USA” aired, it relayed the story of the Jackson Five going to all lengths to get back to Gary, Indiana within twenty-four hours only to have mistakenly arrive a week early for street naming ceremony hosted by the mayor. Ironically, the Jackson family home was located at 2300 Jackson Street; the street is named for former President Andrew Jackson, not the Jackson Five. To sidestep the racial politics of the era, the mayor in this episode was white despite the election of Richard G. Hatcher as Gary’s first African American mayor in 1967. Hatcher’s re-naming of “Jackson Street” as “Jackson Five Blvd” during his 1971 re-election campaign and the meeting of the National Black Political Convention in Gary in March 1972 made Hatcher a symbol of localized Black political power in the post-Voting Rights Act United States.<sup>52</sup> In August 2008, Joe Jackson returned to Gary, Indiana for his eightieth birthday pre-celebration and Mayor Rudy Clay re-dedicated the corner where the former Jackson family home sits as “Jackson Family Blvd.”<sup>53</sup>

Altogether the parallels between the Jackson 5ive's or Michael's real live experiences are too many to elaborate on, episode plots blurred the line between Michael Jackson's real and imagined, past, contemporary, and future life; whether it was performing for the Queen of England and having hundreds of people copy his style of dress as in "The Michael Look,"<sup>54</sup> Michael's affinity for Charlie Chaplin as suggested in the "Never Can Say Goodbye" sequence of the "Rare Pearl" episode, or Michael's later-in-life embodiment of Barney Hoozis, an eccentric billionaire who was robbed of his childhood, dressed in disguises to go out in public, and kept himself locked away in his mansion as in the episode "Who's Hoozis?"

On occasion, the series writers adopted the formula of recasting the Jackson's in popular children's stories, fictional novels, and fairytales that traditionally contained European or European American characters. Six of the twenty-three episodes that followed this recipe included episodes seven "Cinderjackson," eleven "The Wizard of Soul," and twelve "Jackson Island" in season one and episodes two "Michael White," four "Michael in Wonderland" and five "Jackson and the Beanstalk" in season two. "Cinderjackson" marked the first appearance of Michael's wish-granting, guitar-wielding Hairy Godfather, a composite of Black rock and soul musicians including James Brown and Sly Stone. In this episode the older Jackson brothers forced Michael to stay in the hotel because he had a cold, while they went off to a ball to meet Samantha Christy, a Black film and music star dubbed the "Princess of Pop."<sup>55</sup> With Hairy Godfather's help, Michael makes it to the ball, loses his glass sneaker, but wins a date with Christy in the end. Of course in classic *Jackson 5ive* cartoon fashion, it all turns out to be a dream. "Jackson Island" is a retelling of Robert Lewis Stevens' *Treasure Island* and in "Jackson and the Beanstalk" a white used car salesman-type swindles Michael into trading Tito's car for magic beans and the group later encounters a not-so-fearsome giant. Earlier in the 1900s, three of the six adaptations had earlier been converted from children's stories into Disney classics *Snow White* (1937), *Cinderella* (1950), and *Alice in Wonderland* (1951). In his 1988 autobiography *Moon Walk*, Michael had expressed a deep admiration for Walt Disney and his amusement park and media enterprises, although Motown and Rankin/Bass executives never created a *Peter Pan* adaptation for the *Jackson 5ive* cartoon.

The *Jackson 5ive* series remained void of the more common pantheon of African American racial stereotypes, but it was not free of racist stereotypes altogether. Motown Productions vice president Jim White guaranteed the Jacksons' animated caricatures were neither stereotypical characters who "shuffled around like Stepin Fetchit," nor "white kids washed Black." According to an article in the September 1971 issue of *Ebony*, Motown executives had to "approve every aspect of the series" and they rejected a number of writers' scripts before things met their approval.<sup>56</sup> Nonetheless, a society-page editorial in an October issue of *Jet* criticized:

Although the Jackson Five animated series topped the Neilson ratings for Saturday Morning children's programs, Black viewers still felt the show could use more hand-jiving and jive talking, meaning really, don't let it look and sound like Archie and Jughead.<sup>57</sup>

This was not the only criticism of the Jackson 5ive series, *TV Guide*'s preview of the series noted that each episode "promised, or threatened—depending" on one's musical "tastes" two bubblegum-soul Jackson Five songs.<sup>58</sup>

To reinforce the idea of commodified interracial cooperation all the animated audiences in the series were interracial and included Black and white characters; some are even multiracial and included Asian American audience members. Most antagonists to the Jackson Five in the series episodes are comically threatening, but not racist white men, except when Jackie, Tito, Jermaine, and Marlon play antagonists to Michael's protagonist character. Executives at Motown Productions made sure that *Jackson 5ive* series steered clear of racist caricatures of African Americans, but animators at Rankin/Bass were not able to get away the inclusion of some of the worst caricatures of Africans or American Indians in some episodes of the animated series. "Bongo Baby, Bongo" was an episode where a baby bongo playing gorilla is taken to a circus from a zoo and the infuriated mother gorilla angrily claims Michael as a replacement until the older Jackson brothers can rescue the baby gorilla. In the song sequence of this episode one cannot help notice the physical resemblance of an animated mandrill and an animated African complete with war paint and a bone in his nose. Similarly, "It All Started With..." "Farmer Jacksons," and "Rasho-Jackson" contained blatantly racist stereotypes of American Indians. In "It All Started With ..." as the Jackson Five contemplated what they would do with their money Jackie wanted to buy a basketball team, Tito wanted to own a Rolls Royce factory, Jermaine wanted to be a famous chef, and Marlon wants to be a mad scientist. Michael's character wanted to be a cowboy and with his own cows, buffalo, wagon train, and his "own injuns." We then see Michael hopping around on one foot, dressed as and playing Indian with buckskin pants, no shirt, a double-feathered headdress and a tomahawk. Similarly, the character Running Water, in the "Farmer Jacksons" episode stereotypically speaks broken English, wears a single feather, and is out of touch with modern technology. The idea of the noble savage trapped in a struggle between modernity and traditional, but stagnant past remained a common stereotype of American Indians in the media during this period, despite the rise of the Red Power or American Indian Movement and the battles with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and natural resource corporations maneuvering to take what remained of land the United States government forced American Indians to settle or resettle.<sup>59</sup> Finally, when Tito's car runs out of gas in the "Rasho-Jackson" episode Tito is chased and shot at by Indians with bow and arrows as he roams through the mythical Wild West looking for a gas station.

The show ran for two seasons with a total of twenty-three episodes, but between 1984 and 1985 ABC rebroadcast *The Jackson 5ive* on Saturday mornings and VH1 aired some of the original episodes in 1996.<sup>60</sup> From reports in *Ebony* in 1971 and an interview with Bob Balser, who was *Jackson 5ive* series' Animation Director, it appears Motown Productions and Rankin/Bass only planned and contracted the series for a two season run. Motown Records invested less in the group as record sales slumped which forced Motown executive Ewart Abner to bark, "They already had their own cartoon, for Christ's sake. Why spend any more money on them?"<sup>61</sup> Motown Productions moved on to major motion picture productions and Rankin/Bass tried, but failed to duplicate the success of *Jackson 5ive* series with the *Osmonds* animated series.

In 1975, when the Jackson Five left Motown over debates about song writing and poor marketing, Berry Gordy used the fact that the group actually contributed nothing to the cartoon series and left a year before the contract expired in his argument for damages. While a number of illegal and unauthorized copies of the *Jackson Five* two-season series are for sale on the internet, available on YouTube, and other websites, only time will tell whether the hopes of fans clamoring for the official release of the series on DVD are fulfilled or not.

The *Jackson Five* animated series represents both a group of animated series that broke with the animated racist past and signaled the commodification and popular adaptation of Civil Right and Black Power Movement ideologies. The series laid a foundation for later animated series like the more educational *Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids* and *Mister T* (September 1983 to 1986) and equally commercial *Rickety Rocket* (ABC, 1979-1980), *Kid N Play* (NBC, 1990-1991), and *Hammerman* (ABC, September 14 to December 7, 1991). This gives Michael Jackson and the Jackson Five a permanent place in the history of race and animated film and in the memories of those reflecting on why so many remember the Man in the Mirror as the “King of Pop” music.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Jackson, *Moon Walk* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 118 and 98-99.

<sup>2</sup> “The Princess and the Frog,” <http://disney.go.com/disneypictures/princessandthefrog/> (accessed 9/1/09); M. Keith Booker and Terrence Tucker, “Superheroes and Comics,” *African Americans and Popular Culture, Vol. 3: Music and Popular Art*, ed. Todd Boyd (Westport: Praeger, 2008), 171 and 173; Aaron McGruder “handed in the final scripts” to *The Boondocks* season three on June 30, 2009, see “The Boondocks” <http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#/pages/The-Boondocks/48248794872?ref=ts>.

<sup>3</sup> “Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids,” <http://tv.msn.com/tv/series/fat-albert-and-the-cosby-kids/> (accessed 9/11/09).

<sup>4</sup> Rob Sheffield, “A New Kind of Hollywood Musical,” *Rolling Stone: Special Commemorative Issue* (2009), 76.

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<sup>5</sup> Charles V. Hamilton, “An Advocate of Black Power Defines It,” *The Rhetoric of Black Power*, ed. Robert Scot and Wayne Brockriede (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 178-179; John T. McCartney, *Black Power Ideologies: An Essay in African American Political Thought* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 112-113. Hamilton developed this definition from his original; see Kwamé Turé and Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation* (1967, New York: Vintage Books, 1992).

<sup>6</sup> In making this claim, I have expanded on the idea that “Black nation discourse is commodified in popular culture;” see S. Craig Watkins, “‘Black is Back, and It’s Bound to Sell:’ Nationalist Desire and the Production of Black Popular Culture,” *Is It Nation Time? Contemporary Essays on Black Power and Black Nationalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 190.

<sup>7</sup> Henry T. Sampson, *That’s Enough Folks: Black Images in Animated Cartoons, 1900-1960* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998), 7-11; Christopher P. Lehman, *The Colored Cartoon: Black Representation in American Animated Short Films, 1907-1954* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 9-11.

<sup>8</sup> Sampson, *That’s Enough Folks*, 2, 3, 11 and 12.

<sup>9</sup> Clyde Taylor quoted in St. Claire Bourne, *American Masters: Paul Robeson - Here I Stand*, VHS, prod. Chiz Schultz, Susan Lacy, and David Menair (Winstar, 1999).

<sup>10</sup> Sampson, *That’s Enough Folks*, 219, 220, 222, 223, 226, 227, 230, 232, 235, and 236.

<sup>11</sup> Sampson, *That’s Enough Folks*, 219-237.



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<sup>12</sup> Komozi Woodard, *A Nation Within a Nation: Amiri Baraka (Leroi Jones) and Black Power Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 64 and 67; T.V. Reed, *The Art of Protest: Culture and Activism from the Civil Rights Movement to the Streets of Seattle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 40-74.

<sup>13</sup> Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar, *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 113; Brian Ward, *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 413-414 and 416.

<sup>14</sup> Sam Durant, ed. *Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas* (New York: Rizzoli, 2007); Reed, *The Art of Protest*, 129-155.

<sup>15</sup> “Crusaders with Pen and Ink,” *Ebony* (January 1993), 36, 38, 40, and 42.

<sup>16</sup> Lehman, *The Colored Cartoon*, 121.

<sup>17</sup> Watkins, “Black is Back, and It’s Bound to Sell,” 193.

<sup>18</sup> Heather Hendershot, *Saturday Morning Censors: Television Regulation Before the V-Chip* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 193-216.

<sup>19</sup> Stuart Fischer, “The Hardy Boys” *Kids TV: The First 25 Years* (New York: Facts on File Publications, 1983), 225.

<sup>20</sup> Fischer, “Where’s Huddles?” *Kids TV: The First 25 Years*, 236-237.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0065353/usercomments>.

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<sup>22</sup> Jeff Lenburg, "The Archie Show," *The Encyclopedia of Animated Cartoon Series* (Westport, CT: Arlington, 1981), 134.

<sup>23</sup> Lenburg, "Josie and the Pussy Cats," *The Encyclopedia of Animated Cartoon Series*, 134.

<sup>24</sup> *The Beatles* animated series ran from September 26, 1965 to October 21, 1967; see "The Beatles" and "Josie and the Pussy Cats in Outer space," in Lenburg, *The Encyclopedia of Animated Cartoon Series*, 105 and 135.

<sup>25</sup> Lenburg, "The Harlem Globetrotters," *The Encyclopedia of Animated Cartoon Series*, 125.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 125-126.

<sup>27</sup> Gary H. Grossman, *Saturday Morning TV* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1981), 268-269; Fischer, "Kid Power," *Kids TV: The First 25 Years*, 271.

<sup>28</sup> Goldschmidt, *The Enchanted World of Rankin/Bass*, 107.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 107; "Kid Power Intro," [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKj\\_uNy-bss](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKj_uNy-bss). Accessed September 15, 2009.

<sup>30</sup> Lenburg, "Star Trek," *The Encyclopedia of Animated Cartoon Series*, 171; Nichelle Nichols, *Beyond Uhura: Star Trek and Other Memories* (New York: G.P. Putnam & Sons, 1994), 205.

<sup>31</sup> Lenburg, "I'm the Greatest—The Adventures of Muhammad Ali," *The Encyclopedia of Animated Cartoon Series*, 130-131; Grossman, *Saturday Morning TV*, 377.

<sup>32</sup> Grossman, *Saturday Morning TV*, 365 and 409.

<sup>33</sup> Lehman, *The Colored Cartoon*, 121.

<sup>34</sup> *The Jackson Five Show*, Episode #3 "Drafted."

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<sup>35</sup> Jackson, *Moon Walk*, 88; No photographs of the Jackson 5 giving the Black Power salute emerged during my research. Although a *Rolling Stone Magazine* article noted two times when the Jackson Five gave the salute during a return visit to Gary, see Ben Fong-Torres, “The Men Don’t Know But the Little Girls Understand,” *Rolling Stone Magazine*, Issue 81 April 29, 1971.

<sup>36</sup> Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*, 279, 395-397, 413-414.

<sup>37</sup> “New Heights for The Jackson Five: Quintet stars in TV special and cartoon series,” *Ebony* (September 1971), 127.

<sup>38</sup> “Motown Wing to Do Specials,” *Billboard* (May 1, 1971), 62; Rick Goldschmidt, *The Enchanted World of Rankin/Bass* (Tiger Mountain Press, 1999), 2-4, 11-12, 17-18, 28-31, 130-134; Pegbar Productions was Balser’s animation company housed in Estudios Moro in Barcelona, Spain. Bob Balser interview with author, October 5, 2009.

<sup>39</sup> Sharon Davis, *Motown: A History* (Guinness: Middlesex 1988), 81 and 88; Virginia Aronson, *The History of Motown* (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2001), 68 and 73.

<sup>40</sup> Davis, *Motown: A History*, 87.

<sup>41</sup> List of films, series, and special produced by Motown Productions from Virginia Aronson, *The History of Motown*, 103.

<sup>42</sup> *TV Guide* (October 9, 1971), A11; Hank Harrison, *The Art of Jack Davis* (New York: Stabur, 1987); *Jackson 5 1971 Concert Program* in author’s collection.

<sup>43</sup> Touré, “Black Super Hero,” *Rolling Stone: Special Commemorative Issue* (2009), 72.

<sup>44</sup> “Jackson Five Cartoon Set for Weekly ABC-TV Series,” *Jet* (May 6, 1971), 62.

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<sup>45</sup> Michael Jackson quoted from Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, *The Michael Jackson Tapes* (New York: Vanguard Press, 2009), 77.

<sup>46</sup> See the end credits of any episode and “New Heights for The Jackson Five: Quintet stars in TV special and cartoon series,” *Ebony* (September 1971), 127. The only difference between the first and second season introduction was the use of the words “The New.”

<sup>47</sup> Goldschmidt, *The Enchanted World of Rankin/Bass*, 103.

<sup>48</sup> Khalid Salaam, “You Are Not Alone: A Look at Mike’s love for animals,” *XXL Presents Michael Jackson* (2009), 18; Lisa D. Campbell, *Michael Jackson: The King of Pop* (Wellesley: Branden Publishing Company, 1993), 26.

<sup>49</sup> *The Jackson Five Show*, Episode #1 “It All Started With ...”.

<sup>50</sup> Berry Gordy, *To Be Loved: The Music, The Magic, The Memories of Motown-An Autobiography* (New York: Warner Books, 1994), 279; Mikal Gilmore, “Triumph & Tragedy: The Life of Michael Jackson,” *Rolling Stone: Special Commemorative Issue* (2009), 14.

<sup>51</sup> *The Jackson Five Show*, Episode #11 “The Wizard of Soul.”

<sup>52</sup> “Jackson 5 Returns Home in Mayor Hatcher Benefit,” *Jet* (February 18, 1971), 52; Robert C. Smith, *We Have No More Leaders: African Americans in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (SUNY Press, 1996), 29-85; Alex Poinsett, *Black Power Gary Style: The Making of Mayor Richard Gordon Hatcher* (Chicago: Johnson Publishing, 1970). Hatcher served from 1967 to 1987. Berry Gordy supported Hatcher financially also; see Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*, 396.

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<sup>53</sup> “Father of King of Pop Sparks Museum Talk,” *Gary Crusader*, August 9, 2008, accessed September 1, 2009, [http://www.chicagocrusader.com/Feature\\_detail.asp?ID=41](http://www.chicagocrusader.com/Feature_detail.asp?ID=41).

<sup>54</sup> Campbell, *Michael Jackson: The King of Pop*, 26.

<sup>55</sup> Michael would, of course, earn the title “The King of Pop.”

<sup>56</sup> “New Heights for The Jackson Five,” *Ebony* (September 1971), 129.

<sup>57</sup> Cordell S. Johnson, “New York Beat,” *Jet* (October 14, 1971), 63.

<sup>58</sup> “Children’s Shows,” *TV Guide* Fall Preview Issue, (September 11-17, 1971), 63

<sup>59</sup> Reed, *The Art of Protest*, 129-155. Rex Weyler, *Blood of the Land: The Government and Corporate War Against the American Indian Movement* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984); for detail on FBI repression of the Black and Red Power Movements see Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, *Agents of Repression: The FBI’s Secret War Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement* (Cambridge: South End Press, 1988).

<sup>60</sup> Goldschmidt, *The Enchanted World of Rankin/Bass*, 104.

<sup>61</sup> Ewart Abner quoted in J. Randy Taraborrelli, *Michael Jackson: The Magic, the Madness, the Whole Story, 1958-2009* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2009), 105.