

HOPE AND STRUGGLE IN THE POLICED INNER-CITY: BLACK  
CRIMINALIZATION AND RACIAL CAPITALISM IN PHILADELPHIA,  
1914-1978

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by  
Menika Belicia Dirkson  
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Examining Committee Members:

Bryant Simon, Advisory Chair, Department of History  
Lila Corwin Berman, Department of History  
Harvey R. Neptune, Department of History  
Elizabeth K. Hinton, External Member, Yale University  
Timothy J. Lombardo, External Member, University of Southern Alabama

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## ABSTRACT

During the Great Migration (1916-1970) of African Americans to the North, Philadelphia's police department, journalists, and city officials used news media to disseminate crime narratives laced with statistics and racial stereotypes of "black invasions," "urban neighborhood jungles," "roving black gangs," and the "culture of poverty" to convince the white middle-class to resist desegregation and support tough on crime policing in the inner city from 1958 to the present-day. However, African Americans experienced double victimization from the proliferation of these crime narratives. Police and journalists used crime narratives to justify the racially biased policing tactics of hyper-surveillance, daily patrols, excessive force, and incarceration against black and poor residents. Over time, city officials developed a system of racial capitalism in which City Council financially divested from social welfare programs, invested in the police department, and promoted a tough on crime policing program that generated wealth for Philadelphia's tax base and attempted to halt white flight from the city. My evidence consists of newspapers, archived news reel, municipal court dockets, census records, oral histories, interviews, police investigation reports, housing project pamphlets, and maps to demonstrate that a consequence of tough on crime policing was hyper-surveillance, the use of excessive force, and neglect by officers in the most disadvantaged areas of the city: poor, segregated, and black-inhabited housing projects and neighborhoods. Nevertheless, by looking through the lens of Philadelphia specifically, I emphasize that the budgetary strategy of a city government spending more money on policing and corrections than social welfare programs is ineffective and a form of racial capitalism which relies on criminal scapegoating, continues the cycle of poverty-

induced crime, inflates rates of incarceration and police brutality, and marginalizes poor people of color.

For my grandmother, Ada Fernella.

A dream deferred now a dream fulfilled.

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This dissertation is for all the friends, neighbors, and strangers who shared their own Philadelphia stories with me about race relations, gangs, and police at libraries, bus stops, coffee shops, offices, and even in their own homes. I am deeply thankful for their time, respect, and interest in my research. Above all, I especially thank my mom who has always been there for me and is my biggest supporter.

Lastly, this dissertation is dedicated to my maternal grandmother Ada Fernella Jarvis (née Knight). She came to the United States around March 1983 from Antigua with her sixth and youngest child at the age of forty-eight. As a black West Indian woman growing up in a traditional, patriarchal, colonial society, she was convinced into thinking that there were only two realistic options for her in life: care for her parents and younger siblings or get married and become a housewife and mother. She chose the latter, experiencing some joy but also much pain and heartache. She came to America to escape a trying marriage and create a new and better life for herself. However, her true dream was to attend college. Every day I think about what she lost and what she won, knowing that the one dream she wanted was finally accomplished through me. School has been my entire life and with the completion of this dissertation, I am more than happy that my university days are over! "Sunshine, I'm so free, livin' out my dreams," I'm ready to start the next chapter of my life and discover what new adventures and goals await me!

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## INTRODUCTION

For more than 50 years, Philadelphia's Route 33 Bus travelling from 23rd and Venango to Penn's Landing has been referred to by some SEPTA passengers as the route where you "ride at your own risk."<sup>1</sup> However, this bus route with such a stigmatized reputation gives a vivid tour of how black bodies in urban black spaces have been criminalized since the Great Migration (1916-1970).<sup>2</sup> The route begins in North Philadelphia, traversing through the low-income black neighborhoods of Nicetown-Tioga, Allegheny West, Strawberry Mansion, and North Central, until it reaches the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, located downtown in Center City.

From 1900 to 1970, these North Philadelphia neighborhoods went from being segregated and middle-class all-white spaces to hyper-segregated and impoverished all-black spaces as African Americans migrated from the South to the North following the Civil War (1861-1865) and Reconstruction (1866-1877). As black migrants gradually changed North Philadelphia's demographics over time, a slew of figures--social scientists, police, journalists, real estate agents, city officials, and everyday citizens--spread popular narratives of "moral panic" laced with racial stereotypes to resist desegregation in their community.<sup>3</sup> News media and popular culture promoted racist

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<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Perales, "Letters to the Editor: Risky Riding," *Philadelphia Daily News* (Aug 19, 1970): 29, Newspapers.com, accessed April 12, 2021, [Clipping from Philadelphia Daily News - Newspapers.com](#). Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, or SEPTA, is the public transportation system that operates in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. The opening story of this introduction is a tribute sociologist Elijah Anderson, who opened his 1999 book, *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City* with an introduction describing black street life along Philadelphia's 23 Bus route.

<sup>2</sup> Heather Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters," *Journal of American History* 97.3 (2010): 703-734. Like the Route 33 Bus, SEPTA passengers have also associated the Route 23, 16, and 54 Buses with crime, possibly because they travel through many low-income black neighborhoods in North Philadelphia.

<sup>3</sup> In this dissertation, a moral panic is defined as a widespread fear based on a contemporary narrative of an exaggerated public safety issue that is disseminated to the public through mass media, political rhetoric, and everyday word of mouth.

narratives of “black invasions,” “urban neighborhood jungles,” and uncontrollable “black crime” to trigger white fear, criminalize black people, maintain segregation, and strengthen a system of racial capitalism that relies on the exploitation of black people. Over time, these narratives influenced middle-class whites to resist their black neighbors with legalized segregation, violence, white flight, containment, hyper-policing, and incarceration to maintain a racial hierarchy in which whites socioeconomically remain at the top while blacks stay at the bottom.<sup>4</sup>

For decades, the racialized stereotypes of poverty, filth, and crime bestowed on the Route 33 Bus mirror those placed on the North Philadelphia community it serves.<sup>5</sup> Along the route, neighborhood outsiders looking into North Philadelphia find poverty, filth, and vice showcased in the existence of housing projects, abandoned homes, trash-strewn streets and vacant lots, graffitied mini markets, liquor stores, and regular police patrols. When non-residents see these elements in a black neighborhood (that look vastly different from Philadelphia’s white communities) outside of their historical context, they are at *risk* of believing a stereotypical, “single-story” about the black poor.<sup>6</sup> This “single-story” of the black poor as impoverished, dirty, immoral, and criminal is often retold by people in power who recycle racist stereotypes rooted in a social history of anti-blackness. Nevertheless, the residents become voiceless while the police, journalists, and city officials who patrol, report, and represent these neighborhoods become the most influential narrators in the city. Oftentimes these narrators inform the public about these

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<sup>4</sup> Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*, (Chapel Hill: University of Chapel Hill Press, 1983), 27.

<sup>5</sup> “SEPTA Riders Speak Out,” *Philadelphia Daily News* (Aug 8, 1983): 5, Newspapers.com, accessed April 12, 2021, [Clipping from Philadelphia Daily News - Newspapers.com](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/100000000/Philadelphia-Daily-News-1983-08-08-SEPTA-Riders-Speak-Out/).

<sup>6</sup> TED, “The Danger of a Single Story-Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie,” October 7, 2009, Video, 19:16, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9Ihs241zeg>.

black urban spaces to criminalize them and further their political and financial goals.<sup>7</sup> In Philadelphia, these goals have been (and still are) about convincing white people that jobs, homes, and crimeless streets exist in the inner-city to halt white middle-class flight to the suburbs and protect the city's tax base in times of economic downturn.

The criminalization of black bodies and black urban spaces for socioeconomic gain is not a 21st century invention. As writer Michael Hariot explained in his article, "Maybe America is Racist," it is easier to convince white people to believe racial stereotypes that portray black people as "inherently dumber, lazier, and more prone to violence" because it erases the "history of slavery, Jim Crow, redlining, voter suppression, and employment discrimination" that white people benefit from in a racial hierarchy constructed by white supremacy.<sup>8</sup> In America, racial stereotypes protect white supremacists from having a "crisis in whiteness" in which their racial privilege is denied and they must accept racial equality in the social, economic, and political realms of society.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, Hariot's argument coincides with social scientist Cedric J. Robinson's book, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* which states that racial capitalism, an economic system of inequality that thrives on racism and labor exploitation to achieve profit, requires the erasure of history to "dispossess" and "expropriate" value from a marginalize people cast as "different" from the majority that dominates a society.<sup>10</sup> In fact, Robinson argued that even when black people rebel against multiple

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<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016), 1-2.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Hariot, "Maybe America is Racist," TheRoot.com, accessed April 14, 2021, <https://www.theroot.com/maybe-america-is-racist-1846667213>.

<sup>9</sup> Amanda Taub, "Behind 2016's Turmoil, a Crisis of White Identity," NYTimes.com, accessed April 27, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/02/world/americas/brexit-donald-trump-whites.html>.

<sup>10</sup> KODX Seattle, "Robin D. G. Kelley - What is Racial Capitalism and Why Does It Matter?," November 18, 2017, Video, 1:26:46, [Robin D. G. Kelley - What is Racial Capitalism and Why Does It Matter? - YouTube](#).

forms of oppression like segregation and police brutality, the memory of their resistance is often “systematically distorted and suppressed in the service of racist, Eurocentric, and ruling-class historiographies.”<sup>11</sup> Crime narratives centered around historic racial stereotypes have particularly been used to cultivate not only division and adversarial interactions between black and white people, but also justify political and economic programs that indefinitely disadvantage, marginalize, criminalize, and stigmatize African Americans while establishing a system of white privilege and entitlement to socioeconomic resources.

In 1968, historian Winthrop Jordan explained how racial stereotypes about black people as “dirty,” “iniquitous,” “deadly,” and “wicked” were hatched as early as the 1500s. English traders and explorers like Richard Hakluyt and Richard Ligon portrayed West Africans in their journals and travel accounts as an inferior people because they were of a different ethnicity, race, and culture.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, historians like Jennifer L. Morgan have explained that racially-biased discourses were not only used to other and misrepresent Africans as socially, morally, and religiously inept, but also affirm the superiority of “white intelligence,” legitimize European intolerance of African culture, and justify black slavery in the Americas and Europe.<sup>13</sup> These authoritative white narratives about black inferiority informed the public that black people had no natural right to “life, liberty, and property” and therefore the Anglo-American concept of civil rights became inapplicable to people of African descent. Moreover, the stigma of black

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<sup>11</sup> Robinson, *Black Marxism*, 177.

<sup>12</sup> Winthrop Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812*, (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2013), 7.

<sup>13</sup> Jennifer Morgan, “‘Some Could Suckle Over Their Shoulder’: Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 54 (1997): 167-192.

inferiority these travelers and colonists cultivated in their narratives set the stage for the criminalization of black people in American society from the nineteenth century onward.

From the 1860s through the 1940s scholars, journalists, police, and public officials used biased scientific research, social statistics, and crime narratives as so-called “objective” methods to measure and document black inferiority. This data was then used to justify white supremacist agendas to contain and control African Americans following their emancipation from slavery in 1865.<sup>14</sup> As historian Khalil Muhammad explained in his book, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, physicians, naturalists, and demographers throughout the 1800s used scientific racism to prove that Anglo-Saxon and Germanic peoples had superior intellect and civility to govern society while people of African descent were inferior beings prone to idleness, vice, and crime if not forcibly ruled over and put to work. Physicians like Samuel George Morton (1799-1851) and Josiah Clark Nott (1804-1873) analyzed human skulls and conducted patient observations on white and black people to disprove the fact that individuals of different races were physiologically the same and shared a common human ancestor. Although Morton and Nott’s scientific methodology was wrought with discrepancies, their research supporting the white supremacist belief in polygenesis was published, read, and expanded upon by their contemporaries and many future scholars of the sciences and humanities.<sup>15</sup>

In the 1880s, naturalists like Nathaniel Southgate Shaler (1841-1906) described in his *Atlantic Monthly* article, “The Negro Problem” how he used scientific research and his

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<sup>14</sup> Khalil Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 8.

<sup>15</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 22-23.



personal experiences with enslaved African Americans on his family's Kentucky plantation to argue that black people posed a threat to "civilized" society because their brains were less developed than whites and their "African blood" made them unfit for "survival, labor, and citizenship" in America.<sup>16</sup> Shaler stated that although black people were "charming" and had "quick sensibilities," they were animalistic and child-like because they lacked the self-discipline necessary to control their sexual impulses, work industriously without guidance from a superior, or plan effectively for the future. Furthermore, he suggested there was a "white man's burden" in which white people had to contain and control black people with something greater than an "industrial education" and segregation or face the destruction of a "civilized" American society.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, Shaler, a Harvard College professor who taught over seven thousand students and authored numerous articles on "race relations," influenced future generations to follow in his tradition of social science and opinion-based narratives rooted in racist stereotypes and anti-blackness.<sup>18</sup>

In the 1890s, demographers like Frederick Ludwig Hoffman (1865-1946) gathered statistics from the 1870, 1880, and 1890 U.S. federal census reports along with mortuary reports from eight Southern states to analyze the "behavioral characteristics" of African Americans. Hoffman's overall goal was to evaluate how well black people survived independently from slave masters as freed people and determine whether they were able to "virtuously" overcome their "ancestral condition" by avoiding earthly vices.<sup>19</sup> In Hoffman's 1892 article for the Boston journal *The Arena*, "Vital Statistics of the Negro,"

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<sup>16</sup> Nathaniel S. Shaler, "The Negro Problem," *Atlantic Monthly* 54 (1884): 696-709.

<sup>17</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 17-18.

<sup>18</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 19.

<sup>19</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 35-36.

he argued that African Americans died at a rate twice that of whites because their poor health, “inferior constitution,” and “gross immorality” made them susceptible to tuberculosis, maternal death during childbirth, and sexually-transmitted diseases.<sup>20</sup> Throughout Hoffman’s career as a statistician, he studied the work of Nathaniel Shaler of Harvard College, General Samuel Chapman Armstrong (1839-1893) who founded the black industrial school Hampton Institute, and Alabama prison doctor Russell McWhortor Cunningham (1855-1921). Cunningham’s 1894 journal article in *The Medical News* in particular inspired Hoffman to study black criminality.<sup>21</sup>

In Cunningham’s “The Morbidity and Mortality of Negro Convicts,” he argued that his observations of hundreds of black and white male convicts’ bodies revealed that black men’s physical deficiencies and asymmetrical bodies seen in their “large stomachs and penises” made them “predisposed” to numerous diseases. Additionally, he claimed that as a prison doctor, he observed blacks to be more criminal than whites because following emancipation black people comprised five times the prison population in comparison to whites who were 99% of convicts in Alabama prior to 1865.<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, when Cunningham came to these conclusions, he ignored the fact that approximately 90% of the African American population--four million--was enslaved prior to 1865, which explains why whites fully occupied Southern prisons. Cunningham also neglected to acknowledge that post-emancipation, African Americans filled up prisons at higher rates than whites because Southern Black Codes established after slavery disproportionately incarcerated thousands of poor black men on trumped up criminal charges like vagrancy,

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<sup>20</sup> Frederick L. Hoffman, “Vital Statistics of the Negro,” *The Arena* (April 1892): 539-542.

<sup>21</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 35-36.

<sup>22</sup> R. M. Cunningham, “The Morbidity and Mortality of Negro Convicts,” *The Medical News* 64:5 (1894): 113.

interracial sex, and gambling. These black men were then filtered into the convict leasing system where they worked for months at a time in prison labor camps like Mississippi's Parchman Farm.<sup>23</sup> However, Cunningham still claimed that Alabama's laws were "impartially administered" in regard to race.<sup>24</sup>

Few physicians like Philadelphia's Eastern State Penitentiary doctor Michael Valentine Ball (1868-1945) challenged Cunningham. In Ball's 1894 response to Cunningham's article in *The Medical News*, "Correspondence: The Mortality of the Negro," he explained that working-class black people *and* white immigrants often succumbed to illnesses earlier than whites of Anglo-Saxon and Germanic descent because they experienced lifelong poverty and "unsanitary" living conditions in overcrowded communities.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, Ball stated that since black and white people were biologically the same, racial prejudice was the cause for African Americans being overrepresented in prison, not black inferiority.<sup>26</sup> Unfortunately, Hoffman's racist views of black inferiority, promiscuity, and criminality prevailed into the twentieth century with his influential 1896 publication on African Americans post-emancipation.

In Hoffman's 1896 monograph, *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, he reflected on the work of esteemed, white supremacist scholars like Cunningham and argued that black people's "self-destructive tendencies" were responsible for their promiscuity, criminality and overrepresentation in prisons, not white oppression or

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<sup>23</sup> Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 118.

<sup>24</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 43.

<sup>25</sup> M.V. Ball, "Correspondence: The Mortality of the Negro," *The Medical News* 64:5 (April 1894): 389-390.

<sup>26</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 48.

environmental factors.<sup>27</sup> Many of Hoffman's contemporaries accepted his findings because he described himself as an outsider from Germany who had no personal connections to slavery or racial discrimination against African Americans like many other whites in his field. Hoffman's statistical research later inspired his employer, Prudential Insurance Company of America, to charge African Americans higher premiums for life insurance than white people because they accepted his racially-biased data describing black people as unhealthy and prone to illness.<sup>28</sup> Hoffman's research also encouraged scholars to collect biased crime statistics to justify disproportionate arrest and incarceration rates between blacks and whites. Moreover, Hoffman's work influenced future scholars in Sociology and Anthropology to use statistics to support the racist stereotype that people of Anglo-Saxon and German ancestry were superior to the people of African, Asian, Hispanic, Eastern European and Southern European descent.

In focusing on anti-blackness in the twentieth century, Muhammad's *Condemnation of Blackness* articulates how the racialization of street crime by scholars and the media effected the method in which different racial groups were stereotyped and policed in Philadelphia. As 6.6 million African Americans migrated North during the Great Migration looking for wartime jobs and affordable housing, social Darwinists documented the "peculiarity and heightened rate" of black crime in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. The goal of these eugenicists was to convince white Northerners to resist integration with blacks.<sup>29</sup> Whites who feared social competition with blacks for

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<sup>27</sup> Frederick L. Hoffman, *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, (New York: American Economic Association, 1896), 217-234.

<sup>28</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 42.

<sup>29</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 10.

jobs, housing, mates, and schools thrived on biased crime data because it justified their right to criminalize, police, and imprison blacks at higher rates than whites.<sup>30</sup>

Muhammad's meticulous research, focused heavily on Philadelphia through the 1940s, further explains that when race-conscious social scientists highlighted the arrival of the "Negro Problem" to the North, many white government and community officials began to view crime committed by blacks and whites differently. Following the Great Migration, Irish, Italians, Polish, and other non-Anglo Saxon whites who were once stigmatized as biologically vulnerable to criminal behavior were later viewed as victims of an unequal society who committed an individual failure and required charitable "redemption and rehabilitation" in a settlement house or Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).<sup>31</sup> Conversely, society viewed African Americans as having a racially inborn defect that made them susceptible to crime and requiring imprisonment as a penalty. However, black social scientists like Anna J. Thompson and W.E.B. DuBois countered those claims with statistical data arguing that crime among blacks and whites occurred at similar rates and for reasons such as inescapable poverty.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, this continuation of the stereotypes of black inferiority, brutality, and criminality by eugenicists and social Darwinists during the Progressive era sparked the hyper-policing and mass arrests of African Americans in cities including Philadelphia.

Muhammad's work on the criminalization of black people was so influential that historians of the pre- and post-World War II era expanded on his theme by investigating how news media, police, and the criminal justice system have used adultification bias to

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<sup>30</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 247.

<sup>31</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 9.

<sup>32</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 165-166.

justify the tough on crime policing and incarceration of black youth. In historian Tera Eva Agyepong's book *The Criminalization of Black Children: Race, Gender, and Delinquency in Chicago's Juvenile Justice System, 1899–1945*, she explains how Progressive era reformers created the first Juvenile Court in Chicago in 1899 with the mission to rehabilitate youth who committed crime. However, prejudice and racial discrimination played a role in the institution implementing different treatment for white and black children.<sup>33</sup>

From 1899 to 1945, black youth were increasingly criminalized through inflated crime statistics and news stories all while an influx of Southern black migrants were moving North during the Great Migration. Juvenile institutions justified rehabilitation for white youth from poor and immigrant families because juvenile court officials equated the children's "whiteness" with "childhood innocence."<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, black youth were often strictly disciplined, beaten, and tried as adults in court because juvenile officials in reformatories and the courts viewed their "blackness" as the cause of their "deviancy," which could not be reformed.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, her research highlights how criminalized blackness took precedence over youth when social reformers confronted juvenile delinquency among African Americans.

While Agyepong's research focuses on the criminalization of black youth in Chicago, her monograph reflects a national trend common in several major urban cities during the Great Migration. In historian Carl Suddler's book, *Presumed Criminal Black Youth and*

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<sup>33</sup> Tera Eva Agyepong, *The Criminalization of Black Children: Race, Gender, and Delinquency in Chicago's Juvenile Justice System, 1899–1945*, (Chapel Hill: University of Chapel Hill Press, 2018), 9.

<sup>34</sup> Agyepong, *The Criminalization of Black Children*, 13-14.

<sup>35</sup> Agyepong, *The Criminalization of Black Children*, 90.

*the Justice System in Postwar New York*, he argues that from the 1930s through the 1970s, police, city officials, juvenile institutions, and journalists use inflated crime statistics and news stories to criminalize black youth and promote a tough on crime program against African Americans in Harlem.<sup>36</sup> Since the 1930s, police stigmatized the black neighborhood of Harlem as a crime-ridden area threatening New York City. Journalists portrayed Harlem as a place filled with jobless adults and “broken homes” where children lacked a father figure. These accounts along with biased crime statistics led to tough on crime policing. Over the decades, police sought to control and contain crime in Harlem by preemptively sending additional police patrols to the area, which inevitably led to inflated crime rates and black residents facing increased police harassment. The police department also organized the Police Athletic League (PAL) to steer black youth away from crime.<sup>37</sup>

Following WWII, many African Americans who served in the military received benefits from the GI Bill which enabled them to move out of all-black communities like Harlem to live in other neighborhoods in New York, desegregating them. However police, journalists, and city officials criminalized black youth in the city through different methods, which kept black children in close contact with the criminal justice system. Police implemented preventative crime techniques like stop and frisk to get guns off the streets, while journalists and government officials like Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia (1934-1945) portrayed black youths as “gang members” and “hoodlums” whose criminal

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<sup>36</sup> Carl Suddler, *Presumed Criminal: Black Youth and the Justice System in Postwar New York*, (New York: New York University Press, 2019), 7.

<sup>37</sup> Suddler, *Presumed Criminal*, 26-27.

behavior originated from excessive freedom and a culture based on “religion and sex.”<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, Suddler explains that although African Americans and community activists from organizations like the YMCA, the Harlem Youth Citizens’ Council (HYCC) and even sports teams like the Brooklyn Dodgers fought to end juvenile delinquency in the black community, black youth were often surrounded by a “cycle of crime” because they were born into an environment shaped by racial discrimination and discriminatory policing.<sup>39</sup>

While many historians have analyzed how African Americans have been criminalized throughout the twentieth century, there are scholars like Elizabeth K. Hinton who have connected the political usage of stereotypical crime narratives in the 1960s to tough on crime policing initiatives that contribute to mass incarceration and racial capitalism in the present-day. In Hinton’s book *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America*, she argues that conservative and liberal politicians under Lyndon B. Johnson’s Presidential Administration sought a transition from the War on Poverty to the War on Crime in 1965 because of urban uprisings, gang violence, juvenile crime, and illegal gun sales throughout the country.<sup>40</sup> The federal government supported major cities with grants for anti-gang programs and job training for juveniles under the Law Enforcement Assistance Act (LEAA) of 1965. However, pressing concerns about crime and the gradual gains from rehabilitative programs for “inner city” youth encouraged federal and local politicians to increase spending on police departments, military tanks, and other tough on crime policing initiatives. One narrative

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<sup>38</sup> Suddler, *Presumed Criminal*, 81.

<sup>39</sup> Suddler, *Presumed Criminal*, 123.

<sup>40</sup> Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 1-4.



that reflected the racial stereotype of black criminality and inspired a call to action against black idleness and crime was Harvard University's president-emeritus James B. Conant's 1961 description of unemployed and frustrated black youth as "potential social dynamite."<sup>41</sup>

Conant, who was a chemist and not a social scientist, suggested to policymakers at a May 1961 conference that the government assist black youth in getting jobs or they could fall into delinquency and rioting in major urban cities.<sup>42</sup> News columnist and anti-segregationist Ralph McGill spread the term "social dynamite" across national media and it triggered politicians to advocate and establish social programs for urban youth of color like Job Corps and Head Start.<sup>43</sup> However, the federal government later transitioned from a War on Poverty to a War on Crime when by 1964 approximately 250 uprisings occurred across the country following numerous incidents of police brutality against African Americans in cities like New York and Jersey City. The federal government's tough on crime initiatives involved offering major cities, where African Americans were at least 33% of the population, LEAA grants for not only anti-poverty and anti-crime programs for youth, but also new surveillance technology and "military-grade weapons" for police departments.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 29-30.

<sup>42</sup> In this dissertation, a riot refers to unjustified violence, murder, and reckless destruction of public and private property to further an immoral cause such as maintaining segregation, hate crimes, and other forms of racial intimidation to oust "undesired" people from a community. An uprising refers to justified violence as a form of active protest to bring awareness to social issues and spark immediate and positive change in a community. An uprising can occur in response to a moral issue like police brutality and involve the destruction of property to make the voices of the marginalized minority heard by the majority.

<sup>43</sup> Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 27.

<sup>44</sup> Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 29.

Additionally, some social scientists continued to produce data accepting the theory that poverty begot crime, but also embracing the racial stereotypes of black inferiority and criminality. Furthermore, their biased research bolstered greater support for the War on Crime than the War on Poverty because it convinced policymakers that a rise in urban black crime was inevitable because African Americans were inherently “culturally deficient.”<sup>45</sup> In the 1960s, social scientists like sociologist and Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan conducted studies on black families and youth that reflected a core belief in the “social pathology” of African Americans. In Moynihan’s 1965 publication *The Negro Family: The Case For National Action*, popularly known as the *Moynihan Report*, he suggested that black immorality was responsible for higher rates of “female-headed households,” unemployment, teen pregnancy, and high school dropouts among blacks than whites.<sup>46</sup> Although the Moynihan Report acknowledged that racial discrimination had a partial role in the marginalization of African Americans in “slums,” Moynihan suggested that cultural inferiority was also to blame. According to his research, when blacks migrated from rural to urban cities, the first and second generations struggled to transition into their new environment. As a result of black people’s difficulty to settle into their new community, they engaged in “drunkenness,” “crime,” and “juvenile delinquency.”<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, Moynihan’s findings suggested that the federal government had a white man’s burden in helping African Americans live a

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<sup>45</sup> Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 38.

<sup>46</sup> United States Department of Labor Office of Policy Planning and Research, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Print, 1965), 16-37.

<sup>47</sup> United States Department of Labor, *The Negro Family*, 17.

stable life with proper education and jobs or watch black youth fall into criminality and inevitably incarcerate them.

Throughout the 1970s, social scientists like anthropologist Walter B. Miller collected biased statistics and observations of “black gangs” in neighborhoods and schools in Philadelphia, Chicago, and Los Angeles. His work highlighted higher rates of juvenile delinquency among blacks than whites and emphasized the racial stereotype of black criminality.<sup>48</sup> Miller, who worked with Moynihan at Harvard-MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies during the 1960s, had research conclusions similar to Moynihan on the issue of juvenile delinquency among youth of color. In Miller’s 1975 publication, *Violence by Youth Gangs and Youth Groups as a Crime Problem in Major American Cities*, he acknowledged that gang activity among youth of color was a product of poverty because juvenile delinquency was “concentrated in low-income ghettos.” However, Miller suggested that youth of color, specifically black and Latino children, were inherently criminal because in his opinion most gang activities in non-white neighborhoods and schools were “non-criminal” but becoming more violent and dangerous.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, Miller’s research not only described black gangs as an imminent threat to urban cities over time, but also criminalized both black bodies and hyper-segregated black urban spaces as inseparable entities requiring police intervention.

Furthermore, politicians received the justification they needed from social scientists to spend hundreds of millions of dollars militarizing police departments and defund social

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<sup>48</sup> Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 269-270.

<sup>49</sup> AP, “Youth gangs seen growing threat,” *The Morning Call* (May 1, 1976):4, Newspapers.com, accessed April 27, 2021, [Clipping from The Morning Call - Newspapers.com](#).

welfare programs benefiting poor people of color because race-based statistics, observations, and crime narratives convinced them that the “culture of poverty” influenced black juvenile crime.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, Hinton’s book demonstrates that this practice has resulted in the double victimization of urban low-income black communities. Black communities are not only criminalized because of the statistics and crime narratives police, journalists, and politicians share with the public, but also the harmful public policies of government divestment from social programs, excessive force from a militarized police force, and stricter criminal sentences that negatively affect African Americans from those communities.

Most recently, urban historians like Eric C. Schneider have not only acknowledged statistical data documenting actual crime in black communities, but also offered a contextual interpretation of black life that counters racial stereotypes and explains why there is vice and crime in hyper-segregated low-income black neighborhoods. According to Schneider, black communities have become synonymous with crime because there is a complex history of these neighborhoods that explains how racial discrimination, violence, crime, and masculinity have played a role in the high rates of murder in Philadelphia’s hyper-segregated black communities from World War II to the early 1980s.<sup>51</sup> Through Schneider’s use of transcripts from 195 criminal court trials for homicide in Philadelphia and his incorporation of research from sociologists and criminologists, he refutes theories suggesting that African Americans and their culture are inherently violent. Although Southern black migrants came from a rural society with entrenched racial violence from

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<sup>50</sup> Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 2.

<sup>51</sup> Eric C. Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide: Race, Place, and Space in Postwar Philadelphia*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), ix.

white supremacist groups like the Ku Klux Klan, their culture of survival did not make them more likely than Northerners to commit crimes like murder.<sup>52</sup> Instead, he explains historically how high murder rates in marginalized black communities are a result of generations of social inequality that create an environment where life is uncertain and murder is performed as self-protection from physical violence and dishonor in the public and private spheres of society.

In *The Ecology of Homicide*, Schneider argues that segregation and ghettoization during the postwar created the ecology for homicide to thrive in low-income African American neighborhoods. During WWII, African Americans migrating to Philadelphia looking for wartime industrial jobs were funneled into segregated neighborhoods. Government housing policies maintained residential segregation in the city and white resistance to desegregation in the form of race riots and white flight made neighborhoods hyper-segregated.<sup>53</sup> After WWII, African Americans were excluded from factory jobs when private enterprises, un beholden to wartime production demands, offered positions to returning white soldiers seeking jobs despite civil rights protests for equal opportunity employment. Deindustrialization, financial disinvestment, and the reduction of legitimate employment in black neighborhoods made room for “vice markets” of illegal drugs,

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<sup>52</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 1-2.

<sup>53</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, xvi. In this dissertation, desegregation refers to neighborhoods naturally becoming racially heterogeneous when new migrants arrive to all-white communities under their own volition and free of political, legal, or social motives to make change. Integration refers to a premeditated, strategic plan to diversify an all-white neighborhood to further political, legal, or social motives, like pursuing a civil rights lawsuit to challenge restrictive covenants for homes and ending legalized segregation.

alcohol, gambling, prostitution, and numbers games to “flourish” and inevitably bring residents in close contact with police.<sup>54</sup>

Black people were more likely than white people to carry weapons like knives and guns for self-protection because of underpolicing in their neighborhoods, racial violence when travelling through all-white neighborhoods, the existence of poverty-induced crime, and their mistrust of a racially-biased criminal justice system.<sup>55</sup> Since black men had little control over their access to secure employment and financial stability, they “exercised” their masculinity through violence when they faced confrontations in the street and at home that threatened their social reputation. Moreover, murder was not only about self-protection, but also asserting one’s manhood through the display of dominance over adversaries who challenged their masculinity, such as friends, domestic partners, romantic rivals, police, and strangers.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, this scholarship on the criminalization of black people in urban spaces sets the stage for new research on how police, journalists, and city officials have used crime narratives about black people to stigmatize neighborhoods and housing projects highly populated by poor African Americans and expropriate value from them through tough on crime policing.

### **A New Intervention: Racial Stereotypes, Criminalized Bodies, and Racial Capitalism**

In this dissertation, my contribution to the historiography on the criminalization of African Americans is a monograph on how police, journalists, and city officials used

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<sup>54</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 6.

<sup>55</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 6-10.

<sup>56</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 28.

crime narratives featuring anti-black stereotypes to promote tough on crime policing against African Americans beyond the post-World War II era. This dissertation builds on the scholarship of historians, sociologists, and criminologists to explain how crime narratives influenced white backlash to desegregation and the formation of poor, marginalized, and over-policed black communities in urban postwar cities. The result of the public's consumption of these narratives was hyper-segregation, the stigmatization of black neighborhoods, the adultification of criminal black youth, and tough on crime policing. This race and class-based tough on crime program against African Americans as a group and later as individuals was justified and city-financed because of their mythologized identity of racial inferiority, slum residency, and criminality.

Furthermore, in this dissertation I argue that during the Great Migration (1916-1970) of African Americans to the North, Philadelphia's police department, journalists, and city officials used news media to disseminate crime narratives laced with statistics and racial stereotypes of "black invasions," "urban neighborhood jungles," "roving black gangs," and the "culture of poverty" to convince the white middle-class to resist desegregation and support tough on crime policing in the inner city from 1958 to the present-day. However, African Americans experienced double victimization from the proliferation of these crime narratives. Police and journalists used crime narratives to justify the racially-biased policing tactics of hyper-surveillance, daily patrols, excessive force, and incarceration against black and poor residents. Over time, city officials developed a system of racial capitalism in which City Council financially divested from social welfare programs, invested in the police department, and promoted a tough on crime policing program that generated wealth for Philadelphia's tax base and attempted to halt white

flight from the city. My evidence consists of newspapers, archived news reel, municipal court dockets, census records, oral histories, interviews, police investigation reports, housing project pamphlets, and maps to demonstrate that a consequence of tough on crime policing was hyper-surveillance, the use of excessive force, and neglect by officers in the most disadvantaged areas of the city: poor, segregated, and black-inhabited housing projects and neighborhoods. Nevertheless, by looking through the lens of Philadelphia specifically, I emphasize that the budgetary strategy of a city government spending more money on policing and corrections than social welfare programs is ineffective and a form of racial capitalism which relies on criminal scapegoating, continues the cycle of poverty-induced crime, inflates rates of incarceration and police brutality, and marginalizes poor people of color.

While crime narratives about African Americans are less racially stigmatizing today, these narratives are still used to support tough on crime policing in major urban cities like Philadelphia. Crime narratives facilitate a system of racial capitalism that promotes the expropriation of value from low-income black communities, condones police brutality to prevent black crime, and heaps countless socioeconomic and judicial benefits onto militarized police departments at the expense of everyday citizens. Moreover, the overall goal of this dissertation is to be more than fodder for academic discussions on race and policing in America. My hope is that this monograph sparks a moral imperative in city officials, police, journalists, policymakers, and everyday citizens to rightfully upend structures of social inequality such as poverty, mass incarceration, and the policing system.



## CHAPTER 1

### **“THE GREAT ‘INVASION’: BLACK MIGRATION AND RACIAL PREJUDICE IN THE ERA OF *THE BIRTH OF A NATION*, 1914-1935”**

“The purpose of racism is to control the behavior of white people not black people. For blacks, guns and tanks are sufficient.” -Otis Madison, “Confronting Racism,” January 1997<sup>57</sup>

On November 2, 1914, 28-year-old James H. Teagle, the “colored” chauffeur for City Controller John Walton, left his trinity house at 215 S. Delhi Street to move into a home in Cobbs Creek at 6112 Spruce Street with his white wife Laura and mother-in-law Aurelia Jones.<sup>58</sup> Although Teagle knew that residential segregation existed and was strongly enforced by white residents in Philadelphia, he chose to leave South Philadelphia where there were unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions for a better life in West Philadelphia. The next day, a white mob gathered outside their home and broke their windows and demanded the family “vacate immediately.” What Teagle didn’t know was that he was set up. Charles Horn, a white man, sold Teagle the house in retaliation for his fellow white neighbors getting an injunction against him for running a gasoline engine in his cellar.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Cedric J. Robinson, *Forgeries of Memory and Meaning: Blacks and the Regimes of Race in American Theater and Film Before World War II*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 82.

<sup>58</sup> “Teagle’s White Wife the Cause of Trouble at 60th and Spruce Streets,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (Nov. 14, 1914): 5, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed September 15, 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/530719412?accountid=14270>. A trinity house, also known as a bandbox house, was an attached, two or three-story townhouse under 1000 square feet with a winding staircase and each floor containing one room. Today, Philadelphia’s “rowhomes” are the closest likeness to a bandbox home of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

<sup>59</sup> “West Phila. House Stoned,” *Evening Public Ledger Philadelphia* (Nov. 5, 1914), [ChroniclingAmerica.loc.gov](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045211/1914-11-05/ed-1/seq-4/;mode=full), accessed December 20, 2012, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045211/1914-11-05/ed-1/seq-4/;mode=full>.

On November 4, another white mob of approximately one thousand people surrounded the Teagle home.<sup>60</sup> Unfortunately, Teagle was not home and his family was left unprotected as he went to work. The white mob taunted the family and then men and women from the crowd encouraged white boys from the neighborhood to attack the home. Soon people began to throw sticks, bricks, and stones at the house. One youth used an axe to shatter the glass on the front door.<sup>61</sup> The stoning of the Teagle house damaged window panes and furniture, and injured Teagle's mother-in-law who was knocked unconscious by a stone or brick that came through a window. Around 8 PM, Teagle arrived home and upon seeing the riot he called the police. When police from the 18th District at 55th and Pine Streets arrived on the scene, they dispersed the mob but made no arrests. Two days later, the Teagles agreed to move and their white neighbors raised money to purchase their home and pay for the damages made by the white mob.<sup>62</sup>

Following the neighborhood ousting of the Teagle family, the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) investigated the riot and came to the conclusion that the Teagles were not solely attacked because Teagle was a black man who moved into their all-white neighborhood. His white neighbors also despised him because of his interracial marriage.<sup>63</sup> The NAACP offered to provide legal and emotional support for Teagle, but he rejected their findings, refused to pursue a legal suit, and later moved into an apartment at 1929 N. 19th Street, located in a predominantly

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<sup>60</sup> "West Phila. House Stoned."

<sup>61</sup> "Police Stop Raid on Colored Household," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Nov. 6, 1914): 6, Newspapers.com, accessed September 15, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/57798145/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>62</sup> "To Reimburse Negro," *Evening Public Ledger Philadelphia* (Nov. 6, 1914), *ChroniclingAmerica.loc.gov*, accessed December 20, 2012, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045211/1914-11-06/ed-1/seq-14/?mode=full>.

<sup>63</sup> "Teagle's White Wife the Cause of Trouble at 60th and Spruce Streets."

black neighborhood in North Philadelphia. According to the *Philadelphia Tribune*, the NAACP dissolved the potential case at Teagle's request and activists from the organization wrote Teagle off as a "Jack Johnson" who wanted to remain uninvolved in antiracist protest and moved on to pursue other legal cases involving middle-class African American families attempting to desegregate all-white residential communities.<sup>64</sup>

The attack on the Teagles wasn't the first time that a white mob in Philadelphia stoned a black home.<sup>65</sup> With the arrival of thousands of black migrants from the Great Migration (1916-1970) looking for homes and jobs, white sentiments of anti-blackness along with rumored myths of black criminality and "invasion" into white neighborhoods sparked many more incidents like this through the 1960s.<sup>66</sup> In the early twentieth century, Philadelphia was a city segregated by race and class. With the gradual emergence of the black middle-class, African Americans began to move away from the slums and into adequate housing in all-white neighborhoods for a chance at a better life. However, racial outbursts of violence like the 1914 white "gang" riot outside of the Teagle family's West Philadelphia home forced many African Americans back into the impoverished slums which they fought to avoid. Prior to World War II (1941-1946), white segregationists utilized three main tactics to impede black occupancy in all-white neighborhoods, which historian James Wolfinger describes as "organized violence, restrictive covenants, and flight to the suburbs." In addition to these three narratives, white residents relied on racist

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<sup>64</sup> "Teagle's White Wife the Cause of Trouble at 60th and Spruce Streets." Jack Johnson (1878-1946) was an African American professional boxer who was known for his interracial marriages to white women and his lack of racial solidarity with the black community in his personal life and throughout his career. The *Philadelphia Tribune* is a black newspaper published in Philadelphia since 1884.

<sup>65</sup> "Another Outrage in Quaker City," *The New York Age* (Nov. 11, 1914): 5, Newspapers.com, accessed September 15, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/57803651/the-new-york-age/>.

<sup>66</sup> Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North*, (New York: Random House, 2008), 225.

stereotypes of African Americans as prone to “poverty, crime, and sexual promiscuity” to justify their resistance to desegregation.<sup>67</sup>

Following the American Civil War (1861-1865), the trope of a “black invasion” arose out of the Reconstruction era (1866-1877), as once-enslaved African American families were migrating in groups to new locations throughout the country and desegregating formerly all-white residential communities, especially major urban cities in the North like New York, Chicago and Philadelphia. African Americans who challenged the racial order of segregation during the Jim Crow (1896-1968) era were viewed by white segregationists as an invading, criminal force that needed to be contained, surveilled, and policed. From 1905 to 1915, white supremacist literature and film mythologized black people as racially inferior and inherently criminal while also celebrating white mob vigilante groups like the Ku Klux Klan that “protected” white supremacy in American society. The 1915 film, *The Birth of a Nation*, spread racist propaganda that convinced white citizens and police to view groups of black migrants and residents as threats to not only racial purity and segregation, but also public safety in the North. Moreover, from 1914 through 1935, white segregationists, police, and realtors capitalized on *The Birth of a Nation*-inspired stereotype of a “black invasion” to resist desegregation and encourage white flight when discriminatory laws and mob violence proved ineffective in impeding the Great Migration of African Americans into Philadelphia.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> James Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided: Race and Politics in the City of Brotherly Love*, (Chapel Hill; University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 2.

<sup>68</sup> This process of white resistance to black migration and residential desegregation coincides with historian Kevin Kruse’s argument (described in his 2006 book, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*) that white flight was a “political revolution” involving violence, fleeing, and then cultivating suburban areas to be racially homogenous and exclusive communities for white people.

## Philadelphia: A Segregated City of Neighborhoods

In the nineteenth century, Philadelphia was a city of diverse ethnicities, particularly with many being foreign-born and working-class white ethnics fleeing famine, political unrest, and religious persecution in their home countries. Among all the ethnicities present in the city, “old-stock” Philadelphians of English and German descent had ancestors who lived in America for more than seven generations. German Americans specifically, had been in the Philadelphia area since the 1600s, when Germantown was established as a community for German immigrants, especially those tied to religious organizations such as the Quakers and Lutherans.<sup>69</sup> By the 1860s and lasting until the 1890s, the Irish, who had first started coming to Philadelphia to escape the Potato Famine, were the largest immigrant group in the city as their population grew from 16.9% to 41%.<sup>70</sup> From 1870 to 1960, most city blocks in Philadelphia were segregated by race, class, and ethnicity. North, West, South, and Central Philadelphia were highly populated by white immigrants or native-born citizens whose families had been in America for three to seven generations.<sup>71</sup>

Although Philadelphia was home to predominately Anglo-Saxons and Irish, several other European descendants resided in the city.<sup>72</sup> In North Philadelphia, there were Irish, Eastern European, and Jewish enclaves in Kensington and Port Richmond where the

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<sup>69</sup> Judith Callard and Germantown Historical Society, *Images of America: Germantown, Mount Airy, and Chestnut Hill*, (Philadelphia: Arcadia Publishing, 2000), 7.

<sup>70</sup> Sandy Hingston, “What Two Centuries of Census Records Taught Us About Philadelphia,” *Philadelphia Magazine* (Jan. 18, 2020), PhillyMag.com, accessed January 25, 2021, <https://www.phillymag.com/news/2020/01/18/philadelphia-census-records/>.

<sup>71</sup> Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided*, 17.

<sup>72</sup> Nathaniel Burt and Wallace E. Davies, “The Iron Age, 1876-1905” in *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982), 471-523. In 1900, Philadelphia’s Irish population was the third largest in the country after Boston and Providence.

proliferation of synagogues, kosher meat markets, and Jewish-owned businesses made the area colloquially known as “Jewtown” and “Jerusalem.”<sup>73</sup> In the center of the city, “The Tenderloin,” located within the borders of 6th and 12th Streets and Callowhill to Arch Streets, encompassed Chinatown where Asian Americans as early as 1870 fled the racial violence of the Driving Out on the West Coast to create a new life in a segregated area near Skid Row, a “vice district” known for its “burlesque houses,” “gin joints,” and flophouses.<sup>74</sup> In West Philadelphia, there were majority Irish residents who lived in the “Top” beyond 52nd Street, while African Americans lived within the borders of 32nd to 40th Streets and Market Street to Powelton Avenue in an area known as the “Black Bottom.” In South Philadelphia, there were Italian, Irish, Jewish, Polish, and Lithuanian residents living in conditions as diverse as “one-story white houses with ducks, pigs, and chickens in “The Neck,” located south of Moore Street and between the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers, to tar paper shacks surrounded by “unpaved roads, pig farms, trash dumps, and outdoor toilets” in the Southwest known as “The Meadows.”<sup>75</sup>

Neighborhoods outside of these locations, like Germantown, Mount Airy, and Chestnut Hill, usually housed Philadelphians of English and German descent.<sup>76</sup> These neighborhoods were also stratified by class. In Germantown alone, the neighborhood was divided into three class distinct areas. “Dogtown” referred to the upper edge between

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<sup>73</sup> Ron Avery, “As Neighborhoods Change, So Do the Names,” *Philadelphia Daily News* (Jan. 2, 1991): 6, Newspapers.com, accessed September 17, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/51578816/philadelphia-daily-news/>.

<sup>74</sup> Kali N. Gross, *Colored Amazons: Crime, Violence, and Black Women in the City of Brotherly Love, 1880-1910*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 81. From the 1860s through the 1910s, Philadelphia’s downtown region was known as the “center of the city.” By the 1920s, the downtown area was referred to as “Center City” in newspapers by advertising companies and journalists to identify the central area of the city for suburbanites looking for work in Philadelphia.

<sup>75</sup> “As Neighborhoods Change, So Do the Names.”

<sup>76</sup> Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided*, 16.

Upsal and Johnson Streets where “proud dog owners” lived in single and multi-family homes. “Smearsburg” (named after smearcase, a German-style cottage cheese) was known as a working-class area south of Penn Street. And “Brickyard” referred to a blue-collar community at the lower edge (bordering Nicetown) at Germantown and Wister Avenues where businessman Samuel Collum operated his brickmaking facility near the Reading Railroad train station, Wayne Junction.<sup>77</sup>

As early as the 1890s, African Americans from southeastern states like North and South Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia steadily travelled to Philadelphia, often by train, for better employment, housing, and educational opportunities while also escaping the debt-inducing poverty of the sharecropping system, segregation, and racial violence from white supremacist groups like the Ku Klux Klan.<sup>78</sup> When working-class African Americans arrived in Philadelphia, they often lived in tenements, shacks, and rowhomes in segregated, all-black neighborhoods or side by side with white immigrant families in South and North Philadelphia where housing was affordable, crowded, and located in “undesirable” locations, often near dockyards, rivers, and swampland.<sup>79</sup> Similar to native-born black Philadelphians, black migrants acquired services jobs in white-owned businesses or employment at industrial centers like railroads, shipyards, and steel companies where they were traditionally given the dirtiest jobs, paid less than their white counterparts, and sometimes blocked from joining unions.<sup>80</sup> As “old-stock” working-

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<sup>77</sup> “As Neighborhoods Change, So Do the Names.”

<sup>78</sup> V.P. Franklin, “Operation Street Corner: The Wharton Centre and the Juvenile Gang Problem in Philadelphia, 1945-1958” in *W.E.B. DuBois, Race, and the City: The Philadelphia Negro and Its Legacy*, eds Michael B. Katz and Thomas J. Sugrue, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 195-218.

<sup>79</sup> John F. Bauman, “Black Slums/Black Projects: The New Deal and Negro Housing in Philadelphia,” *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 41.3 (July 1974): 310-338.

<sup>80</sup> Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided*, 127.

class whites gained upward social mobility by acquiring jobs as policemen, firemen, and watchmen, white immigrants like the Irish and Italians, and African Americans competed for the jobs in the construction of brickwork, bridges, and railroads and domestic labor they left behind. Nevertheless, “old stock” politicians gave ethnic privilege to Irish and Italian Americans by gradually promoting them through the ranks of government in areas like city council and the police department.<sup>81</sup>

Although black migrants left the Jim Crow South to escape racial segregation, racial and class biases awaited them in the North. However, some white immigrants also encountered segregation, employment discrimination, and economic exploitation too because their foreign origin and culture were viewed as a stigma of “otherness.” Nevertheless, many migrants and immigrants, white and black, relied on social welfare institutions like settlement houses to provide them assistance with housing, employment, healthcare, education, and recreation that kept them out of poverty, homelessness, and criminality.<sup>82</sup> As early as the 1880s, black and white activists in Philadelphia were concerned about the existence and effects of poor housing on newcomers to the city, particularly African Americans. Since homes in the city’s black neighborhoods were often dilapidated and exorbitantly priced, black churches, settlement houses, and local philanthropists often worked with community activists and professionals trained in the health and social sciences to improve the quality of life for black residents of the slums.

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<sup>81</sup> Burt and Davies, “The Iron Age, 1876-1905,” 488.

<sup>82</sup> Khalil Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 128.



These organizations and activists were not able to eradicate the slums, but they provided charitable outreach to African Americans who sought out their help.<sup>83</sup>

As early as 1880, banker and philanthropist Theodore Starr purchased a lot on Saint Mary Street in South Philadelphia, built several homes, and sold them to African Americans at a low cost.<sup>84</sup> Starr's initiative influenced Susan Parrish Wharton, a Quaker philanthropist and graduate of Vassar College, to establish the Octavia Hill Association in 1888 with her cousin Helen Parrish to renovate dilapidated homes to rent and sell to poor and working-class black families at an affordable rate.<sup>85</sup> In 1893, Wharton and several other social reformers established the Whittier Centre in South Philadelphia, a settlement house that offered social programs to help recent black migrants from the South adjust to their new life in Philadelphia. Among the social welfare services offered at the Whittier Centre included affordable and decent housing programs, tuberculosis testing and treatment, and financial savings clubs facilitated by black staff who were professionally-trained social workers and medical officials.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, these social services offered by philanthropists and social workers, medical officials, and community

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<sup>83</sup> Franklin, "Operation Street Corner," 197.

<sup>84</sup> Franklin, "Operation Street Corner," 197. Historians like Khalil Muhammad and Saidiya Hartman have also discussed in their research the charity work settlement houses like the Wharton Centre did for black migrants in North Philadelphia. However, V.P. Franklin's 1998 article was a precedent for their scholarship. Franklin's article is based on boxes of archival documents on the Wharton Centre and its impact on the black community from 1930 through the 1960s. His scholarship on the Wharton Centre's founding and anti-gang program "Operation Street Corner," is a foundational text on the role settlement houses played in attempting to improve slum communities.

<sup>85</sup> Franklin, "Operation Street Corner," 197. Aside from organizing a neighborhood library and a housing program for black residents in Philadelphia, in 1895 Susan Parrish Wharton initiated arrangements for W.E.B. DuBois to investigate black life in the city's Seventh Ward with sponsorship from the University of Pennsylvania.

<sup>86</sup> Franklin, "Operation Street Corner," 198-200.

activists enabled black migrants to adjust to their new life in Philadelphia despite the difficulties they encountered in housing, employment, and healthcare.

### **The Origins of Prejudice: Black Migration and the Social Impact of *The Birth of A Nation***

At the start of the twentieth century, blackness and poverty became social stigmas often equated with immorality and crime. In sociologist W.E.B. DuBois' 1899 monograph, *The Philadelphia Negro*, he discussed the competing theories of nature versus nurture in regard to the "submerged tenth," a term coined by English theologian William Booth in his 1890 book, *In Darkest England, and the Way Out*, referring to the bottom tenth of the population that remained entrenched in poverty.<sup>87</sup> DuBois argued that the intersecting stigmas of blackness and poverty led to stereotyping African American residents of South Philadelphia's Seventh Ward as inherently vulnerable to vice and crime. From August 1896 to December 1897, DuBois, with the help of his assistant Isabel Eaton, conducted 5,000 interviews, mapped landmarks and social institutions, and administered questionnaires to residents of the Seventh Ward, an area bordered by Spruce Street to the North and South Street to the South and extending from the Schuylkill River east to 7th Street.<sup>88</sup> Through his research he determined that there was no "Negro Problem" where poor black people were a threat to the morality and safety of society. However, as DuBois explained in the final chapter of his monograph, "ignorance, poverty, crime, and the dislike of the stranger" were factors supporting white racism

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<sup>87</sup> William Edward Burghardt Du Bois and Isabel Eaton, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1899), 311-314.

<sup>88</sup> Stephen McGrail, "Philadelphia Negro (The)," *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*, (2013), accessed September 17, 2020, <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/philadelphia-negro-the/>.

against African Americans through socioeconomic inequality, housing discrimination, and racial violence that created conditions in which black people fell into poverty, illiteracy, vice, and crime.<sup>89</sup> Nevertheless, he concluded that while there were African Americans who engaged in crime, black people were not inherently immoral or criminal because of their race, as naturalists, eugenicists, and Social Darwinists of the time used pseudoscience to argue as fact.<sup>90</sup> These racist myths encouraged many outside of the “submerged tenth” to view the poor (who were often black) as threats to middle-class and all-white communities, which resulted in residents of different races and classes using the law and violence to strengthen residential segregation in their neighborhoods.<sup>91</sup>

When race riots like the two-day riot that occurred outside of James Teagle’s West Philadelphia home in 1914 sparked up in Philadelphia over residential desegregation, they were iterations of the “Negro Problem” originally popularized in white supremacist and lawyer Thomas Dixon Jr.’s 1905 book, *The Clansman: A Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan*.<sup>92</sup> Teagle and his middle-class, interracial family embodied the fears detailed in Dixon’s novel because Teagle challenged the established racial hierarchy of his community by engaging in residential desegregation, interracial marriage, and property ownership that made him equal to whites. Dixon’s novel, which sold over a million copies nationwide, subscribed to the Dunning school interpretation of the Civil War which argued that although the war was a “Lost Cause” for Southerners, the Confederate States of America (CSA) fought gallantly to defend slave owners’ state right

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<sup>89</sup> Du Bois and Eaton, *The Philadelphia Negro*, 385.

<sup>90</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 33.

<sup>91</sup> Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 68-69.

<sup>92</sup> Thomas Dixon Jr., *The Clansman: A Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan*, (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1905), 182.

to enslaving African Americans as their property.<sup>93</sup> Dixon himself was the son of a former North Carolina slave owner and his childhood experiences of witnessing his father and uncle retaliate against the social reforms of Reconstruction by participating in Klan parades and the lynchings of alleged “black [male] rapists” of white women shaped the plot of his novel.<sup>94</sup> Although Dixon was born in 1864 as the Civil War drew to a close, he was a Confederate sympathizer. Dixon believed the uncontrollably large population of freed African Americans were too racially inferior to be granted civil rights and should have been relocated to Africa because in his opinion, “no amount of education of any kind, industrial, classical or religious, can make a Negro a white man or bridge the chasm of centuries which separate him from the white man in the evolution of human nature.”<sup>95</sup> Moreover he believed that Anglo-Saxon and Germanic people were racially superior to all other races and white supremacist vigilantes like the Ku Klux Klan were the only organizations that could forcefully restore the racial order that existed during slavery.

*The Clansman* portrayed white Southerners during the Reconstruction era as oppressed by formerly enslaved African Americans whose “savage” and “uncivilized” nature as a group predisposed them to violent crimes like rape, robbery, and murder. Throughout the novel, Dixon demonstrated how “insane” he thought the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments were by depicting “Radical Republicans” as irresponsible for empowering black people to vote and hold public

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<sup>93</sup> The Dunning school of historiography was based on the historical interpretation of Columbia University professor of History, William Archibald Dunning (1857–1922).

<sup>94</sup> Raymond A. Cook, *Thomas Dixon*, (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1974), 68.

<sup>95</sup> Samuel K. Roberts, “Kelly Miller and Thomas Dixon Jr. on Blacks in American Civilization,” *Phylon* 41.2 (2nd Qtr., 1980): 202–209.

office.<sup>96</sup> In addition to the novel's portrayal of the white supremacist's fear of "black rule" in government and "black supremacy" in society, the book highlighted the imagined threat of incompetent African American and Republican-led congresses passing laws beneficial to blacks, particularly the legalization of interracial marriage. At the conclusion of the novel, white supremacy is restored when the Ku Klux Klan arrives on horses wearing white hooded sheets to physically force African Americans out of public office and back into a life of second-class citizenship where their rights and privileges as free people would be controlled and contained by legal segregation under the Jim Crow era.<sup>97</sup> Nevertheless, one of the underlying themes of Dixon's book was the fear of black people "invading" and controlling white society.

Following the publishing of Dixon's book in 1905, white resistance to black migrants moving into white neighborhoods not only happened in Philadelphia, but in other Northern cities across the country. From as early as 1909 to 1931, news reporters from New York, Baltimore, and Chicago described how the influx of middle-class black families into all-white middle-class communities was a "black invasion" that triggered lawsuits, white rioting, and white flight. For example, in 1910, educator of phrenology Adena C. E. Minott bought a house at 121 W. 136th Street in an all-white neighborhood of Harlem to house black students from her school, the Clio School of Mental Sciences.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Stephen Johnson, "Re-Stirring an Old Pot: Adaptation, Reception and the Search for an Audience in Thomas Dixon's Performance Text(s) of *The Clansman*," *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film* 34.2 (December 2007): 4-46.

<sup>97</sup> Dixon, *The Clansman*, 315-317.

<sup>98</sup> "Black Invasion of Harlem Stirs Up Bitter Feud," *The Evening World* (Dec. 15, 1911): 19, Newspapers.com, accessed April 29, 2021, [Clipping from The Evening World - Newspapers.com](#). Adena C.E. Minott (1879-1955) was a Jamaican-born scholar, author, and activist who studied phrenology, physiology and psychology. In 1906, she founded the Clio School of Mental Sciences and in 1910 she operated as the institution's principal. In 1921, she earned her doctorate in Metaphysics from the College of Metaphysics in St. Louis. She was a member of a Colored Women's Club which participated in social activism which included anti-lynching campaigns and care for aging African Americans. Additionally, she

According to a journalist from *The Evening World* who covered the story in the 1911 article, “Black Invasion of Harlem Stirs Up a Bitter Feud,” 600 white members of the Harlem Property Owners’ Protective Association spent a year trying to “oust” Minott from the neighborhood. The organization pursued lawsuits against Minott and members pledged to not rent or sell their homes to African Americans for fifteen years. However, Minott overcame those challenges with support from the New York branch of the NAACP. The NAACP later created a vigilance committee to file a lawsuit against the property owners’ association to guarantee African Americans the right to purchase homes on 132nd and 139th Streets in Harlem.<sup>99</sup>

On March 4, 1922, black principal Harry T. Pratt and his family moved into a “solid white” block at 527 Stanford Place in Baltimore. Three days later, a group of white neighbors carrying bricks and pistols attacked the Pratt home, shattering its windows, unhinging the front door, and splattering ink on its marble steps.<sup>100</sup> Like Teagle, Pratt’s white neighbors used violence to convince him and his family to leave the neighborhood so that the white residents who opposed desegregation would not have to move out or risk real estate agents devaluing their home’s property value.

And in March 1923, two white Chicagoans, identified as “Yanker” and “An Evader” in the *Chicago Tribune*, wrote letters to the editor detailing how the “invasion” of black migrants from the South to white neighborhoods in Chicago inspired them to move

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was often featured in the black newspaper, *New York Age*, where editors highlighted her business and activist endeavors.

<sup>99</sup> “Black Invasion of Harlem Stirs Up Bitter Feud.”

<sup>100</sup> “Baltimore Resents Negro in White Block,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (March 8, 1922): 1, Newspapers.com, accessed April 29, 2021, [Clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer - Newspapers.com](#).

elsewhere.<sup>101</sup> In Yanker's letter, "Moving," he described himself as a "white man" who moved four times in six years (with plans to move again) to "evade the black invasion" of the Southside.<sup>102</sup> In An Evader's letter, "Race Irritation," the author complained that African Americans were moving to all-white residential communities all over Chicago.<sup>103</sup> An Evader further stated that other non-Anglo Saxon groups have stayed in their own communities like Chinatown and Little Italy, but African Americans refuse to settle completely in the Black Belt located on the Southside of Chicago. An Evader summed up the letter in protest for segregation stating, "If the Negroes would pick a certain section of the city and stay there, all this argument would be passe. Instead, they keep up their invasion of the white neighborhoods, north, south, east, and west."<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, both authors, who read newspaper articles laced with racist narratives of black migration, were convinced that African Americans were encroaching upon their communities and white people had to resist in any way possible. Moreover, the white residents across the country who evolved from anti-desegregation lawsuits and riots to white flight facilitated the process of inner-city neighborhoods gradually becoming hyper-segregated prior to World War II.

Additionally, some white journalists who covered news stories about racial desegregation were highly vocal about their resentment regarding the gradual migration of middle-class black families into all-white neighborhoods throughout the country. As one journalist from *The Birmingham News* explained in his 1918 article about a reported

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<sup>101</sup> Yanked, "Moving," *Chicago Tribune* (March 3, 1923); 6, Newspapers.com, accessed April 29, 2021, [Clipping from Chicago Tribune - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>102</sup> "Moving."

<sup>103</sup> An Evader, "Race Irritation," *Chicago Tribune* (March 3, 1923); 6, Newspapers.com, accessed April 29, 2021, [Clipping from Chicago Tribune - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>104</sup> "Race Irritation."

incident of white resistance to black neighbors in South Philadelphia, “A Different Black Invasion,” black migrants had no right to “impose” on whites in cities like Philadelphia and “invade” districts “long occupied” by the white community.<sup>105</sup> The author further argued that white people had a right to “indignant protest” or riot against their black neighbors because the “consequences” of accepting racial desegregation were a “bad feeling, depreciation of real estate values, and an increase of lawlessness.” The underlying sentiment in this article was that black people were inherently criminal regardless of their character, social status, or profession. Since African Americans themselves were racially stigmatized as criminals, the spaces they occupied were also marked as criminal areas. Furthermore, the author concluded that white residents should use armed resistance to prevent their neighborhoods from becoming “a perfect haven for the most disreputable negroes” or look forward to their communities becoming desegregated, financially devalued, criminal spaces where “dope-smoking, crap-shooting, gun-fighting, razor-cutting, and joy-riding” were commonplace.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, the news reports of lawsuits, riots, and white flight were examples of how false crime narratives laced with racial stereotypes persuaded some white people to fear and resist desegregation in neighborhoods and to a greater extent, schools and government where middle-class black people would eventually populate if they lived in the same communities with white people.

On February 8, 1915, D.W. Griffith’s film, *The Birth of a Nation*, based on Dixon’s 1905 novel, was released into theaters across the nation. By 1920, approximately 50

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<sup>105</sup> “A Different Black Invasion,” *The Birmingham News* (Sept. 5, 1918): 8, Newspapers.com, accessed April 28, 2021, [Clipping from The Birmingham News - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>106</sup> “A Different Black Invasion.”



million people saw the propaganda film.<sup>107</sup> Similar to *The Clansman*, Griffith's 193-minute film offered viewers a Confederate apologist's recollection of Reconstruction. In the silent film, Republican politicians and educators, referred to derogatively as "carpetbaggers," were portrayed as "swarms from the North" intending to "beguile and use the negroes," to pursue public office.<sup>108</sup> African Americans were parodied by white actors who made a minstrel of slave plantation stereotypes in blackface to depict black men as "brutes" attempting an "overthrow of civilization in the South" by occupying government positions and romantically pursuing white women who desperately chose suicide over interracial marriage to black men. The Ku Klux Klan was portrayed as heroes who rose into existence to "protect the southern country" under the objective of "self-preservation" for white men.<sup>109</sup> The overarching goal of *The Birth of A Nation* was to visually portray Reconstruction as an era of social decline in which only white vigilantes like the Ku Klux Klan could rescue white society from desegregation, racial equality, and miscegenation following the prohibition of slavery in 1865. Moreover, like Dixon's *The Clansman*, the propaganda film justified the use of violence to prevent specifically African Americans, but also non-white immigrants (who could not identify as an Anglo-Saxon Protestant) from exercising their civil right to voting, property ownership, fair wages, and holding public office.

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<sup>107</sup> Craig D'Ooge, "The Birth of a Nation': Symposium on Classic Film Discusses Inaccuracies and Virtues," *Library of Congress*, (June 24, 1994), accessed March 11, 2021, ['The Birth of a Nation' \(June 27, 1994\) - Library of Congress Information Bulletin \(loc.gov\)](#).

<sup>108</sup> Andrew Leiter, "Thomas Dixon, Jr.: Conflicts in History and Literature," *Documenting the American South*, accessed March 11, 2021, [Thomas Dixon, Jr.: Conflicts in History and Literature by Andrew Leiter \(unc.edu\)](#).

<sup>109</sup> Woodrow Wilson, *A History of The American People*, (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1902), 306.

The racist propaganda depicted in *The Birth of A Nation* cast black men as a threat to the “civilized,” racially-homogenous white society. As *The Birth of A Nation* reached audiences nationwide, white supremacists marketed the film as historical truth while black activists demanded censorship for the photoplay’s “libelous” racial representations and its ability to “incite” racial violence against African Americans.<sup>110</sup> The film was not only screened at theatres, but even at the White House. On February 18, 1915, President Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921) publicly endorsed the racist message of *The Birth of A Nation* when he hosted a screening of the film in the East Room of the White House for his family and friends. Wilson, who was a friend of Thomas Dixon Jr. since 1884 when they attended graduate school together at Johns Hopkins University, even allegedly praised the film based on Dixon’s novel as: “history written in lightning. And my only regret is that it is all so terribly true.”<sup>111</sup> Nevertheless, when Wilson gave *The Birth of A Nation* a positive review as president of the United States and as an academically-trained historian, he not only encouraged Americans to accept the photoplay as a factual interpretation of American history, but also emboldened other political figures to risk sparking racial tension and publicly offer their seal of approval for the film as well.

Across Pennsylvania, city officials were concerned about how citizens, white and black, would react to the film’s release in theaters. In Harrisburg, Mayor Ezra S. Meals was so worried about African Americans disapproving of the film’s denigrating portrayal of black people and instigating race riots that numerous politicians from majority-white

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<sup>110</sup> “Negroes Raise Film Fund: \$500 Collected at Mass-Meeting to Fight Photoplay,” *Evening Public Ledger* (Sept 27, 1915): 4, Newspapers.com, accessed March 3, 2021, [Clipping from Evening Public Ledger - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>111</sup> Alexis Clark, “How ‘The Birth of a Nation’ Revived the Ku Klux Klan,” *History.com*, (July 29, 2019), accessed March 11, 2021, <https://www.history.com/news/kkk-birth-of-a-nation-film>.

cities like Wilkes-Barre and New Castle submitted open letters to express acclaim for the photoplay.<sup>112</sup> In the *Harrisburg Daily Independent*'s nearly full-page, February 1916 article, "'Birth of A Nation' Wins Praise of Many Mayors," numerous mayors commended *The Birth of A Nation* for its "historical accuracy" and "educational" nature while also alleging that the photoplay caused no "racial disturbance" in their city, even when African Americans viewed it in theaters. In Shamokin, Mayor Drumheiser wrote an open letter to Mayor Meals attempting to convince Meals to permit theater screenings of the photoplay in the state's capital by arguing that there was nothing racist about the film's portrayal of black leadership during Reconstruction as "disastrous":

The 'Birth of a Nation' caused only favorable comment here. There are black heroes as well as white heroes, and white villains as well as black villains. It attacks not the negro race but the corrupt and scheming politician who seeks to use the ignorance and cruelty in men. Every good citizen ought to see it and learn its lesson.<sup>113</sup>

Similar to the other Pennsylvania mayors featured in the article, Drumheiser's denial of the racially provocative material in *The Birth of A Nation* was not only powerful because of his government position, but also because he knew that if African Americans in Shamokin were to publicly protest the film they would be outnumbered and resisted by white residents and police because his city's population was approximately 98% white.

In Philadelphia, where nearly 6% of the population was black, African Americans protested the 1915 release of *The Birth of A Nation* in local theaters. In September 1915, African American residents, businessmen, ministers, day laborers, community activists, and some of their white allies held several mass protests outside Forrest Theatre and

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<sup>112</sup> "'Birth of A Nation' Wins Praise of Many Mayors," *Harrisburg Daily Independent* (Feb 5, 1916): 14, Newspapers.com, accessed February 20, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/68927133/harrisburg-daily-independent/>.

<sup>113</sup> "'Birth of A Nation' Wins Praise of Many Mayors."

Olympia Theatre, both located in the center of the city.<sup>114</sup> According to journalists from Philadelphia's newspaper, the *Evening Public Ledger*, the demonstration at Forrest Theatre turned into a "near riot" while the protest at Olympia Theatre triggered a community meeting on pursuing legal censorship of the film.<sup>115</sup> On September 21, a group of demonstrators surrounded the Forrest Theatre to protest the showing of *The Birth of A Nation*. The demonstration soon turned violent when someone threw a brick through the theatre's window and the police later arrived at the scene with revolvers and batons. The demonstration ended with the protestors fleeing from the theatre and police officers chasing after them, especially when a few demonstrators tossed milk bottles at the patrolmen as they ran down the street.<sup>116</sup> On September 26, a group of over 1000 protestors gathered outside Olympia Theatre to demand censorship of the photoplay. The next day, the *Evening Public Ledger* announced that a group of African American community leaders had a meeting with former Pennsylvania Senator John A. Sheatz where they raised \$500 to finance a "legal fight" against the showing of the film in local theaters.<sup>117</sup> Nevertheless, these protestors resorted to public demonstrations and legal suits because they were concerned about the public image of black people in *The Birth of A Nation* and how its racist propaganda could negatively affect their relationship with white residents and the police in Philadelphia.

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<sup>114</sup> Joseph A. Gambardello, "How Philly came to call its downtown 'Center City,'" *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Inquirer.com, (May 14, 2019), accessed March 2, 2021, <https://www.inquirer.com/news/philadelphia/center-city-philadelphia-history-downtown-name-20190514.html>. In 1915, the Forrest Theatre was located at Broad and Walnut Streets while the Olympia Theatre was located at Broad and Bainbridge Streets in the downtown area of Philadelphia.

<sup>115</sup> "Negroes Raise Film Fund: \$500 Collected at Mass-Meeting to Fight Photoplay."

<sup>116</sup> Cara Caddoo, "The Birth of A Nation, Police Brutality, and Black Protest," *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, Normal Vol. 14.4, (Oct 2015): 608-611.

<sup>117</sup> "Negroes Raise Film Fund: \$500 Collected at Mass-Meeting to Fight Photoplay."

The popularity of *The Birth of A Nation* helped spark a revival of the Ku Klux Klan (1915-1944) when membership rose from 3,000 to three million nationwide by 1918.<sup>118</sup> The revival of the Ku Klux Klan triggered by the film inevitably inspired white segregationists to use violence like the Klan to deny African Americans equal opportunities to quality housing not only in the South, but also in the North. The film demonstrated how white mob violence could function as a tool to maintain racial hierarchy by policing the color line. Moreover, *The Birth of A Nation*'s negative depiction of African Americans as a racially-inferior, dangerous group of people provided white residents, police, and realtors the justification they needed to maintain residential segregation by any means necessary.

### **“We Intend to Keep This Neighborhood White”: White Residents Resisting Black Migrants**

From 1900 to 1935, white segregationists noticed the migration of thousands of Southern blacks to Philadelphia and responded with not just violence, but also laws enforcing residential segregation. In 1910, Philadelphia's population was nearly 1.5 million and residents of European descent were the racial majority living in distinct ethnic enclaves in South, North, and West Philadelphia. The population of specifically white ethnic immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe steadily increased into 1930.<sup>119</sup> In 1920, Philadelphia's Russian community was the largest immigrant group due to Jews escaping pogroms in the Soviet Union. By 1930, the Italian immigrant population in Philadelphia was significant following war along with political and social unrest associated with the Risorgimento (unification of Italy from 1848 to 1871) when it

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<sup>118</sup> “How 'The Birth of a Nation' Revived the Ku Klux Klan.”

<sup>119</sup> “What Two Centuries of Census Records Taught Us About Philadelphia.”

increased from 5% to 9.3% in twenty years. Prior to the Great Migration, Philadelphia's black population was small in comparison to that of the entire white immigrant community from 1900 to 1920, although it increased from 4.9% to 7.3% over the span of ten years.<sup>120</sup>

When the United States became involved in World War I (from 1917-1918), the war triggered the First Great Migration (1916-1930), in which 1.6 million African Americans were inspired to leave the entrenched racism of the rural South and relocate to Northern industrial cities like Philadelphia looking for wartime jobs and decent, affordable housing. From May 1916 to May 1918 alone, over 15,000 black migrants arrived into the city at a rate of approximately 150 people per week. In the Summer of 1918, over 8,000 African Americans migrated into the city within three months.<sup>121</sup> As African American migration to Philadelphia continued, profit-seeking landlords capitalized on segregation by offering recent black migrants slum shacks and bandbox houses, often converted into tiny apartments, in exclusively black neighborhoods that were overpriced, overcrowded, and in desperate need of repair.<sup>122</sup> In South Philadelphia, where many migrants first settled, tenement homes were overcrowded, expensive, and lacked modern amenities. Journalists often wrote exposés on the numerous tenement homes along Lombard, Rodman, and Iseminger Streets where multiple families lived in buildings with stagnant water, dark rooms, crumbling walls, winding stairs, and no baths.<sup>123</sup> Despite the decrepit

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<sup>120</sup> "What Two Centuries of Census Records Taught Us About Philadelphia."

<sup>121</sup> Charles Hardy III, "Historical Overview," *The Great Migration: A City Transformed*, accessed March 11, 2021, <https://greatmigrationphl.org/node/24>.

<sup>122</sup> Bauman, "Black Slums/Black Projects," 312-316.

<sup>123</sup> Harry B. Webber, "Slum Profits in Philadelphia Run into Huge Profits Often Bringing 100 Percent Return," *Philadelphia Tribune* (April 18, 1935): 12, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed September 17, 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/531361881?accountid=14270>.

conditions of these tenements, many landlords made 100 to 200 percent profit each year by overrating the rental price for rooms. For example, in 1935, a 100-room tenement house with no baths at 219 Lombard Street had a real estate value of \$4,000, but the landlord earned approximately \$10,400 a year with 50% occupancy by renting rooms at \$4 a week!<sup>124</sup>

When African Americans attempted to move into all-white neighborhoods, municipal segregation zoning ordinances usually banned “black occupancy” into those communities until the Supreme Court made the practice unconstitutional in 1917.<sup>125</sup> When city ordinances were inapplicable, racist white residents protested the arrival of black neighbors with cross burnings, arson, bombings, and stonings at the homes of black families.<sup>126</sup> By the 1920s, restrictive covenants found in the home deeds of nearly every new private housing development built between 1920 and 1948 barred African Americans from living in white neighborhoods.<sup>127</sup> These restrictive covenants consisted of overtly classist and racist clauses requiring homeowners to prohibit multiple-family housing, restrict household animals like pigs and chickens some rural migrants owned to maintain their livelihood, and ban home rentals and sales for non-white people, such as “Africans, Negroes, Ethiopians” and to a lesser extent, “Asians, Mexicans, and Jews.”<sup>128</sup> To make matters worse, federal housing policies established during the Great Depression (1929-1941) declared that racial homogeneity existed in new developments, while real estate agents protected the right of developers and homeowners who desired racially-

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<sup>124</sup> “Slum Profits in Philadelphia Run into Huge Profits Often Bringing 100 Percent Return.”

<sup>125</sup> Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, 202.

<sup>126</sup> Stephen Grant Meyer, *As Long as They Don't Move Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods*, (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 219.

<sup>127</sup> Meyer, *As Long as They Don't Move Next Door*, 202-211.

<sup>128</sup> Meyer, *As Long as They Don't Move Next Door*, 229.

segregated neighborhoods by “steering blacks into racially mixed or all-black neighborhoods.”<sup>129</sup>

In addition to the anti-black sentiment and violence in desegregated neighborhoods, profound racial tension between African Americans and the police developed in Philadelphia’s all-black and integrated neighborhoods as early as the 1920s.<sup>130</sup> In social worker Anna J. Thompson’s 1926 report, “Survey of Crime among Negroes in Philadelphia” she described how the over-policing of black communities in the 1920s resulted in the overrepresentation of African Americans in arrest records and penal institutions. During a six-month period in 1924, African American males comprised 20.5% of arrested individuals even though they made up only 3.7% of the city’s population.<sup>131</sup> One third of these arrested black men were later “released and charged with no crime due to lack of evidence,” because police raids in places like South Philadelphia’s Seventh Ward often involved the false arrest of innocent men who lived near criminal suspects. Her investigation also found discrepancies in the arrest records, such as the documents never identified repeat offenders. Thompson concluded that racial bias was prevalent among the white police force since “unwarranted police arrests were based on suspicion alone,” especially when the contentious relationship between Irish police officers and black Philadelphians was a popular “joke” in City Hall.<sup>132</sup>

Throughout the Great Depression (1929-1939), decrepit private housing for working-class African Americans worsened until many slum homes and apartments collapsed,

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<sup>129</sup> Meyer, *As Long as They Don’t Move Next Door*, 229.

<sup>130</sup> Karl E. Johnson, “Police-Black Community Relations in Postwar Philadelphia: Race and Criminalization in Urban Social Spaces, 1945-1960,” *The Journal of African American History*, 89.2, African Americans and the Urban Landscape (Spring, 2004): 118-134.

<sup>131</sup> Johnson, “Police-Black Community Relations in Postwar Philadelphia,” 120.

<sup>132</sup> Johnson, “Police-Black Community Relations in Postwar Philadelphia,” 120.



often resulting in the deaths of children and adults. In addition to tragedies such as these, the eyesore of urban blight encouraged numerous city, religious, and charity-based committees to vigorously petition the local and federal governments to raze slums, fund public housing projects, and designate neighborhoods available for the building of those developments.<sup>133</sup> The obvious solution to derelict but expensive private housing for black residents would have been government regulation and enforcement of fair and decent private housing in integrated neighborhoods. Unfortunately, many middle-class blacks desired separation from class stigmas and some whites despised living near working-class African Americans. Furthermore, those who opposed new neighbors of a lower-class status or different race either moved to “better” neighborhoods or rejected the establishment of public housing in their communities.<sup>134</sup>

From the 1930s to 1960s, the National Association of Real Estate Boards (NAR) doubled-down on the use of restrictive covenants to maintain segregation in residential areas. The NAR’s issued an ethical guidelines brochure to realtors instructing them to *never* “introduce into a neighborhood a character of property or occupancy, members of any race or nationality, or an individual whose presence will be clearly detrimental to property values in a neighborhood.”<sup>135</sup> Furthermore, realtors, home developers, and homeowners were strongly advised to prevent African Americans from possessing homes in white neighborhoods, because doing so would create “blight” in white enclaves. This sentiment undoubtedly likened prospective African American residents to bootleggers, gangsters, and madams of prostitution.

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<sup>133</sup> Bauman, “Black Slums/Black Projects,” 323-329.

<sup>134</sup> Bauman, “Black Slums/Black Projects,” 331-336.

<sup>135</sup> Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, 229.

By 1937, the federal government's passage of the Wagner-Steagall Act granted Philadelphia \$20 million in federal funding for the creation of housing projects under the New Deal (1933-1938) after several years of public outcry and protest, anti-New Deal politicians' efforts to hinder the program, and broken promises of federal funding.<sup>136</sup> Under the Wagner-Steagall Act, blacks *and* whites could benefit from public housing if they were part of "families whose incomes are so low that they cannot afford adequate housing provided by private enterprise." On August 6, 1937, the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) was established under the Housing Authorities Law of Pennsylvania and given the authority to "clear slum areas and to provide safe and sanitary dwellings through new construction or rehabilitation of existing structures."<sup>137</sup> As developers built housing projects throughout the city for working-class families unable to afford decent private housing, occupancy in these developments mirrored the racial segregation of the surrounding community. To add insult to injury, housing projects constructed specifically for African Americans were not only erected in the heavily populated black neighborhoods of North Philadelphia, but also patronizingly named after accomplished black figures, like the James Weldon Johnson Homes at 25<sup>th</sup> and Ridge and the Richard Allen Homes at 9<sup>th</sup> and Poplar, to *contain* working-class black people in neighborhoods isolated from white society.<sup>138</sup> Although the Wagner-Steagall Act of 1937 provided many African Americans a way out of the slums by facilitating the creation of public housing in Philadelphia, some middle-class black families were financially secure enough to

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<sup>136</sup> Bauman, "Black Slums/Black Projects," 330.

<sup>137</sup> "Overview of Philadelphia's Post World War II Public housing projects and the Philadelphia Housing Authority."

<sup>138</sup> "Overview of Philadelphia's Post World War II Public housing projects and the Philadelphia Housing Authority."

purchase their own home, learned how to circumvent discriminatory housing laws, and chose to move into all-white neighborhoods, particularly in North and West Philadelphia.

### **“A Horde of Negro Families Demand Decent Housing”: Blockbusting, Panic Selling, and White Flight**

In the 1930s, not all black families experienced violent backlash from their neighbors in all-white communities like James Teagle’s family did in 1914. Some black families witnessed white flight from their neighborhood block after they settled into their new home. When the Great Migration brought black migrants from the South into Philadelphia’s inner-city communities surrounding Center City, many white residents moved out to all-white neighborhoods on the margins of the city in a phenomenon historian James Wolfinger describes as the “black core–white periphery form of many of America’s postwar cities.”<sup>139</sup> White real estate agents, who knew how to profit from segregation and desegregation, noticed the demand for housing “went sky high” and catered to black families who had the money to rent and buy homes in any neighborhood the families desired.<sup>140</sup> As a result of black settlement in all-white neighborhoods, white families panicked and sold their home to realtors at a price below market value and moved to another racially homogenous community. It wasn’t overcrowding that initiated this pre-World War II white flight, but racial prejudice against African Americans (like the narratives about black primitivism and criminality presented in *The Birth of A Nation*)

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<sup>139</sup> Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided*, 2.

<sup>140</sup> Harry B. Webber, “Slums No Accident Claims Tribune Housing Investigator,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (March 14, 1935): 20, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed March 11, 2021, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/slums-no-accident-claims-tribune-housing/docview/531409300/se-2?accountid=14270>.

because the suburbanization of counties outside of Philadelphia with new and affordable housing had not occurred until the postwar era.<sup>141</sup>

For example, in 1900, the 32nd Ward of North Philadelphia in the area bounded by Norris Street to the North and Montgomery Avenue to the South and extending from 19th Street east to 18th Street, was an all-white neighborhood. Among the 200 English, German, and Irish American families that lived there, the only African Americans who resided there were nineteen servants in private households. By 1930, at least 50% of the neighborhood contained African American families, many of whom were working-class renters from the Carolinas, Virginia, Maryland, Mississippi, and West Virginia.<sup>142</sup>

Twenty-nine-year-old Riley Posey, a laundryman from South Carolina, was one of these newcomers who rented a house for his wife Lelia and son Melvin at 1949 N. 19th Street for \$26 per month. Among the new arrivals to the neighborhood were also black people with middle-class status who could afford to purchase their own home instead of renting from a landlord. Music teacher John M. Boiling, his wife Edna, and their six children moved from South Philadelphia to a home at 1927 N. 19th Street, which the family purchased for \$6000 (approximately \$90,863 today). Another black family new to the area was Randolph Thompson, a Virginia-born construction worker and World War I veteran, and his wife Ethel who moved from Southwest Philadelphia to a home at 1813 Berks Street which they purchased for \$5000 (approximately \$75,719 today).<sup>143</sup> Other

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<sup>141</sup> Allison Shertzer and Randall Walsh, "Why US cities are segregated by race: New evidence on the role of 'white flight,'" Voxeu.org, (May 19, 2016), accessed March 11, 2021, <https://voxeu.org/article/segregation-us-cities-new-evidence>.

<sup>142</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*, Ancestry.com, 1930 United States Federal Census [database online]. Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>143</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*, Ancestry.com, 1930 United States Federal Census [database online]. Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>. Both John M. Boiling and

new black homeowners in the 32nd Ward were 34-year-old real estate agent Elizabeth A. Madison of 1815 Berks Street, 61-year-old roofer William Stewart and his 52-year-old wife Leenma of 1945 N. 19th Street, and 41-year-old dressmaker Maggie E. Cook of 1947 N. 19th Street.<sup>144</sup>

As African Americans moved into the 32nd Ward, many white families moved out. In 1900, 52-year-old shirt salesman Francis C Brooker lived with his 52-year-old wife Maria and 21-year-old son William at 1909 N. 19th Street. Brooker lived in his North Central house over the span of twenty years where he experienced three major life events: the deaths of his wife and son, his remarriage to Sara Elizabeth Rhoads, and his entrance into retirement.<sup>145</sup> Although Brooker had many familial and emotional ties to Philadelphia, he and his wife sold their home and moved to Doylestown where he died in 1929.<sup>146</sup> Brooker was not the only white resident to break long-standing ties with their neighborhood to escape their black neighbors. From 1900 to 1930, Philadelphia-born dyer William Pascoe Childs lived with his wife Caroline and daughter Caroline at 1913 N. 19th Street where they gradually witnessed desegregation in their neighborhood.<sup>147</sup> By

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Randolph Thompson are interesting figures who lived in Philadelphia as accomplished, middle-class African Americans but are largely unknown. According to U.S. Federal Census records, Boiling was a South Philadelphia music teacher who gradually worked toward owning his own music store. Thompson was born in Warsaw, Virginia and at the age of 24, he joined the Army during World War I, did two years of service, and fought in major battles at Saint-Dié-des-Vosges and Meuse-Argonne in 1918. Both Boiling and Thompson are subjects worthy of deeper historical investigation.

<sup>144</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*, Ancestry.com, 1930 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>145</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, Philadelphia Ward 32, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*; Roll: T625\_1633; Page: 2A; Enumeration District: 1066, Ancestry.com, 1920 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>146</sup> Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, *Pennsylvania, U.S., Death Certificates, 1906-1967*, "Frank C. Brooker," *Pennsylvania (State), Death Certificates, 1906-1968*, Certificate Number Range: 117001-120000, Ancestry.com, *Pennsylvania, U.S., Death Certificates, 1906-1967* [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>147</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*; Page: 14A; Enumeration District: 0727, Ancestry.com, 1930

1940, Childs, now a widower, sold his home and moved to Abington where his daughter and brother-in-law lived.<sup>148</sup> While some white residents moved to suburban areas to avoid desegregation, others like jewelry engraver Thomas Washington Hitchcock frantically moved multiple times throughout the city to find “peace” by living in an all-white neighborhood.

In 1900, forty-four-year-old Tennessee-born Hitchcock lived with his wife and four children in a home at 2047 N. Gratz Street, located in an all-white community.<sup>149</sup> By 1910, Hitchcock sold his house and moved with his family to another home in North Philadelphia located at 1929 N. 19th Street.<sup>150</sup> At this North Central home, the same one James Teagle would eventually live in by 1920, Hitchcock was unsatisfied with the demographic change in the area and decided to sell the house and move again to 3403 N. 15th Street in Nicetown-Tioga.<sup>151</sup> Then at the time of Hitchcock’s death in 1924, he and his family were living in a new home, two doors down, at 3407 N. 15th Street.<sup>152</sup>

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*United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>148</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Abington, Montgomery, Pennsylvania*; Roll: m-t0627-03576, Page: 8B; Enumeration District: 46-6, Ancestry.com, *1940 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>149</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Philadelphia Ward 32, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*; Page: 6; Enumeration District: 0814, Ancestry.com, *1900 United States Federal Census* [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>150</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Philadelphia Ward 32, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*; Roll: T624\_1403; Page: 4B; Enumeration District: 0757, Ancestry.com, *1910 United States Federal Census* [database on-line], Lehi, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>151</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, Philadelphia Ward 38, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*; Roll: T625\_1636; Page: 1B; Enumeration District: 1345, Ancestry.com, *1920 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>152</sup> Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, *Pennsylvania, U.S., Death Certificates, 1906-1967*, “Thomas Washington Hitchcock,” *Pennsylvania (State), Death Certificates, 1906-1968*, Certificate Number Range: 102001-105000, Ancestry.com, *Pennsylvania, U.S., Death Certificates, 1906-1967* [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

Furthermore, Hitchcock's death did not end the family's instinct to engage in white flight. In 1930, Hitchcock's wife Anna moved with her family for a fourth time to 3414 N. Carlisle Street in Glenwood where there were still *affordable* homes for working-class people in an all-white neighborhood!<sup>153</sup> Moreover, racism and irrational fear about a "black invasion" drove thousands of white residents like Hitchcock, Childs, and Brooker to leave their neighborhoods during the early years of the Great Migration.

In March 1935, the black-owned, middle-class conscious newspaper, *Philadelphia Tribune* published its investigation into the housing situation in the article, "Slums No Accident Claims Tribune Housing Investigator." In the article, journalist Harry B. Webber explained that real estate agents were aware of the racial prejudices many white residents had about black people and they capitalized on those proclivities and profited from "black and white alike" by engaging in blockbusting.<sup>154</sup> According to Webber, realtors were known to "plant" a "colored family" in a "lily white block" in North and West Philadelphia neighborhoods and wait for white families to respond with panic selling:

Real estate men saw on the one hand a horde of Negro families demanding decent houses. On the other hand they saw long clean blocks of white dwellings in West and North Philadelphia and in Germantown. They quickly learned that when a colored family moves into an all-white block the rest of the block quickly begins to show "For Rent" and "For Sale" signs.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> United States of America, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*; Page: 19B; Enumeration District: 0785, Ancestry.com, *1930 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA, accessed April 19, 2021, <http://www.ancestry.com>.

<sup>154</sup> "Slums No Accident Claims Tribune Housing Investigator."

<sup>155</sup> "Slums No Accident Claims Tribune Housing Investigator."

Real estate agents knew that white residents viewed black people as inferior, unclean, uncivilized, and prone to engaging in crime so they “played upon white residents’ prejudices” and offered them cash for their homes. The white families took the cash, put a down payment on a new home in a white neighborhood, while the realtors sold the vacated homes to black families who unknowingly bought them at a rate of at least a thousand dollars more than what the real estate agents paid.<sup>156</sup> Although many realtors were consciously engaging in the lucrative practice of “block emptying” all-white neighborhoods to provide housing options for black families, real estate agents maintained the class status of the existing community by planting a “high class colored family” in a “high class” white neighborhood and a “colored laborer family” in a working-class white neighborhood. In working-class white neighborhoods, realtors sometimes further aggravated racial tension in these communities by “planting” a black family with several children because white residents would have a greater chance of discovering their presence when the youths played outside on the street. Furthermore, Webber’s article also explained that by 1935, this realtor scheme was a citywide practice done on approximately 5,500 residential blocks in Philadelphia.<sup>157</sup> Nevertheless, when discriminatory housing laws and racially-biased policing could not keep black families out of white neighborhoods, white segregationists resorted to white flight to avoid living with African Americans and risking the devaluation of their home in the midst of residential desegregation.

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<sup>156</sup> “Slums No Accident Claims Tribune Housing Investigator.”

<sup>157</sup> “Slums No Accident Claims Tribune Housing Investigator.”



## Conclusion

From 1914-1935, the myth of a “black invasion” into all-white neighborhoods following the Great Migration to cities like Philadelphia triggered resistance from white segregationists in the form of race riots, police power, and discriminatory housing laws, but all these efforts failed as African Americans persistently found ways to bypass those impediments and desegregate white communities. Although black people faced de facto segregation in Center City where they were banned from patronizing lunch counters, hotels, restaurants, and theaters, many African Americans were still able to overcome those racial restrictions and achieve middle-class status in Philadelphia. From 1908 to 1935, black homeownership in Philadelphia increased by over 1,200%, making it the city with the most black homeowners above the Mason-Dixon line.<sup>158</sup> Also during this time period, many black Philadelphians achieved middle-class status when 2,009 were teachers, policemen, businessmen physicians, and clergymen.<sup>159</sup>

For many white segregationists, white flight was the last resort for those who could afford to move away from their new black neighbors. As a result of this pre-World War II

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<sup>158</sup> “Historical Overview.” In 1908, there were 802 African Americans who owned homes in Philadelphia. By 1935, there were 9,855 African Americans (approximately 4.5% of the black population) who owned homes in the city.

<sup>159</sup> Ken Finkel, “Roots of Hypersegregation in Philadelphia, 1920-1930,” *The Philly History Blog* (Feb 22, 2016), accessed March 11, 2021, <https://blog.phillyhistory.org/index.php/2016/02/roots-of-hypersegregation-in-philadelphia-1920-1930/>. In Finkel’s article, he argues that hyper-segregation was not in Philadelphia’s “original DNA” because it was “designed” and “destined” for “social, economic, and racial integration.” Finkel suggests that eighteenth century Quaker William Penn’s idea of Philadelphia as a society of religious and racial harmony was the original design. However, when the Great Migration sparked an influx of thousands of African Americans who were “overwhelmingly rural and predominantly southern” to Philadelphia, many white people embraced white flight and segregation in “accommodations, services, education, and religion.” Contrary to what Finkel’s article suggests, I argue that racism was always present in Philadelphia. Given the city’s brief history of slavery, some people held African Americans as slaves in Philadelphia, including George Washington, who possessed slaves during his presidency. White racism may spiked at the turn of the twentieth century because of black emancipation and the white supremacist ideology of Anglo-Saxonism that revered Anglo-Saxon and Germanic ethnicity and culture over all others in law and social practice. Nevertheless, white racism was always present in Philadelphia.

white flight, hyper-segregation occurred in Philadelphia and other Northern cities like Baltimore, Boston, Detroit, and Cleveland where residential segregation increased nationally by 34% in the 1910s and over 50% during the 1920s.<sup>160</sup> From the 1920s through the 1940s, desegregated neighborhoods in North, West, and South Philadelphia saw its black population increase within a percentage range of 50-80% as white flight occurred.<sup>161</sup> For the white families who either refused to move from their neighborhoods or could not afford to leave their community as it desegregated, racial tropes about African American communities encouraged white people to stay within their neighborhoods and only utilize public and private resources like schools and businesses that were *contained* in their communities. Moreover, from 1935 through 1957, hyper-segregation intensified as police and journalists cultivated the stereotype of “the jungle,” a crime-ridden, impoverished black slum, to keep white people out of black neighborhoods in North and West Philadelphia, maintain racial and class solidarity against desegregation, and promote tough on crime policing against African Americans.

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<sup>160</sup> “Why US cities are segregated by race: New evidence on the role of ‘white flight.’”

<sup>161</sup> “Roots of Hypersegregation in Philadelphia, 1920-1930.”

## CHAPTER 2

### **“‘KID GLOVES WON’T END GANG WARS’: POLICE, JOURNALISTS, AND ACTIVISTS TACKLING BLACK GANGS IN THE ‘URBAN JUNGLE,’ 1935-1957”**

In March 1935, *Philadelphia Tribune* journalist Harry B. Webber wrote a six-part series for the black-owned newspaper about North Central, a neighborhood in lower North Philadelphia with black residents, slum housing, and alleged rampant crime colloquially known to police as “Blood Hill.”<sup>162</sup> According to Webber, Blood Hill was a community east of Broad Street where over 24,000 African Americans (and a few whites) lived in overcrowded bandbox homes (often converted into apartments) spread out across 198 acres of land. Police identified Blood Hill as a slum because of the neighborhood’s vacant and crumbling homes, high crime, and desolation. Webber described the neighborhood as the place where working-class migrants from South Philadelphia came to find better homes.<sup>163</sup> Consequently, when black residents left South Philadelphia they unknowingly faced housing discrimination in North Philadelphia where realtors and slumlords forced them to pay several thousand dollars more to mortgage and rent two and three-story homes that were once owned by white residents.

As more black people occupied the slum area known as Blood Hill, the neighborhood became synonymous with crime. According to Webber, newspaper reporters identified this area as a “happy hunting ground” for big crime stories and tragic accounts of human suffering.<sup>164</sup> Many of the narratives surrounding Blood Hill involved abject poverty along

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<sup>162</sup> Harry B. Webber, “In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (March 7, 1935): 12, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed September 17, 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/531364395?accountid=14270>.

<sup>163</sup> “In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City.”

<sup>164</sup> “In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City.”

with the ever-presence and fear of violent crime. According to Webber, the most “newsworthy” stories of Blood Hill involved joblessness, homelessness, teen pregnancy, kidnapping, robbery, and murder. It was labeled as a place of high unemployment where “jobless men” lived in vacant lots under the railroad, a neighborhood of danger where “women walked in pairs at night,” and a den of moral defilement where “honky tonk cabarets” and “odorous movie houses” operated at night.<sup>165</sup> In some instances, the residents of Blood Hill were reportedly so poor that some slept in alleys while others ripped apart their homes to secure firewood on cold nights.

Webber learned from his conversations with police that Blood Hill was documented by the Bureau of Crime Prevention as a crime hotspot where “uncivilized” people lived. For the police, residents in Blood Hill who engaged in crime were by nature criminal. The fact that many residents lived in crumbling homes built of wood and sandstone while youth had few yards or playgrounds for recreation was not a significant excuse for descent into crime.

In the context of juvenile delinquency, Webber claimed that the housing crisis produced a series of crimes where “roving boy gangs” roamed the streets and “party girl” gangs rented rooms and old houses to host unsupervised late-night get-togethers for teenagers under sixteen years old.<sup>166</sup> According to Webber, the cruelty of slum life made gang membership enticing to youth in Blood Hill. Through his research, he uncovered that there were “hundreds of child criminals” who by the age of ten had been arrested and paroled approximately twenty times. Several youth gangs existed in North Philadelphia and were known for congregating on street corners and committing petty crimes like

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<sup>165</sup> “In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City.”

<sup>166</sup> “In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City.”

theft. According to Webber, gangs like the Muggers, 40 Thieves, and Black Hawks had up to 100 members who were mostly twelve or thirteen years old.<sup>167</sup> Many gang members were arrested, but oftentimes youth were paroled to their parents' home because institutions like the House of Correction were regularly overcrowded and Philadelphia's County Jail only accepted inmates who were at least sixteen-years-old.<sup>168</sup>

Over the course of Webber's six-part muckraker series, he maintained the belief that African Americans were not inherently criminal and that poverty begot crime. However, he argued that slum residents had a personal responsibility to avoid crime and corruptible influences in his articles. Webber, who represented the *Philadelphia Tribune* as a reporter to the black middle-class, harkened back to the supposed "middle-class values" of morality and self-sufficiency, to question the effectiveness of neighborhood churches and disavow movie theaters that permitted youth to view "Wild Wild West" themed films because in his estimation, those institutions were failing to instill positive values to shape residents into law-abiding citizens.<sup>169</sup> Additionally, Webber suggested that black leaders, presumably from the middle-class, should engage in social activism to uplift Blood Hill residents. He described North Philadelphia as a huge area of "amazing life, possibilities, and people" where "leadership worthy of the name" could "contribute to the "better life of the city" by redeeming the reputation of the working-class African American community.<sup>170</sup> Furthermore, while Webber's 1935 report critiqued the moral compass of adults and youth in Blood Hill, Webber primarily blamed slumlords who used

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<sup>167</sup> "In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City."

<sup>168</sup> "In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City."

<sup>169</sup> "In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City."

<sup>170</sup> "In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City."

blockbusting and redlining to trigger white flight and create a hyper-segregated environment where poverty and crime could thrive.

As a housing investigator for the *Philadelphia Tribune*, Webber's article was written for the black middle-class who lived in North Philadelphia's segregated communities west of Broad Street and away from the poor and working-class African Americans of Blood Hill. West of Broad Street was known as "Little Harlem" because it was a community of 87,000 black residents with "glittering" cafes, theaters, and night clubs where upper-class, interracial clientele frequented while politicians went there to win "black votes."<sup>171</sup> In fact, the area surrounding Columbia Avenue from Broad Street to 18th Streets, not far from landmarks like the famed Pearl Theatre in Little Harlem, was referred to as the "Gold Coast," reflecting the wealthy white and black-owned business owners and gangsters who established themselves there.<sup>172</sup> Although Webber's articles were about issues involving African Americans and written for a black audience, his series reflected two major concerns that black *and* white middle-class residents of North Philadelphia had about the influx of working-class black migrants to their area: the drop in their home's real estate value and neighborhood crime. Nevertheless, Webber's series informed the public about the looming threat of black migrants whose working-class status and possibly rural Southern background threatened to bring blight and crime that could spill over into their community. Webber held the sentiment that the black poor were disadvantaged, misguided, and susceptible to criminal activity. However, other

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<sup>171</sup> "In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City."

<sup>172</sup> Ron Avery, "As Neighborhoods Change, So Do the Names," *Philadelphia Daily News* (Jan. 2, 1991): 6, Newspapers.com, accessed September 17, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/51578816/philadelphia-daily-news/>. Pearl Theatre was a popular jazz venue known for its upper-class clientele, dances, and the celebrities who performed there like Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Pearl Bailey. It was in operation from 1927 to 1963 and demolished in 1970.

journalists in the city who viewed race and class segregation as the proper order of society used crime narratives, particularly those about juvenile gangs, to warn middle-class Philadelphians to remain vigilant and resist demographic change in their neighborhoods as desegregation took place throughout the city.

From the 1930s through the 1950s, Southern black migrants who settled in the impoverished and underdeveloped areas of Philadelphia like North Central were associated with the stigmas of poverty, slum residency, and criminality. As white flight and hyper-segregation intensified in Philadelphia's neighborhoods, the communities where these migrants lived became stigmatized when police and journalists used news media to disseminate crime narratives to the public about black neighborhood slums with juvenile gangs. These gang narratives encouraged white *and* black middle-class families to maintain racial and class segregation in their communities or face blight and crime. While community activists from North Central sought to redeem the reputation of delinquent black youth and reform them with poverty alleviation and anti-gang programs located at settlement houses, the police department used Police Athletic League centers and incarceration to curb juvenile crime. Nevertheless, from 1935-1957, police and journalists in Philadelphia cultivated the stereotype of "the jungle," a poor, crime-ridden, gang-filled black neighborhood, which inspired white residents to resist desegregation, stay contained in white neighborhoods, and advocate for tough on crime policing to prevent the spillage of black crime into their communities.

## **“Blood Hill” and the “Gang Problem” in North Philadelphia**

In the 1930s, North Central, known to police and journalists as Blood Hill, epitomized middle-class fears of crime because its black migrants, slum housing and crime threatened to spill over into neighboring North Philadelphia communities like Strawberry Mansion and Brewerytown. As *Philadelphia Tribune* journalist Harry B. Webber explained in his 1935 article, “In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City,” communities like North Central were stigmatized as the slums because it was a place where black tenants and homeowners were forced to pay inflated prices for unworthy homes that often lacked heat, hot water, and bathrooms necessary for maintaining a healthy and sanitary lifestyle.<sup>173</sup> Real estate agents redlined working-class neighborhoods like North Central, Yorktown, and Sharswood as risky for financial investment because the people who resided there were believed to be criminals by nature.<sup>174</sup> The white people who lived there prior to black migration refused to remain in the area as it desegregated, resorted to panic selling, and engaged in white flight to other residential communities. Additionally, exposés like Webber’s also argued that neighborhoods like North Central were not desirable places for law-abiding citizens to start families because there were many “child criminals” who “infested” the area.<sup>175</sup> Nevertheless, journalists who focused on black juvenile criminals made white and black middle-class residents in North Philadelphia fearful of black crime spilling over into their neighborhoods when children walked the streets unsupervised by parents and teachers.

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<sup>173</sup> Harry B. Webber, “Slum Profits in Philadelphia Run into Huge Profits Often Bringing 100 Percent Return,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (April 18, 1935): 12, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed September 17, 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/531361881?accountid=14270>.

<sup>174</sup> Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*, (New York: Liveright, 2017), 1.

<sup>175</sup> “In Philadelphia--Third Largest City: Housing Cancer Is Undermining City.”



In the midst of the “housing cancer” Webber described in neighborhoods like North Central, community activists in North Philadelphia sought to fix the core issues of those communities that made it colloquially known as a black slum. These activists not only wanted to assist black families in finding affordable housing and decent employment in segregated Philadelphia, but also provide recreational facilities for youth who had no outlet for play at home or in their community. African American teens who loitered on city streets were stereotyped as being delinquents. Furthermore, the goal activists had in mind was to solve the real issue of inadequate play areas and disprove the myth that black youth were inherently delinquent and criminal. In April 1930, Quaker and local human rights activist Helen H. Corson published a full-page article in the *Friends’ Intelligencer* requesting that the journal’s readers donate funds to establish a settlement house in North Philadelphia for \$30,000 that would steer black youth away from gangs and crime to prevent incarceration:

We hear much of crime among Negroes. But what can we expect when thousands of Southern rural Negroes pour into a congested section of a great city and find that practically the only recreational facilities open to them are commercialized pool rooms, speakeasies, lottery establishments and a low type of movie and vaudeville house? It costs society at least \$500 a year to maintain a boy for a year in a modern reformatory. To keep a boy in a boy’s club costs nine to ten dollars of society’s money, and his parents maintain him. Boys’ clubs do not completely eliminate delinquency but they very greatly decrease it.<sup>176</sup>

Corson’s plea for a settlement house to rehabilitate and provide community resources for black youth was based on the common knowledge and daily observations made by social workers that “gang groups” were known to hang out on street corners and at movie

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<sup>176</sup> Helen H. Corson, “Article soliciting funds for proposed Settlement House--A Few of the Future Patrons: The Susan Parrish Wharton Memorial,” Photograph, Philadelphia: *Friends Intelligencer*, April 12, 1930, From Temple University Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, <https://digital.library.temple.edu/digital/collection/p16002coll2/id/1344/rec/11> (accessed Jan 25, 2021).

theaters, taprooms, candy stores, liquor stores, and pool rooms in the community.<sup>177</sup>

Oftentimes these locations became sites for gang violence that not only affected gang members, but also innocent bystanders, residents, and business owners. For example, the Vogueteers were a group of ten boys between the ages of seventeen and twenty who were known to frequent the “colored” Vogue Theater at 19th Street and Columbia Avenue and often fight rivals like the Mohawks and Swans.<sup>178</sup> By 1931, the Susan Parrish Wharton Memorial Settlement House, or Wharton Centre, opened at 22nd Street and Columbia Avenue in North Philadelphia as a social uplift organization for African Americans. Similar to the Whittier Centre in South Philadelphia, the Wharton Centre, named in honor of philanthropist Susan Parrish Wharton who died three years prior, operated in collaboration with white and black donors, social workers, residents, and city officials to improve the lives of African Americans living in the slums of neighborhoods like North Central Philadelphia.<sup>179</sup>

Social workers from the Wharton Centre noticed the existence of youth gangs in North Central once the settlement house was up and running and they began to investigate the factors that created the phenomenon. According to the black social workers who conducted sociological studies on black families in North Philadelphia, the reason for the rise of youth gangs in this section of the city was because of the “social problems and neighborhood conditions” of generational unemployment, crime, and family instability that nurtured some youth into delinquency.<sup>180</sup> Slum housing offered to African

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<sup>177</sup> W. Miller Barbour, “Gangs and Their Locations,” Wharton Centre (1944-1947), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, Wharton Centre, call no. URB 30, Box 34, Folder 2.

<sup>178</sup> Barbour, “Gangs and Their Locations,” Wharton Centre (1944-1947).

<sup>179</sup> V.P. Franklin, “Operation Street Corner: The Wharton Centre and the Juvenile Gang Problem in Philadelphia, 1945-1958” in *W.E.B. DuBois, Race, and the City: The Philadelphia Negro and Its Legacy*, ed.s Michael B. Katz and Thomas J. Sugrue, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 197.

<sup>180</sup> Franklin, “Operation Street Corner,” 209-211.

Americans at exorbitant rates forced employed black parents to often work lengthy hours to pay for inadequate living conditions while their children remained unsupervised and susceptible to delinquency outside of school hours.<sup>181</sup> Nevertheless, the Wharton Centre's social workers combatted the myth of inherently criminal black youth by demonstrating through community activism that the social conditions of racial segregation, poverty, and slums created a dangerous society where some black youths in North Central happened to engage in gang activity.

Throughout the 1930s, the Wharton Centre responded to the gang problem in North Central by offering recreational programs for youth and sponsored community service projects to benefit teenagers and adults. The Wharton Centre sought to uplift black families facing the disadvantaging effects of racial segregation and financial woes by offering classes in health and cooking along with clubs focused on domestic skills and creative arts like sewing and dramatics.<sup>182</sup> In regards to recreation, the settlement house offered art classes and shows, citywide youth concerts, a gymnasium for sports and tabletop games, and summer camps for black children in North Philadelphia.<sup>183</sup> Social workers and college-aged volunteers even initiated community street cleaning projects to convert vacant lots into playgrounds for neighborhood children.<sup>184</sup> Nevertheless, the goal of these activists was to not only improve the social conditions of these residents but also

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<sup>181</sup> Franklin, "Operation Street Corner," 204.

<sup>182</sup> Franklin, "Operation Street Corner," 204.

<sup>183</sup> "Children play ping pong at Wharton Centre," Photograph, Philadelphia: Wharton Centre, date unknown, From Temple University Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, <https://digital.library.temple.edu/digital/collection/p16002coll2/id/172> (accessed Jan 25, 2021).

<sup>184</sup> "Youth cleaning streets and lots," Photograph, Philadelphia: Wharton Centre, date unknown, From Temple University Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, <https://digital.library.temple.edu/digital/collection/p16002coll2/id/1395> (accessed Jan 25, 2021).

change the narrative that journalists cultivated in news articles about black residents, slums, and juvenile gang activity.

### **Postwar Desegregation, Race Rioting, and the Police's Influence on Black Youth**

The United States' involvement in World War II (1941-1945) sparked the Second Great Migration (1940-1970) of approximately five million Southern blacks to Northern and West Coast cities looking for homes and jobs. When these black migrants arrived in Philadelphia, they often settled in the hyper-segregated black areas of the city like North Central. Although black migrants during this period tested the strength of segregation in Philadelphia's residential communities, it was not until after WWII that many neighborhoods desegregated. U.S. soldiers returned from the war with numerous opportunities available to them. The 1944 Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill) enabled military veterans with honorable discharge and at least 120 days of service entitlement to: purchasing new houses with low-cost mortgages, receiving cash payments from the government for tuition and living costs to attend vocational school or college, and up to a year of unemployment compensation.<sup>185</sup> The GI Bill helped some African American veterans buy a home in a decent neighborhood and obtain an industrial job at a factory.<sup>186</sup> However, as historian Lizabeth Cohen explained in her 2004 book, *Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*, few African Americans achieved middle-class status from the GI Bill. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) redlined residential neighborhoods to maintain segregation and regularly denied African Americans mortgage loans for homes in non-white communities

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<sup>185</sup> Glenn C. Altschuler and Stuart M. Blumin, *The GI Bill: A New Deal for Veterans*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 118.

<sup>186</sup> Matthew Desmond and Mustafa Emirbayer, *Racial Domination, Racial Progress: The Sociology of Race in America*, (New York City: McGraw-Hill Education, 2009).

labelled as “high-risk” investments. Additionally, African American veterans were excluded from the GI Bill’s educational benefits for pursuing a post-secondary education that would lead to a well-paying, skilled profession because the law only funded accredited institutions which, because of segregation, were virtually all-white.<sup>187</sup>

Between 1946 and 1953, housing options for African Americans were bleak when *only* 347 of 120,000 new homes built in Philadelphia were for black people. Many of the preexisting homes available to African Americans were not only cramped and overpriced, but houses formerly occupied by working-class whites who migrated to Northeast Philadelphia and suburban towns like Levittown seeking affordable housing in “racially homogenous” communities.<sup>188</sup> African Americans’ desire to live in all-white neighborhoods was not an act of provocation against white people. Black people simply wanted quality housing, schools, jobs, and recreational facilities in their neighborhood. Since these amenities were available in *segregated* white communities, black families were persistent in achieving a better quality of life for not only themselves, but also their children.<sup>189</sup> As neighborhoods desegregated, many whites continued to rebel against the migration of African Americans to neighborhoods that had been all-white before WWII. They did so through violent harassment outside the homes of black families and provoking violent attacks against them in schools.

According to historian Karl E. Johnson, the desegregation of Philadelphia’s residential neighborhoods in the 1940s sparked high incarceration rates for black men and boys in

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<sup>187</sup> Lizabeth Cohen, *Consumer’s Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 170-171.

<sup>188</sup> Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, 229.

<sup>189</sup> Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, 225.

the city.<sup>190</sup> As neighborhoods desegregated, many white Americans rebelled against the migration of African Americans to neighborhoods that were all-white before WWII by holding mass riots outside the homes of black families and provoking violent attacks against them in public spaces like schools. In these instances, whites in Philadelphia fought to keep their neighborhoods segregated because they believed in several racist stereotypes that made them unwilling to have black people as neighbors such as African Americans being “prone to poverty, crime, and sexual promiscuity.”<sup>191</sup> Furthermore, throughout the 1940s, police often arrested blacks but not whites for rioting. In 1947, social scientist G. Gordon Brown elaborated on the issue of police bias in his published survey, “Law Administration and Negro-White Relations,” which investigated the racial tension between black citizens and white police. The survey exposed the “strong racial prejudices” white law enforcement officers had toward African Americans.<sup>192</sup> In Brown’s interviews with white policemen, he discovered that many officers (of different ranks) were simply racist or held animosity toward African Americans who acquired homes and jobs in all-white communities. This anger resulted in countless white police not only embracing racist stereotypes that labeled black people as prone to criminal behavior, but also justified the use of excessive force against African Americans.

In one interview, a patrolman reacted to the 1944 Philadelphia Transit Strike in which white workers halted public transportation to protest the hiring of black streetcar conductors with vengeful sentiment: “Next time they [African Americans] try [something

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<sup>190</sup> Karl E. Johnson, “Police-Black Community Relations in Postwar Philadelphia: Race and Criminalization in Urban Social Spaces, 1945-1960,” *The Journal of African American History*, 89.2, African Americans and the Urban Landscape (Spring, 2004): 118-134.

<sup>191</sup> James Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided: Race and Politics in the City of Brotherly Love*, (Chapel Hill; University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 2.

<sup>192</sup> Johnson, “Police-Black Community Relations in Postwar Philadelphia,” 120.

like that], we'll get them good."<sup>193</sup> In another interview, a detective described how black people were innately unprincipled: "They are not bad people, but they seem instinctively to be more likely to commit certain kinds of crime than whites are. Maybe it is their African ancestry." Additionally, Brown had overheard a conversation between a detective and investigators, in which the detective suggested that African Americans be *contained* and content within their given station in life of poverty and denied civil rights: "You don't have too much trouble with the Negroes if you keep them in their place."<sup>194</sup>

When Brown interviewed African Americans about their opinions of white policemen, he learned that while some respected the police, many black people (particularly the working class) thought poorly of them too. Several black Philadelphians told Brown they mistrusted white police because many: used excessive force; falsely arrested African Americans; refused to thoroughly investigate crimes where black people were the victims; received bribes, gifts, merchandise, meals, and "services" from operators of illegal drug dealing, prostitution, and numbers racketeering in black neighborhoods; and were openly racist and disrespectful in their interactions with upstanding black citizens.<sup>195</sup> In one of Brown's interviews, an assistant to a molder's helper acknowledged the racial bias white police had toward alleged black suspects: "The police treat the colored rougher than the whites because they think that all the crimes are committed by colored." In another interview, a black official stated that many black residents mistrusted police and judges because they felt they were incompetent and harbored racial prejudices that influenced them to unfairly arrest and prosecute African Americans: "Police are

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<sup>193</sup> Johnson, "Police-Black Community Relations in Postwar Philadelphia," 120-122.

<sup>194</sup> Johnson, "Police-Black Community Relations in Postwar Philadelphia," 120-122.

<sup>195</sup> Johnson, "Police-Black Community Relations in Postwar Philadelphia," 120-122.

dominated, first, by Irishmen who live in a racial no-man's land, and, second, by Southerners who have drifted in, and who got a job with the police because they could not do anything else.”

Brown’s research also uncovered the sentiments of a black newspaper editor who was also particularly critical of Irish American officers who (in his opinion) purposely arrested more African Americans than Irish: "The police definitely discriminate against Negroes. The police have all the prejudices of their class, and these are intensified by their service...the police would not pick up an Irishman, except for a major crime."<sup>196</sup> The fact that African Americans during the 1940s constantly recounted their confrontations with specifically Irish American police harkens back to the racial tension that occurred when black families first moved into all-white neighborhoods, predominantly occupied by the Irish citywide, during the 1920s. Furthermore, some of the racist white adults and teens who resisted African Americans in their neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces with racial violence, continued their discriminatory abuse as police officers out of self-interest and neighborhood solidarity, knowing that their authoritative position enabled them to get away with police misconduct. Moreover, white police officers often acted as “dirty workers” who fought to maintain an “informal apartheid” of white supremacy in desegregated neighborhoods by disproportionately arresting and incarcerating African Americans during race riots.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Johnson, “Police-Black Community Relations in Postwar Philadelphia,” 120-122.

<sup>197</sup> Eric C. Schneider, Christopher Agee, and Themis Chronopoulos, “Dirty Work: Police and Community Relations and the Limits of Liberalism in Postwar Philadelphia,” *Journal of Urban History* Vol. 46.5 (2020): 961–979. The term “dirty worker” originates from sociologist Lee Rainwater, who described it as someone who does undesirable tasks that mainstream society wants completed but the society itself refuses to publicly recognize. Rainwater’s original use of the term “dirty worker” can be found in this article: Lee Rainwater, “Revolt of the Dirty Workers,” *Society* 5.2 (November, 1967): 1-2.



While the Philadelphia Police Department did engage in racially-biased policing against African Americans in black and desegregated neighborhoods, the city's police union, Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), made superficial efforts to build positive police-community relations with youth in crime hotspots to prevent them from engaging in potentially criminal behavior. In 1947, Philadelphia police officers, under the initiative of Sergeant August "Gus" Rangnow (1892-1972), established the Police Athletic League (PAL) following World War II to deter youth of underprivileged communities from engaging in street crime and drug use.<sup>198</sup> The main goal of PAL centers was to connect police officers with neighborhood children through mentorship, friendship, and sportsmanship in athletic games of boxing, baseball, basketball, table tennis, and marching band.<sup>199</sup> PAL centers in North Philadelphia and other working-class communities in the city offered free after-school programs for tens of thousands of children from ages six to eighteen. Active police officers and city officials participated in events sponsored at its centers to encourage youth to not only be familiar with law enforcement officers, but also develop respect for them as authority figures in the community. One activity PAL centers offered to instill this value was "Commissioner for a Day," in which the police commissioner gave teenagers assignments at police headquarters and educated them about the work police officers did on a daily basis.<sup>200</sup> Additionally, officers, coaches, and mentors at PAL centers also promoted American patriotism by encouraging children to say the pledge of allegiance and sign oaths of

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<sup>198</sup> Matthew Ward, "Police Athletic League," *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*, (2017), PhiladelphiaEncyclopedia.org, accessed May 3, 2018, <http://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/police-athletic-league/>.

<sup>199</sup> PAL centers also offered children arts and crafts, homework clubs, and literacy programs.

<sup>200</sup> "Sniper shoots down police, setting off a massive manhunt," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Feb 26, 1976): 2-A, Newspapers.com, accessed March 31, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9053474/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9053474/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

allegiance that were sent to the mayor and other state and national politicians.<sup>201</sup>

Nevertheless, PAL's patriotic activities were not only meant to steer children from crime, but also indoctrinate them into being loyal citizens. Moreover, the overall mission of PAL was a superficial attempt to mentor youth. Although the FOP knew that crime often occurred in impoverished areas, the organization refused to accept the sociological argument that social workers at institutions like the Wharton Centre defended, which was poverty begot crime. Instead, the FOP operated under the premise that some people, particularly the black poor, were by nature prone to engaging in criminal behavior and it was the police's duty to intervene through either recreation or incarceration.

#### **“Cultivating Potential”: The Wharton Centre’s “Operation Street Corner”**

While PAL offered recreational facilities for children in the slums as a form of crime prevention, the Wharton Centre offered nurture-based, teen-centric programs for youth in North Philadelphia to demonstrate to black children that although their neighborhood may have been a “tough” place to live, they didn’t need to join a gang to survive. Unlike PAL, the Wharton Centre operated under the belief that poverty begot crime and children, including the black poor, were not inherently criminal. Nevertheless, the organization's social workers and gang workers offered neighborhood children recreational activities that would shape them into positive, law-abiding citizens and shelter them from the negative influences of drugs and crime present in the slums.

Settlement houses like the Wharton Centre often relied on college-educated social workers trained in the latest research to organize social welfare programs centered around disadvantaged youth in communities like North Central. In the 1880s, the Whittier Centre

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<sup>201</sup> “Police Athletic League.”

operated social welfare programs for youth under the direction of the Vassar College-educated social worker Susan Parrish Wharton. In the 1940s, the Wharton Centre, an offshoot of the Whittier Centre, operated recreational, anti-gang programs under the guidance of Temple University-educated social worker W. Miller Barbour.<sup>202</sup> Social workers believed that poverty, social ostracism, and the desire for social belonging were influential factors in the formation of juvenile gangs because of the research they read from sociologists like Frederic Thrasher and William Foote Whyte.

In Thrasher's 1927 monograph, *The Gang: A Study of 1,313 Gangs in Chicago*, he argued that a gang was an "interstitial group" whose members united through conflict like animosity from outsiders who opposed them.<sup>203</sup> Based on Thrasher's observation of over 1,000 gangs in Chicago from 1923 to 1926, he argued that all childhood playgroups (including social and athletic clubs) were potential gangs, where members met face to face, were attached to a territory (like the neighborhood playground, school, city block), and were *inclined* to but not necessarily involved in delinquency.<sup>204</sup> Additionally, juvenile gangs were often shaped by "neighborhoods in flux," "urban geography," and "codes of honor and glory."<sup>205</sup> One of the final conclusions Thrasher's book made was that the solution to gang activity is not the creation of additional recreation centers for juveniles, but inclusive institutions with positive and influential mentors to steer children away from antisocial and criminal activity.

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<sup>202</sup> Franklin, "Operation Street Corner," 198-200. Wilbur Miller Barbour (1907-1957) was a celebrated social scientist and housing activist who later served as regional director of the Urban League in Los Angeles.

<sup>203</sup> Frederic Thrasher, *The Gang: A Study of 1,313 Gangs in Chicago*, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1927), 38.

<sup>204</sup> Greg Dimitriadis, "The Situation Complex: Revisiting Frederic Thrasher's *The Gang: A Study of 1,313 Gangs in Chicago*," *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 6.3, (Aug. 1, 2006): 335-353.

<sup>205</sup> Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *The City*, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1925), 62.

Although Thrasher's research on youth gangs was widely accepted throughout academia as a fair assessment of the "gang problem" in urban cities during the 1920s and 1930s, his monograph lacked an in-depth discussion of gang formation based on ethnicity, race, and gender. His study also neglected a strong investigation into the existence of black gangs. Instead, *The Gang* implied the cultural bias that non-Anglo Saxon families had an inferior culture that made them more prone to crime. He described the early integration of European immigrants into "old-stock" (Anglo-Saxon or German) American communities as "transitioning" neighborhoods that were experiencing a change in population based on class and ethnicity.<sup>206</sup> According to Thrasher, discrimination and excommunication from the dominant culture enticed immigrant children to join gangs to have a place of belonging and protection from police and street violence. Although Thrasher acknowledged that American-born juveniles made it difficult for immigrant children to assimilate to American customs and social mores, he often stereotyped immigrants as having a flawed culture and family upbringing that impeded their success to Americanization and social inclusion.<sup>207</sup> Furthermore, while Thrasher's monograph was foundational, it contained biases against immigrant children of Irish, Italian, and Jewish descent that coincided with the white supremacist ideology of Anglo-Saxonism typical of the era.

While Thrasher's research suggested that social ostracism played a role in the development of juvenile gangs, sociologist William Foote Whyte explained how poverty influenced juvenile gang formation. In Whyte's 1943 ethnocentric gang study, *Street*

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<sup>206</sup> Brenda C. Coughlin and Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh, "The Urban Street Gang after 1970," *Annual Review of Sociology* 29 (August 2003): 41-64.

<sup>207</sup> Thrasher, *The Gang*, 286-292.

*Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*, he supported Thrasher in identifying social exclusion, foreignness, and the need for protection as the rationale for the creation of gangs. However, Whyte also added new research explaining how financial need enticed youth into gang activity. In Whyte's monograph, he explained how he used participant observation to investigate why some male juveniles chose to be "corner boys" who were involved in gangs versus "college boys" who pursued post-secondary education to achieve wealth and social acceptance.<sup>208</sup> After Whyte spent eighteen out of 42 months of research living with an Italian family in the North End neighborhood of Boston, he learned that some young men found it easier, quicker, and more profitable to achieve financial sustainability by joining a gang that engaged in an underground economy (like racketeering, gambling, alcohol, and prostitution) than attend college and hope to acquire a job offering middle-class wages and status.<sup>209</sup> Despite the limitations in Thrasher's work and Whyte's exclusive focus on one ethnic gang, their theories on gangs provided insight and strategies for social workers like Barbour to use participant observation to study, interact with, and attempt to rehabilitate gang members in North Central.

From 1943 to 1958, gang workers from the Wharton Centre established the anti-gang initiative "Operation Street Corner" to engage black gang members on street corners and attempt to reform "groups" of potential juvenile delinquents within a four-block radius of the center.<sup>210</sup> In the campaign, gang workers like Barbour observed, documented,

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<sup>208</sup> James Pasto, "'Street Corner Society' revisited," *Bostoniano* (February 23, 2013), [Bostoniano.info](http://bostoniano.info/northendspirit/street-corner-society-revisited/), accessed November 11, 2019, <http://bostoniano.info/northendspirit/street-corner-society-revisited/>.

<sup>209</sup> William Foote Whyte, *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943), 1-25.

<sup>210</sup> United States Congress Senate Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, Juvenile Delinquency (Philadelphia, Pa.), *Hearings Before the United States Senate*

interacted with, and directed teenagers from “gang groups” like the Warders, North Coasters, and Tophatters to the settlement house where they could receive mentorship and access to recreation as an alternative to delinquency.<sup>211</sup> As the chairman of the Wharton Centre Robert Rosenbaum would testify before the United States Senate Committee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency in April 1954, gang workers like Barbour used a long-term strategy based on building rapport with youth to convince them to dissolve the “groups” they established on the street corner:

He [the gang worker] studies the neighborhood and its influences and its facilities. He becomes a loiterer. Casually he leans against a lamp post. He may kibitz a crap game, although he never joins one. He may admire the swell tie the guy is wearing. And he may open with, “Well what do you think of the Phillies this year? I wonder how the big fight is doing tonight?” At first his overtures to friendship will inspire little or no response, gloomy look or half-hearted reply. The man from Wharton Centre moves on. Periodically, he will return to a particular corner. There are always several corners under his observation. Gradually, the boys realize that he is not a dick. The cops don’t come during or after his passing. They find that he is from Wharton which has won the respect and trust of all neighborhood factions. It may take several weeks, but eventually the man from Wharton Centre is tolerated as a straight guy.<sup>212</sup>

After gang workers were able to successfully direct gang members away from schoolyards, drug stores, and saloons and into the center, they offered youth access to approximately fifteen clubs supervised by two staff members and an assistant.<sup>213</sup>

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*Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee To Investigate Juvenile Delinquency in the U.S., Eighty-Third Congress, Second Session, on Apr. 14, 15, 1954, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954), 48-58.* A gang worker is a social worker who directly interacts with gang members on street corners and in recreation centers. From the 1940s through the 1970s, gang workers from settlement houses and anti-gang programs spent hours talking with gang members to gain the youths’ trust, direct them to a recreation center for positive mentorship, and educate them about the pitfalls of gang life so that they would abandon gang activity in the future. During the 1970s, some gang workers in programs like Safe Streets, Inc. (from 1969-1976) were college-educated in the field of social work while others were former gang members who relied on their personal experiences to educate and guide youth away from gang activity.

<sup>211</sup> Barbour, “Gangs and Their Locations,” Wharton Centre (1944-1947).

<sup>212</sup> *Hearings Before the United States Senate Committee To Investigate Juvenile Delinquency*, 48-58.

<sup>213</sup> Barbour, “Gangs and Their Locations,” Wharton Centre (1944-1947).

By the 1950s, the Wharton Centre was serving over 300 former gang boys and girls between the ages of twelve and eighteen years old with athletics, weekly dances, trips, social clubs, and educational programs where they learned life skills like hygiene, money management, job training, teamwork, and leadership.<sup>214</sup> In addition to the Wharton Centre managing black juvenile crime in North Philadelphia under “Operation Street Corner” its staff also partnered with community residents, police, churches, schools and affiliates from the Raymond Rosen housing project, and PAL on outreach programs like all-city art and music shows and neighborhood parades. Gang workers even maintained detailed records of their interactions with black and white gangs, residents, churches, schools, and business owners in the neighborhood and recruited leaders and operators of local institutions to participate in fundraisers and community service projects to benefit gang-prone youth and the neighborhood at large.<sup>215</sup>

In 1958, the Wharton Centre ended “Operation Street Corner” due to “insufficient funds” to maintain specialized staff and the board’s belief that a lack of neighborhood support for youth living in an “antisocial” environment would cause a regression into delinquency once they left the center.<sup>216</sup> The Wharton Centre’s ability to identify the major root causes of juvenile delinquency was not a new revelation. In Rosenbaum’s 1954 testimony about the importance of “Operation Street Corner” at the U.S. Senate Committee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, he explained why many youth in North Philadelphia resorted to gangs:

Our Operation Street Corner realizes that the bonds between the members of street corner groups are frequently stronger than their family ties...Well the family in many instances, in these over-crowded areas is a broken

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<sup>214</sup> *Hearings Before the United States Senate Committee To Investigate Juvenile Delinquency*, 48-58.

<sup>215</sup> Barbour, “Gangs and Their Locations,” Wharton Centre (1944-1947).

<sup>216</sup> Franklin, “Operation Street Corner,” 195-218.

family. The pressures of work, their working mothers and working fathers, frequently mean an empty household. When father and mother do come home from work, they are tired. They want to listen to Jack Benny, or some other favorite program and the child is asked to leave, get out in the street and shift for himself. It finds itself naturally in association with others of the same age. And having common activities and common interests there is frequently this loyalty to that group rather than to the family group...We desire to cultivate the potentials for constructive efforts in such cases...The gang, instead of being a chaotic group must be helped to become an organized club.<sup>217</sup>

Unlike PAL, the Wharton Centre specifically acknowledged that havens like theirs were necessary because of racial segregation and economic exploitation in the housing and job markets. Juvenile delinquency and crime arose from how children were poorly nurtured and neglected, not from the nature of their being. Poverty not only affected parents who worked constantly to pay bills, but also children who felt abandoned when they received limited parental interaction and guidance at home. Additionally, gang crimes like robbery temporarily solved issues of financial need. Similar to the sociological research Thrasher and Whyte reported, social workers at the Wharton Centre believed some youth joined gangs because they desired social interaction, belonging, and mentorship from someone in their community who could cultivate an ethos of hope for a better future in their lives. Although the Wharton Centre made great strides toward curbing juvenile gang activity, as black migration and racial tension increased in Philadelphia through the 1950s, some police and citizens began to accept the idea that race and class determined a person's nature, especially when residents, black and white, middle-class and poor, lived in segregated spaces where life was dramatically different based on one's identity.

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<sup>217</sup> *Hearings Before the United States Senate Committee To Investigate Juvenile Delinquency*, 48-58.



### **“Thugs” and “Bandits”: Gang Attacks in North Philadelphia**

As black migration to Philadelphia continued in the 1950s, police and journalists continued to report crime narratives about black gang violence to the public which suggested that tough on crime policing and incarceration was necessary for criminal black youth. From 1950 to 1960, 153,000 blacks migrated into Philadelphia while 225,000 whites moved out of the city. It was also during this period that 700,000 whites took up residence in many of Philadelphia’s suburbs.<sup>218</sup> Racism encouraged many whites to believe the presence of African American neighbors stigmatized their communities, causing filth, crime, and the property values of their homes to decrease.<sup>219</sup> Job flight and white flight from city neighborhoods left these spaces racially and economically imbalanced, especially when an already struggling city tax base slowly began to underfund local schools, streets, and public housing.<sup>220</sup> Therefore, the racist assumption that poor African Americans brought financial destruction and crime had many middle-class Philadelphians resisting desegregation with the help of police power or leaving Philadelphia with the sentiment that safety and prosperity resided in an all-white community.

As white flight exacerbated racial tension between whites and blacks, it was also during this decade that the police department instructed beat officers to take a “pro crime fighter” stance of placing less emphasis on “emergency services and maintaining order” and focusing more on “serious crimes” like rape, murder, robbery, and burglary. Police officers carried out this order by “relying on motorized patrol, rapidly responding to calls

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<sup>218</sup> Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, 224-229.

<sup>219</sup> Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided*, 2.

<sup>220</sup> Wolfinger, *Philadelphia Divided*, 203.

for services, and using forensic science to investigate crimes.”<sup>221</sup> This focus on “serious crimes” often resulted in excessive force because forcible felonies permitted police to invoke legal deadly force against a suspect when an individual’s life was threatened.<sup>222</sup> Additionally, discriminatory policing led to the overrepresentation of African Americans in prisons and their underrepresentation in law enforcement. On January 10, 1950, the *Philadelphia Tribune* published an article stating that 40% of the city’s prison population was African American, even though black people were only 18% of Philadelphia’s population.<sup>223</sup> The article also pointed out that several black leaders were upset that in Holmesburg Prison, Eastern Penitentiary, and Moyamensing Prison, where numerous black people were placed in overcrowded cells before they received a trial or were found guilty, there were no black prison guards or administrators in these segregated facilities.<sup>224</sup> Other black Philadelphians complained that there were few African Americans on the police force because of corrupt police who administered “farce” civil service examinations and Republican ward leaders (city councilmen) who chose the policemen they wanted in their districts.<sup>225</sup> In fact, in 1950, only 195 of the 4,500 officers in the police department were black.<sup>226</sup> With such a clear racial bias in the incarceration of individuals and a nearly all-white police force operating in the city, black crime became a greater cause of concern than white crime.

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<sup>221</sup> Police Study Task Force, *Philadelphia and Its Police: Toward a New Partnership, A Report by the Police Study Task Force*, (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Task Force, 1986), 122-123.

<sup>222</sup> According to Pennsylvania law, a forcible felony crime is rape, murder, armed robbery, or kidnapping.

<sup>223</sup> Police Study Task Force, *Philadelphia and Its Police*, 122.

<sup>224</sup> Police Study Task Force, *Philadelphia and Its Police*, 132.

<sup>225</sup> Police Study Task Force, *Philadelphia and Its Police*, 122-123.

<sup>226</sup> Eric C. Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide: Race, Place, and Space in Postwar Philadelphia*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 52.

During the 1950s, police were concerned about juvenile delinquency, particularly gang activity, which rose sharply in major cities like Philadelphia.<sup>227</sup> From 1951 to 1956, the Juvenile Aid Bureau tracked black and white youth gangs throughout Philadelphia and documented the growing number of gang-related crimes and arrests among teenagers.<sup>228</sup> Although city officials and welfare agencies estimated that only 2% of teenagers in the city were gang affiliated, the rising arrest rates for teenagers made gang violence an alarming issue.<sup>229</sup> In 1951, Philadelphia Police arrested 5,397 boys and girls for gang activity that included weapons, intoxication, arson, robbery, burglary, and homicide. From 1952 to 1955, the rate of gang-related, youth arrests increased each year at a rate fluctuating between 11% and 14%.<sup>230</sup> During that time period, the Juvenile Aid Bureau identified the existence of nearly thirty prominent youth gangs, particularly in North, South, and West Philadelphia. While there were gangs like the Five Points in Northeast Philadelphia, the police focused more on black, white, and multiracial gangs near middle-class neighborhoods and major commercial centers, including Center City because gang activity threatened to increase job flight from the area.<sup>231</sup> Additionally, girl

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<sup>227</sup> Lawrence H. Singer, "Dawn Patrol," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Aug 13, 1944): 93, Newspapers.com, accessed March 25, 2021, [Clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer - Newspapers.com](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/37811825/the-philadelphia-inquirer/).

<sup>228</sup> Joshua Lisowski, "Police Officers Waking Teen Sleeping in Bus Station," *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*, (Sept. 14, 2014), PhiladelphiaEncyclopedia.org, accessed March 25, 2021, <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/bus-stop-2/>. The Juvenile Aid Bureau (JAB) was established in the 1930s as a division within the Philadelphia Police Department. In the 1940s following World War II, a subdivision of the JAB was the Dawn Patrol which involved plainclothes police officers, male and female, patrolling transportation centers, bowling alleys, dance halls, and other public hangouts in the city from 8 PM to 4 AM. The goal of the Dawn Patrol was to intercept underage youth on the streets after curfew who engaged in drinking, gambling, or prostitution. By the 1950s, the JAB focused on youth engaged in gang activity and violent crime on city streets when the police's Gang Control Unit was established around 1954.

<sup>229</sup> Harry J. Karafin, "The Problem of Teen-Age Street Gangs" *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Dec. 13, 1956): 3, Newspapers.com, accessed January 24, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/37811825/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>230</sup> "The Problem of Teen-Age Street Gangs."

<sup>231</sup> "Five Typical Cases handled by the Juvenile Aid Bureau," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Dec. 13, 1956): 3, Newspapers.com, accessed January 24, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/37811825/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

gangs like the Torcheretts and the Demarcarretts were also a concern for police. Girl gang members comprised approximately 18% of juvenile arrests annually until 1953 when the number dropped to 14%. By 1954, Philadelphia witnessed seventeen gang-related homicides and less than two years later the number climbed when there were 40 murders by September 1956. Much of this deadly violence was due to teenagers gaining illegal access to razors, knives, pistols, and shotguns.<sup>232</sup> Gangs like the DeMarcos, Valley, and Tenderloins were even engaging in warfare with improvisational weaponry constructed from everyday items as Edward “Butch” Anthony, a former gang member who lived at 27th and Gordon Streets in Strawberry Mansion recalled:

We were into making zip guns and tack guns. We were taught by an old man, an army veteran. He even gave us gunpowder so we could protect our turf from other neighborhood gangs. All we really needed was wood, a car antenna, and a door latch...We would obtain the wood in wood shop at FitzSimons Junior High School, steal the antennas off of parked cars, and grab simple door latches whenever we spotted one in someone’s house. At school we’d cut a block of wood in the shape of a handgun and carve a narrow path along the top where the barrel would be placed. The bottom section of an antenna worked perfectly as a barrel of a gun. Twenty-two caliber bullets passed through it perfectly. The screw would then be put in place as the trigger mechanism. Thick rubber bands were used as the trigger...A tack or nail would be placed at the front end of the gun and we’d hold a match to the back end until it ignited. There would be a loud bang and the nail would be propelled out of the barrel...It could cause a great deal of pain, break the skin or cause the loss of an eye if it caught you there.<sup>233</sup>

Nevertheless, journalists reported that police had a difficult time trying to hamper street violence because juvenile gang members could create functioning weapons from almost anything they found at home, school, or in their neighborhood.

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<sup>232</sup> “The Problem of Teen-Age Street Gangs.”

<sup>233</sup> Allen M. Hornblum, *Sentenced to Science: One Black Man's Story of Imprisonment in America*, (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2007), 19.

By December 1956, journalists like Harry J. Karafin of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* were expressing their concern, outrage, and vulnerability to the rise in violent gangs with statements like: “Twenty-nine armed teen-age gangs are waging constant deadly warfare among themselves and upon a virtually defenseless Philadelphia public, committing crimes ranging from simple assault to murder.”<sup>234</sup> That year, there were approximately 10,000 arrests of youth under eighteen years old for gang activity. In 1956, with the police department’s 103-officer Juvenile Aid Bureau, the Gang Control Unit had twelve members who monitored youth gangs throughout the city, mapped their turf, and “periodically” raided gang hangouts for weapons. Although the police department was meticulous in its investigation of juvenile gangs in the city, Police Commissioner Thomas J. Gibbons (1952-1960), councilman and chairman of the Public Safety Committee Paul D’Ortona, and Commander of the Juvenile Aid Bureau, Captain Harry G. Fox argued that the Gang Unit needed more officers.<sup>235</sup> According to Captain Fox, more officers were needed to fight gang violence because youth gangs were so volatile that a minor “provocation,” such as opposing gang members brushing past each other, could trigger a “flare up” of gang warfare. Other city officials believed that the city was “hampered” in its use of effective gang prevention or law enforcement because of the city’s financial constraints. In Karafin’s article, he reported that the Juvenile Court was backlogged with cases because its staff was “undermanned and underpaid.”<sup>236</sup> Additionally, the Youth Study Center (YSC), where teenagers were sent for punishment and rehabilitation while they awaited their criminal trial, was full and youth unable to enter the YSC were sent to

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<sup>234</sup> “The Problem of Teen-Age Street Gangs.”

<sup>235</sup> “The Problem of Teen-Age Street Gangs.”

<sup>236</sup> “The Problem of Teen-Age Street Gangs.”

the adult institution, Moyamensing Prison, where they would be negatively exposed to and possibly influenced by “harden criminals” like “narcotics addicts” and “sex offenders.”<sup>237</sup> Although gang violence existed throughout the city regardless of race, police and media gradually focused more on gang activity in certain neighborhoods that were defined by their race and class stratification, in part due to segregation. One gang-related, criminal case that exemplified the growing criminalization (and fear) of poor, black, youth who lived in the slums was the 1956 murder of Chris Schauer in North Philadelphia.

Just after 9 PM on December 6, 1956, the operator of Silver Dollar Check Cashing, 53-year-old Chris Schauer was going toward the night depository at Broad Street Trust Co. Branch located at Broad Street and Fairmount Avenue when he got caught in the crossfire of a gang shootout.<sup>238</sup> Youth gangs, the Tenderloins and the Spaniels were engaging in warfare when Schauer was shot once between the eyes as he stepped out of his 1956 Cadillac parked on the curb. Although Schauer was immediately taken to Hahnemann Hospital in a police emergency car, he died of his injury minutes later. When Police Commissioner Thomas J. Gibbons (from 1952-1960) heard about the crime over

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<sup>237</sup> “The Problem of Teen-Age Street Gangs.” From 1908-1953, Philadelphia’s House of Detention at Front and Arch Streets detained youth awaiting criminal trials in Juvenile Court. The institution offered youth room and board, schooling, recreation, and discipline. In 1954, the Youth Study Center (YSC) opened at 21st and Benjamin Franklin Parkway for youth between the ages of six and seventeen. During the 1950s and 1960s, the YSC often experienced overcrowding and soon only accepted youth up to age sixteen. Youth who could not gain entrance into the YSC were sent to another juvenile institution outside the city limits or an adult prison. In December 2012, the YSC closed and a new, 24-hour facility opened in West Philadelphia at 91 N. 48th Street as the Juvenile Justice Services Center.

<sup>238</sup> “Thug Kills Businessman on Broad St.,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Dec. 7, 1956):1; 12, Newspapers.com, accessed January 24, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/59033077/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>. In 1956, the Silver Dollar Check Cashing agency was located at 711 S. Broad Street in South Philadelphia.

his police car radio, he ordered a search of every “taproom and dive” in the area, joined the manhunt, and reportedly stated:

He [Schauer] never had a chance...We are living in a jungle. This is the one time the courts are going to have to do something about it. They’ve been letting these people off with three-month sentences. If they don’t do something now, whether the Civil Liberties Union likes it or not, I’m not going to have everybody brought in who’s found carrying a gun. It’s time the courts woke up to this danger.<sup>239</sup>

Prior to Schauer’s death, Gibbons expressed his disdain and hopelessness for this area of the city that year when he referred to predominantly black neighborhoods in North Philadelphia like North Central as “the jungle” because it was an impoverished, trash-strewn community with the highest crime rate in the city.<sup>240</sup> Moreover, the proliferation of troubling crime statistics and Gibbons’ reputation as the “Lone Wolf” 27-year veteran officer who Mayor Joseph S. Clark Jr. named police commissioner over several high-ranking officers in an age of mass departmental corruption, made his view of the neighborhood and his stance for tougher criminal sentencing influential in how officers, city officials, and citizens perceived North Philadelphia as well.<sup>241</sup>

The next morning, Schauer’s murder was a front-page news story in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. In the article entitled, “Thug Kills Businessman on Broad St.,” the unknown author described the tragedy with sympathy laced in middle-class consciousness, a scourging anger for urban youth crime, and a conflation of stereotypes where black gang members were not just violent but also potential thieves. In the article, the journalist mentioned how Schauer was an innocent victim of a “thug” and “bandit” who shot him

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<sup>239</sup> “Thug Kills Businessman on Broad St.”

<sup>240</sup> Hornblum, *Sentenced to Science*, 9-20.

<sup>241</sup> AP News, “Thomas Gibbons, 83 of Philadelphia Police,” *New York Times* (Feb. 7, 1988): 44, NYTimes.com, accessed January 24, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/1988/02/07/obituaries/thomas-gibbons-83-of-philadelphia-police.html>.

on the street as his friend, Bessie Strickler witnessed the event.<sup>242</sup> Strickler told police that she and Schauer were stepping out of the car when she heard the sound of a “cap pistol” as three youths came from the corner of Fairmount Avenue. Then a “young Negro” between the ages of fifteen and sixteen, “heavily built” and standing at approximately 5’7” tall wearing a “tan jacket and light-colored trousers” aimed a gun at Schauer and shot him. From the author’s viewpoint, Strickler’s account of the murder was reputable not only because she was with Schauer when he was shot, but because her socioeconomic status as the widow of highly-esteemed University of Pennsylvania dermatologist, Dr. Albert Strickler who died with a \$709,925 estate made her certified as a “decent citizen.”<sup>243</sup> Additionally, the article featured not only soundbites from the journalist’s interview with Strickler, but also crime scene photos that photographically demonstrated Strickler being reportedly “overcome by grief and shock,” as she held a “blood-stained paper packet of money and checks for deposit.” Among the photographs of the murder scene were images of Schauer’s *new* 1956 Cadillac along with his “tortoise-shell spectacles” and “box of fountain pens” that fell in the street as Schauer collapsed from taking a gunshot to the head.<sup>244</sup> The author’s emphasis on Schauer’s car, glasses, and fountain pens reflected a middle-class consciousness that not only reaffirmed his status as an “upstanding citizen,” but also indirectly suggested that this section of the city where he was murdered, Francisville, was a dangerous place where he and others like him, middle-class and white Philadelphians, did not belong. The author’s stereotyping of Schauer’s murderer as a “thug” and “bandit” labelled black gang members as capable of

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<sup>242</sup> “Thug Kills Businessman on Broad St.”

<sup>243</sup> “Thug Kills Businessman on Broad St.”

<sup>244</sup> “Thug Kills Businessman on Broad St.”



committing violence and robbery against middle-class whites. Furthermore, Schauer's death was not the only gang-related crime that cultivated public sentiment that poor, black neighborhoods in North Philadelphia were irredeemable and off-limits to white and middle-class citizens.

In 1956, there were numerous reports of innocent bystanders and gang members killed by illegal firearms from city streets to the steps of a public housing project.<sup>245</sup> Police and judicial response to gang violence in "crime hotspot" areas was often immediate, punitive, and racially stigmatizing for the youth involved. For police and journalists, black youth crime in hyper-segregated neighborhoods was a sign that police and city officials needed to implement more tough on crime policies to control what they believed to be a rising tide of uncontrollable black crime. In February 1956, twenty-year-old truck driver Gilbert Davis was shot to death at Bouvier and Master Streets when he attempted to break up a shootout between the Moroccans and the Cabot Streeters. Following the murder of the husband and father of three, police from the Juvenile Aid Bureau brought 300 black youth into custody and questioned them over the span of 36 hours until they found their murder suspects, seventeen-year-old Norman DeLoatche and sixteen-year-old Charles Talbert.<sup>246</sup> In April 1956, fifteen-year-old Village gang member James Midgett was shot and killed by members of a rival "project" gang at a house near 25th and Norris Streets in the James Weldon Johnson Homes over an unpaid debt for a torn jacket. By February 1957, sixteen-year-olds Frederick Woods, Robert Carroll, LeRoy Brinkley were

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<sup>245</sup> "The Problem of Teen-Age Street Gangs."

<sup>246</sup> "Street-Corner Slaying of Youth Admitted by Two Hoodlums," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Feb. 11, 1956):13, Newspapers.com, accessed January 24, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/68470379/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

tried in court and sent to jail for murdering Midgett.<sup>247</sup> By December 16, 1956, 26 youths were brought into court on criminal charges of homicide and juvenile delinquency. Judge Victor DiNuble later charged nine teenagers with the gang-related murder of Schauer.<sup>248</sup> Although there were many gang-related homicides that triggered anger, outrage, and public demand for tough on crime policing of juvenile gangs, one *Philadelphia Inquirer* article detailing the Schauer case captured the law and order sentiment of police, city officials and some citizens adopted into the 1960s on the growing issue of juvenile gangs in black neighborhoods making “their streets unsafe for decent people”: “Kid Gloves Won’t End Gang Wars.”<sup>249</sup>

On November 9, 1957, *Human Events* published journalist Morley Cassidy’s article, “The Most Explosive Race Problem is in the North: ‘Tyrannosaurus’ Stalks in the City of Brotherly Love.” In this piece, he argued that black gang violence was a result of the “invasion” of Southern black migrants to Philadelphia.<sup>250</sup> Cassidy’s fear-mongering piece equated Southern black migrants to a “Tyrannosaurus” stomping into Northern cities like Philadelphia and bringing crime and blight to the city’s middle-class neighborhoods. In the article, Cassidy stated that from 1950 to 1957, the black population increased by over 113,000 at a rate seven times that of whites in Philadelphia. With 489,900 African Americans living in Philadelphia, they were already 22% of the city’s population and expected to exceed that number in the years to come.<sup>251</sup> Cassidy also emphasized how

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<sup>247</sup> “4 in Teen Gang Jailed in Killing,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Feb. 16, 1957):11, Newspapers.com, accessed January 24, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/68470455/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>248</sup> “Kid Gloves Won’t End Gang Wars,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Dec. 16, 1956):54, Newspapers.com, accessed January 24, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/59033700/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>249</sup> “Kid Gloves Won’t End Gang Wars.”

<sup>250</sup> Morley Cassidy, “The Most Explosive Race Problem is in the North: ‘Tyrannosaurus’ Stalks in the City of Brotherly Love,” *Human Events* 14.45, (Nov. 9, 1957): 1-4.

<sup>251</sup> Cassidy, “The Most Explosive Race Problem is in the North,” 2.

neighborhoods in Philadelphia changed for the worse because black migrants were allegedly collecting welfare benefits instead of seeking employment, sending their “retarded” children with “disciplinary” problems to good schools like Benjamin Franklin High School, and electorally transforming the city’s historically Republican government into a Democratic stronghold. Additionally, Cassidy connected the “invasion” of black migrants to the rise of slums, black gangs, and blighted communities in West Philadelphia where many African Americans were choosing to settle when housing options were unavailable in North Philadelphia:

The first Negro is the portent of wholesale invasion. Much of West Philadelphia, thus, has been transformed from an area of solid middle-class respectability into a heavily colored area where trouble is spreading rapidly. Huge sections along Lancaster Avenue have been downgraded into the meanest kind of slums, noisy with barrooms, brawls, juke boxes and hoagie shops, where even the police walk warily, in pairs. The once fashionable Strawberry Mansion section is now a domain divided among juvenile Negro fighting gangs, waging war among themselves. The meaning of all this, in loss of property values, is something Philadelphians with the best good will cannot ignore.<sup>252</sup>

Furthermore, Cassidy not only scapegoated Southern black migrants for transforming good neighborhoods into slums, but also declared that the middle-class fear of the spillage of black crime was now a reality. He argued that the black gangs Police Commissioner Gibbons reported about in North Philadelphia’s “The Jungle” were now threatening the law-abiding, white communities of West Philadelphia while black leaders were allowing black crime to thrive by spewing “hate-mongering” accusations of police brutality against the police.<sup>253</sup> Nevertheless, Cassidy suggested that criminal activity spread throughout the city as black migration expanded across Philadelphia.

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<sup>252</sup> Cassidy, “The Most Explosive Race Problem is in the North,” 3-4.

<sup>253</sup> Cassidy, “The Most Explosive Race Problem is in the North,” 4.

Cassidy's article was published in *Human Events*, a news outlet similar to the *Philadelphia Bulletin* that catered to a white readership.<sup>254</sup> However, the article was also republished in the black, middle-class newspaper the *Philadelphia Tribune*. The editors of the *Philadelphia Tribune* republished the article twice in February 1958 as a "public service" without any disclaimers about the racist and classist undertones present in Cassidy's piece.<sup>255</sup> Moreover, white middle-class Philadelphians were not the only residents who accepted the "jungle" trope associated with black migrants and their working-class communities. Many middle-class African Americans who lived away from the "black slums" believed in the "jungle" trope too and chose class solidarity over racial solidarity in the postwar era of residential desegregation.

## Conclusion

As historian Timothy Lombardo explains in his 2018 book, *Blue-Collar Conservatism: Frank Rizzo's Philadelphia and Populist Politics*, police and journalists had an authoritative role in shaping the perception average citizens and city officials had of *where* crime occurred and *who* were the perpetrators of offenses like gang violence.<sup>256</sup> When officials like Police Commissioner Gibbons' used the term "jungle" in 1956 to describe North Central Philadelphia, that label embodied the racist connotation that a black-inhabited, working-class community struggling with home maintenance and high levels of poverty and crime were a threat to the safety of "hard-working" middle-class

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<sup>254</sup> Ed. Peter Binzen, *Nearly Everybody Read It: Snapshots of the Philadelphia Bulletin*, (Philadelphia: Camino Books, Inc., 1998).

<sup>255</sup> Morley Cassidy, "Most Explosive Race Problem in North: Cassidy Article Reprint Is Public Service," *Philadelphia Tribune* (February 22, 1958): 1, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed March 25, 2021, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/most-explosive-race-problem-north/docview/532138966/se-2?accountid=14270>.

<sup>256</sup> Timothy Lombardo, *Blue-Collar Conservatism: Frank Rizzo's Philadelphia and Populist Politics*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 28-30.

citizens. Gibbons' term, "jungle," influenced journalists like the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin's* Charles Shaw to pen the February 1957 article, "The Jungle: Seven Square Miles that Shame—and Menace—Our City," describing Lower North Philadelphia, beyond its black neighborhoods, as marked by "blighted housing, a troublingly high crime rate, and a shamed population" where the poor were impoverished because of their supposed moral failings as "drunks, thieves, and transients searching for instant gratification."<sup>257</sup> However, journalists like Anne E. Hellyer reinvestigated Shaw's news story by conducting interviews with white residents of North Philadelphia and from her research she indirectly learned that the "jungle" was indeed a racialized term that did not refer to the white ethnic neighborhoods of North Philadelphia, such as Kensington, Fishtown, and Brewerytown, but the black areas within the North Central Police Division's patrolling boundaries.<sup>258</sup>

News stories of black gang violence in "blighted" and impoverished neighborhoods like the 1956 murder of Christopher Schauer in North Philadelphia cemented the public's belief in the trope of threatening black gangs from the "urban jungle" who needed to be policed and contained in "black spaces" away from the "proud, blue-collar neighborhoods" deemed as "white spaces" in Philadelphia where violent crimes were not supposed to happen.<sup>259</sup> Nevertheless, the term "jungle" was based on race and class stigmas that created a unique self-fulfilling prophecy where over several generations, white segregationists (with assistance from the police) resisted African Americans in their community so strongly with segregation, economic exploitation, social

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<sup>257</sup> Lombardo, *Blue-Collar Conservatism*, 28-30.

<sup>258</sup> Lombardo, *Blue-Collar Conservatism*, 28-30.

<sup>259</sup> Lombardo, *Blue-Collar Conservatism*, 28-30.

disadvantage, and violence following the Great Migration that they helped create what their stereotypical minds feared: a “second ghetto” of black communities filled with poverty, despair, crime, and eventually gang violence.<sup>260</sup> In 1958, police and journalists facilitated the publicity of a new threat to the ideal society: the spillage of black gang violence into white neighborhoods of middle-class status. Nevertheless, “gang” murders like that of a University of Pennsylvania graduate student in West Philadelphia, In-Ho Oh, sparked government support and citizen consent for the tough on crime policing of black youth from the late 1950s through the 1970s.

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<sup>260</sup> Arnold Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), xii.

### CHAPTER 3

#### **“STOP TALKING AND ACT’: THE BATTLE BETWEEN TOUGH ON CRIME POLICING AND GUARDIANSHIP OF BLACK JUVENILE GANGS, 1958-1969”**

On April 25, 1958, it had been a few days since 26-year-old graduate student In-Ho Oh wrote home to his parents in Korea, so on that Friday night (when he was not working as a teller at Provident Tradesmen Bank) he decided to mail them a letter not far from his Powelton Village home.<sup>261</sup> Oh was studying at the University of Pennsylvania to earn his degree in Political Science for the past year after graduating from Eastern University and working overseas as an interpreter for the U.S. Army during the Korean War.<sup>262</sup> Around 9 PM, Oh left one of the apartments in the three-story Victorian home at 3610 Hamilton Street he shared with his Uncle Ki Hang and Aunt Za Yung Oh and walked to the corner of 36<sup>th</sup> and Hamilton to mail the letter.

Less than two minutes away, there were eleven African American teenage boys who had just left St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church after officials turned them away from a society club’s dance that evening. Like the other boys, Leonard Johnson, Lonnie Collins, and Harold Johnson who lived more than a half a mile away in and around the working-class, black neighborhood of Mantua, were angered that they were dismissed from the party because they did not have the 35 cents admission fee and were dressed in “improper

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<sup>261</sup> Seymour Shubin, “Memorial to a Murder,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (June 11, 1961): 108, Newspapers.com, accessed May 28, 2019, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31329497/pittsburgh\\_postgazette/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31329497/pittsburgh_postgazette/).

<sup>262</sup> “Fatal Beating Hearing for 11 on Wednesday,” *Standard-Sentinel* (April 29, 1958): 15, Newspapers.com, accessed May 28, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31330034/standardsentinel/>.

attire.”<sup>263</sup> Soon the boys slowly gathered together and decided they were going to “roll [rob] somebody.”<sup>264</sup>

As Oh was walking back to his apartment, the boys were strolling up 36<sup>th</sup> Street to the same corner. Soon the group approached Oh and attempted to rob him. As a few boys watched, the remaining teenagers scuffled with Oh who tried to fight back in self-defense. Once a few of the boys were able to pin Oh down, others rifled through his pockets looking for money.<sup>265</sup> Then they punched, kicked, and beat him with bottles and a blackjack. After the beating, the boys fled with witnesses later reporting to police that nearly a dozen boys were running from the scene. At 9:20 PM, Oh was spotted lying on the sidewalk. His face was beaten beyond recognition. He was soon taken by an ambulance to Presbyterian Hospital where he died in transit ten minutes later.<sup>266</sup>

At the crime scene, police immediately began their investigation and within forty hours, the eleven boys were “rounded up,” arrested, and interrogated.<sup>267</sup> Days later, the community responded with a town hall meeting on the issue of gang violence at St. Andrew’s Church while police responded with an additional 125 officers patrolling the neighborhood on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights to prevent future gang crimes.<sup>268</sup> When Oh’s parents were notified by telegram about their son’s murder, they responded

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<sup>263</sup> “DA to Ask Adult Trials for 8 Teeners in Killing,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (April 29, 1958): 3, Newspapers.com, accessed May 28, 2019, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31330151/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31330151/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

<sup>264</sup> “Memorial to a Murder.”

<sup>265</sup> “Memorial to a Murder.”

<sup>266</sup> “DA to Ask Adult Trials for 8 Teeners in Killing.”

<sup>267</sup> “Police Capture 11 in Korean’s Fatal Beating,” *Indiana Gazette* (April 28, 1958): 16, Newspapers.com, accessed May 28, 2019, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31329870/the\\_indiana\\_gazette/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31329870/the_indiana_gazette/).

<sup>268</sup> “125 Police Ordered into Murder Area to Curb Teen Gangs: Residents Pledged Aid by Gibbons,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (April 29, 1958):1; 3, Newspapers.com, accessed June 1, 2019, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31330236/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31330236/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).



with a letter to city and prosecutorial officials with sorrow but also juvenile reform for the boys. Oh's family came from a devout Presbyterian background and they developed empathy for others following the human suffering they experienced and witnessed during World War II and the Korean War.<sup>269</sup> Nevertheless, Oh's parents, seven siblings, and thirteen other relatives requested that the teens who murdered Oh not receive the death penalty and that the city accept a \$500 donation from them to assist in reforming the lives of the boys involved in the crime.<sup>270</sup> Mayor Richardson Dilworth (1956-1962) was so shocked and embarrassed by Oh's murder that on behalf of the city of Philadelphia, he started a personal campaign to raise a \$6000 college scholarship in Oh's honor at the University of Pennsylvania to appease and compliment the Oh family's demonstration of forgiveness and charity.<sup>271</sup> At Oh's funeral, Mayor Dilworth further expressed guilt and penance for the "gang murder" that happened under his watch when he spoke to a group of 50 mourners at a small West Philadelphia funeral home with tears in his eyes saying, "it is a horrible thing that this could happen in our city."<sup>272</sup>

In-Ho Oh's murder quickly became national news. In newspapers like the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, along with magazines like *LIFE*, the murder was described as a "slaying" committed by "thugs," "hoodlums," and a "gang of boy street thieves."<sup>273</sup> *TIME* magazine described the aggressive police response

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<sup>269</sup> "In-Ho Oh's Parents to Give \$500 to 'Help' His Slayers," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (April 3, 1959), Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169A, vol. 2412/ Oh, In-Ho—(Murdered).

<sup>270</sup> "Memorial to a Murder."

<sup>271</sup> "Mayor Starts Drive for Fund to Honor Slain Student," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (May 6, 1958): 33, Newspapers.com, accessed March 1, 2021, [Clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer - Newspapers.com](http://clippingfromthe.philadelphiainquirer.com).

<sup>272</sup> "CITIES: Hands Dripping Blood," *TIME*, (May 12, 1958), Time.com, accessed March 1, 2021, <http://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,863391,00.html>.

<sup>273</sup> Maurice M. Lewis Jr., "Gang Murders Korean Student in West Phila.: Police Round Up 6 Youths after Savage Assault," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (April 26, 1958), Temple University Special Collections

following Oh's murder in graphic and racialized terms as patrolmen "swarming" into the "integrated area" around the University of Pennsylvania's campus to eventually "collar all eleven of the junior-grade thugs" involved in the crime.<sup>274</sup> In Philadelphia, interracial murder was a rarity, making up less than ten percent of homicide cases, because of hyper-segregation but when it did happen it was a front page story in major newspapers.<sup>275</sup> Nevertheless, Oh's murder sparked local concern about gang violence and fear of "black criminality" in desegregated urban spaces. Nevertheless, the media portrayed the incident as not only a tragic murder, but also as the annihilation of an ideal, integrated community secure in middle-class values and public safety.

Moreover, the 1958 robbery and murder of international student, In-Ho Oh, by eleven black teenagers in West Philadelphia created public outcry on the issue of black gangs in desegregating neighborhoods. Although the incident was falsely publicized by the media as a "gang murder" because a group of teenage boys committed the crime, the interracial homicide unofficially sparked a full-fledged tough on crime program by police and city officials.<sup>276</sup> From 1958 to 1969, police and city officials became more concerned about "roving black gangs" in desegregated neighborhoods than all-black neighborhoods because they feared white flight and white, middle-class disinvestment from inner-city businesses and institutions that fed Philadelphia's tax base.<sup>277</sup> Since black gang crime

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Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169A, vol. 2412/ Oh, In-Ho—(Murdered).

<sup>274</sup> "CITIES: Hands Dripping Blood."

<sup>275</sup> Eric C. Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide: Race, Place, and Space in Postwar Philadelphia*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 34-35.

<sup>276</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 32-50.

<sup>277</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 41-42.

posed a “threat” to desegregating middle-class neighborhoods throughout the 1960s, police sought to eliminate black crime through policing and mass incarceration.

Black community activists in schools and neighborhoods responded to the “gang problem” by establishing peaceful programs like Herman Wrice’s Young Greats Society to eliminate black gang violence through education, recreation, social welfare, and job training.<sup>278</sup> Nevertheless, from 1958 to 1969, Philadelphia’s police department and City Council pursued a tough on crime policing program targeting real and imagined black gangs to convince the white middle-class to stay in the inner-city, while black community activists provided “guardianship” to black youth to keep them out of the prison system and promote a positive reputation of black citizens.<sup>279</sup>

### **A “Noose” Around Philadelphia: Fighting Black Gangs to Stop White Flight**

The public outcry against the “gang attack” of In-Ho Oh involved sentiments of disbelief, anger, and regret about the failed experiment of residential integration. In the mid-1950s, city planners, religious institutions, and community organizations across the country began to establish multiracial social clubs and sponsored recreational events to transform all-white, middle-class neighborhoods from what historian Abigail Perkiss describes as communities advocating racial homogeneity to ones promoting “class-based

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<sup>278</sup> Joe Clark, “Shotgun Blast Triggers Young Great Society,” *Philadelphia Daily News* (Sept 1, 1965):4-14, Newspapers.com, accessed April 1, 2021, [Clipping from Philadelphia Daily News - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>279</sup> James Forman, Jr., *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017), 44-45. The idea of black activists providing “guardianship” over criminal black youth comes from Forman’s book. In the book, Forman describes how black court officials, community organizers, and elected officials promoted a range of policies to deter criminality and protect black people’s reputation in mainstream society: incarceration, rehabilitation, and strict drug and gun laws. These policies had positive and negative effects on black youth. Strict crime laws and incarceration were particularly detrimental to African Americans in the long-run because many individuals experienced recidivism and social stigma for the rest of their lives.

exclusivity.”<sup>280</sup> Since desegregation was spreading throughout the city, some community members theoretically believed that as middle-class African Americans were attaining upward social mobility and moving into all-white, middle-class neighborhoods, positive race relations between black and white people could be fostered in religious and cultural centers that offered community activities like arts, movie nights, and dances.

In Philadelphia, some die-hard, white residents of neighborhoods in Northwest and West Philadelphia supported residential integration and promoted multiracial organizations like the West Mount Airy Neighbors (WMAN) while also encouraging their black and white neighbors to build community around recreational events at social institutions like the Germantown Jewish Centre, the Unitarian Church, and the local Boy Scouts.<sup>281</sup> However, these white, pro-integration community activists were also invested in convincing their fellow white neighbors to not indulge realtors who financially profited from segregation and blockbusting by engaging in panic selling and moving to Northeast Philadelphia or the city’s suburbs to escape incoming black residents. Furthermore, their goal was to create a stable, multiracial community that would discourage white flight and inspire white residents to accept their black neighbors.<sup>282</sup>

Many white, middle-class residents who believed in the idea of racial inclusivity for their neighborhood wanted to be racially-progressive while also deterring blight and crime in their community. Additionally, many of these white residents fearing blight and black crime did not want to lose their ethnic and communal ties to their neighborhood nor

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<sup>280</sup> Abigail Perkiss, *Making Good Neighbors: Civil Rights, Liberalism, and Integration in Postwar Philadelphia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014), 36-51.

<sup>281</sup> Perkiss, *Making Good Neighbors*, 36-51.

<sup>282</sup> Perkiss, *Making Good Neighbors*, 36-51.

access to good schools and recreation centers in their communities by moving to a new, all-white neighborhood.<sup>283</sup> Therefore, they assumed that African Americans of middle-class status would possess middle-class morals and values similar to the white middle-class that would encourage them to maintain the reputation of their new neighborhood, despite the popular racial stigmas pegged onto their race.

Like the residents in Northwest Philadelphia, many white residents in middle-class neighborhoods like Powelton Village preferred middle-class black families as their neighbors since working-class African Americans were stigmatized as unrefined and criminal because of their race and class. Additionally, these white, middle-class residents wanted to feel “safe” in their communities, while also protecting their home’s property value from devaluation by local realtors who considered race and class demographics as determining factors of a neighborhood’s potential for blight.<sup>284</sup> However, when the news media revealed that Oh’s murderers were in Powelton Village to attend a church-sponsored, neighborhood dance promoting racial integration, it caused some white Philadelphians to question whether residential desegregation was a long-term, social good.<sup>285</sup> It caused some white residents to speculate whether criminality was an inherent trait among African Americans, especially the black poor. Nevertheless, for many white citizens, the Oh murder “traumatized” them into believing that the influx of black migrants into their communities would inevitably result in the rise of violent crime.

In the aftermath of the media blitz surrounding Oh’s murder, both Mayor Dilworth and Police Commissioner Thomas J. Gibbons felt pressured to control the spillage of

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<sup>283</sup> Perkiss, *Making Good Neighbors*, 50-54.

<sup>284</sup> Perkiss, *Making Good Neighbors*, 50-54.

<sup>285</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 32-39.

black gang violence with tough on crime policing in desegregated, middle-class neighborhoods when West Philadelphians expressed their anger and concern about public safety in the city in editorials, soundbites, and letters.<sup>286</sup> Both journalists and the Juvenile Court judge appointed to the Oh murder case used racist “jungle and animal analogies” to describe the black teenagers who murdered the young graduate student.<sup>287</sup> In a May 1958 editorial from the *Philadelphia Bulletin*, an anonymous author castigated the teenagers stating that they were “not human enough” to experience emotion, fear or remorse because for them to commit a murder “as wantonly fierce as ever stained a jungle thicket,” they acted as “insensitive” as “a pack of hyenas regards a carcass.”<sup>288</sup> At the teenagers’ arraignment, Judge J. Stanley Hoffman ordered that the boys be tried as adults and face the death penalty after he described them as “vermin” whose “barbaric piece of savagery brought undeserved shame to a decent, law-abiding segment of our population.”<sup>289</sup> Additionally, Mayor Dilworth himself received three boxes of letters from residents who described incidents in which they or their family members were “assaulted, held up, burgled, or harassed” by predominantly black teenagers, suggested tough on crime punishments for the youth, or expressed their desire to leave the city.<sup>290</sup>

On May 4, 1958, Mayor Dilworth held a televised news conference in which he responded to the letters he received about the Oh murder. He began his speech by discussing how race relations between blacks and whites were marred by segregation,

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<sup>286</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 34-40.

<sup>287</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 36.

<sup>288</sup> “Other Editors’ Views: Why They Don’t Cringe,” *The Evening Times* (May 5, 1958): 4, Newspapers.com, accessed April 1, 2021, [Clipping from The Evening Times - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>289</sup> “11 Lashed as ‘Vermin’ And Held Without Bail in Killing of Student,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, (May 1, 1958): 1, Newspapers.com, accessed April 1, 2021, [Clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>290</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 37-38.

racial discrimination, and economic exploitation in homeownership.<sup>291</sup> Dilworth then explained that black crime in Philadelphia was high because “there are so many low income Negro districts.” From his viewpoint, tough on crime policing was not the best approach because crime rates could drop if there were more social services, recreational facilities for youth, and “specialized institutions” for juvenile offenders. Furthermore, Dilworth argued that Philadelphians could only “solve the problem” of violent interracial crime if they worked as a “community,” which meant whites had to stop practicing racial discrimination and blacks had to exert more leadership in tackling social problems in their community.<sup>292</sup>

However, Dilworth was still concerned about letters he received from residents like Marilyn Steinberg who considered white flight to the suburbs: “I’ve always loved living in the City of Philadelphia, but during the past year I’ve thought more than once of moving as far out as possible.”<sup>293</sup> As historian Eric Schneider explained in his 2020 book, *Ecology of Homicide: Race, Place, and Space in Postwar Philadelphia*, Dilworth was aware that urban desegregation and crime deterred whites from remaining in the city while the allure of “modern housing” in the suburbs enticed white middle-class families to move out. In fact, Dilworth once referred to suburbanization as a “white noose” taking the life out of Philadelphia, which relied on the income of the white middle-class to feed the city’s tax base. Nevertheless, while Dilworth was against the tough on crime policing of poor African Americans, he supported urban renewal projects that would benefit the middle-class, such as revitalizing Center City as a commercial district and building new

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<sup>291</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 40-41.

<sup>292</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 40-41.

<sup>293</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 37.

roadways that connected Philadelphia to other metropolitan areas. However, those plans led to the clearance and gentrification of low-income black neighborhoods like West Philadelphia's Black Bottom which displaced African American residents, established the middle-class community University City, and fueled more racial tension between blacks and whites.<sup>294</sup>

In contrast to Mayor Dilworth, Police Commissioner Gibbons, who in 1957 previously referred to "blighted," impoverished, and black-inhabited neighborhoods as a crime-ridden "jungle," instructed the police department to implement tough on crime initiatives following Oh's murder. Gibbons received 46 letters from citizens expressing their outrage over the homicide in West Philadelphia.<sup>295</sup> In the letters from residents, many complained about how lenient the criminal justice system was in handling juvenile delinquency by condemning politicians, judges, and social workers who advocated rehabilitation over incarceration as "overoptimistic and shortsighted courts, addle-brained social workers, and soft-headed do-gooders."<sup>296</sup> Other letters from real estate owners reported a number of vacancies in the area surrounding Powelton Village because "white collar families" were panicking about the rise in juvenile crime and desiring to move to a "safer area."<sup>297</sup> Gibbons would later oversee the police department's gradual implementation of increased membership in the police department's Gang Unit, the use of the police's K-9 unit on public transportation, and motorized police patrol by car and jeep to "curb the crime wave" of gang violence that tough on crime supporters feared. Furthermore, although only one juvenile of the eleven African American teens who

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<sup>294</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 41-50.

<sup>295</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 39.

<sup>296</sup> "Mayor Starts Drive for Fund to Honor Slain Student."

<sup>297</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 39.



murdered Oh was allegedly a member of an active gang, this “gang murder” triggered stricter tough on crime policies that included less detention of juvenile delinquents at places like the Youth Study Center (YSC) and more imprisonment of “criminal youth” at adult facilities like Holmesburg Prison.

### **Black Gangs Committing Interracial Violence Trigger Tough on Crime Policing**

From 1958 through 1969, interracial violence like the 1958 In-Ho Oh murder case triggered a citywide tough on crime campaign against specifically black gang violence because poor African Americans were stigmatized as criminals and harbingers of urban blight who created crime-ridden “jungles” of the communities they inhabited. Although the eleven black teenagers who murdered Oh were not an established gang, police viewed the murder as a gang crime because the homicide was committed by a group of at least three individuals. Additionally, actual black gangs with official names, turf, and reputations of violence existed throughout the city.<sup>298</sup> Furthermore, from 1958 onward, police focused on black gang crimes because the news coverage of Oh’s murder made citizens fearful and hyper-aware of their presence in the city. In response to the public’s concern about black gangs, social activists in Philadelphia investigated the sociological explanations and rehabilitative solutions for juvenile gang activity. On the other hand, the police department sidestepped sociological data and pursued tough on crime and public safety initiatives to specifically prevent black gangs from committing interracial crimes in integrated public spaces. Moreover, tough on crime policing overshadowed rehabilitative programs run by social activists in Philadelphia because journalists

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<sup>298</sup> Phineas M. Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, (Washington, D.C.: ERIC Clearinghouse, 1970), 20-25.

cultivated a public fear of black gangs from “the jungle” spilling into other areas of the city to promote aggressive policing and strict criminal sentencing of black youth.

In the 1960s, Philadelphia educator M. Phineas Anderson, researched the formation, prevalence, and impact of black gangs in Philadelphia. In his 1969 teacher’s manual on managing gang activity in the classroom, *The Gang Unit*, Anderson explains that African American gangs were the most common in Philadelphia because of racial discrimination:

My belief--formed after widespread reading as well as discussions with gang members, teachers, and other knowledgeable adults-- [is] that racial discrimination is a fundamental cause of gang violence. There are, of course, other causes. But why, I asked, is membership in Philadelphia’s violent gangs overwhelmingly black? Because, the answer came over and over again, discrimination forces so many black children to grow up under exactly those community conditions which have been shown to produce violent gangs among people of any race.<sup>299</sup>

Anderson’s argument was based on research he gathered from local newspaper, *The Evening Bulletin*, the Philadelphia Police Department’s Gang Control Unit, Juvenile Court, and the State Crime Commission. From his study, he learned that for black children who lived in poor and working-class black communities in North and West Philadelphia, gang participation among youth of any race occurred because they sought a place where they belonged, protection from neighborhood rivals and police, and income to improve their impoverished lifestyles.

Additionally, Anderson incorporated sociological research from Lewis Yablonsky’s 1962 book, *The Violent Gang*, into his analysis of black gang activity in Philadelphia.

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<sup>299</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 7. M. Phineas Anderson’s 1969 manual, *The Gang Unit*, was sponsored by the non-profit corporation, the Pennsylvania Advancement School. The manual consisted of sociological research on gangs, statistics on juvenile gang violence in Philadelphia, and classroom lesson plans for teachers who may encounter gang-affiliated youth in their schools.

Yablonsky's theories on social, delinquent, and violent gangs were based on the research sociologists Frederic Thrasher and William Foote Whyte completed in the 1920s through the 1940s. According to Yablonsky, social gangs formed around an interest in a "socially constructive" goal, delinquent gangs formed to engage in illegal behavior like robbery or assault, and violent gangs formed to commit "spontaneous prestige-seeking violent activities" for "psychic gratification" or thrills.<sup>300</sup> In *The Gang Unit*, Anderson bolstered Yablonsky's argument that youth gangs of the 1950s and 1960s were unlike those from the 1920s through the 1930s that were mostly "friendship organizations." Modern gangs were different because they "provided gang youths the opportunity to channel [the] aggressions and hostilities" they have about "school, family, the neighborhood, prejudice, or any other problems" into gang wars or random attacks on innocent people.<sup>301</sup> Moreover, Anderson agreed with Yablonsky's sociological position that although gang activity was a choice, black youth often joined gangs because they felt ostracized in their society and desired to be accepted in some sort of community.

Depending on the gang, boys and young men were inducted into the organization if they voiced their desire to be a member, proved their potential by stealing a designated item, or fought one or more gang members. As one teenaged gang member explained to a reporter from the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, "You have to fight about ten guys to join. You don't have to beat them all up, but you must show that you can defend yourself and that you have guts."<sup>302</sup> In other cases, the initiation process was simpler if the individual was related to a current gang member or possessed a gun. It was a rare

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<sup>300</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 10.

<sup>301</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 12.

<sup>302</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 20-25.

occurrence for individuals to be “drafted” or forced to join a gang against their will.

According to Police Sergeant Joseph E. Rich, supervisor of the Gang Control Unit, the only time youth were coerced to join was when a gang was lacking “troops” in the middle of “warfare” with a rival. He observed, "The only time a kid is drafted into a gang is when the gang is over-extended militarily--that is, fighting two or three fights at once. The ‘runners’ [leaders of the gang] are pretty smart; they know that draftees don't make such good fighters."<sup>303</sup>

Once in a gang, members were organized into different levels: the “Old Heads” (members aged 18-23), the "Young Boys" (sometimes broken into two sub-levels, "Juniors" and "Seniors," but are between the ages of 14-17), the "Midgets" (ages 12-14 years old), and recruits in waiting known as "Pygmies" or "Swiggetts" (aged 12 years old and younger).<sup>304</sup> Among the “Old Heads,” the “runner” or “warlord” was the leader of the gang. Some gangs had a “runner” who held total responsibility for the gang and a “warlord” who was in charge of “military” affairs. The “second runner” was next in command when the “runner” was not present. Lastly, the “checkholder” was responsible for overseeing the lowest rank of gang members, the “corner boys,” and reporting the activity of those “troops” to the “runners.”<sup>305</sup>

The names gang members selected to identify their groups were based on the neighborhood of their headquarters or defined by one or more of their group’s personal characteristics. For example, the 8th and Diamond Streeters referred to the intersection where they lived in North Philadelphia. Zulu Nation reflected the gang’s racial pride in

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<sup>303</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 20-25.

<sup>304</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 20-25.

<sup>305</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 20-25.

being black. And the Moon Gang signified how gang members were “active” when the moon appeared at night.

In times of “warfare” or “protection,” gangs carried a multitude of weapons: rods, shotguns, pistols, zip guns (a makeshift “gun” made of pipe, a block of wood, rubber bands, friction tape, and a door latch), switch blades, razors, car aerials, chains, pipes, and leather straps.<sup>306</sup> Guns acquired for a gang were often illegally purchased in their neighborhood or legally purchased by gang members eighteen years old or older. In Philadelphia, there were no well-established gangs composed of girls and young women. Oftentimes, the girlfriends of gang members participated in gang activities such as spying on rivals, carrying weapons, or fighting a girl affiliated with another gang.<sup>307</sup>

Following Anderson’s pages of research on the formation and prevalence of black gangs, he concluded his monograph with lesson plans teachers could use when educating black students in areas with gang activity.<sup>308</sup> Anderson recommended that teachers not only have open class discussions about gangs in their community, but also recreational activities that build character. According to Anderson, black students could learn how to be responsible by organizing their own dances, develop confidence through “free discussions on current political thought,” and cultivate self-respect by participating in crafts and library programs centered around African and African American art and history.<sup>309</sup> Anderson’s anti-gang initiatives focused on curbing black gang crime in black communities because African Americans were concerned about black gang violence

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<sup>306</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 20-25.

<sup>307</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 20-25.

<sup>308</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 84-85.

<sup>309</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 84-85.

citywide. However, following Oh's 1958 murder, police were concerned about black gang violence in white neighborhoods because "black-on-black" crime neither effected the white middle-class nor triggered white flight from Philadelphia. Furthermore, police became more invested in controlling black gang crimes in white and desegregated spaces than black spaces throughout the city.

When local news media reported countless stories of black gang violence, city officials and police were not triggered to respond to black-on black gang violence with tough on crime policing. This situation occurred because the crime neither involved a non-black victim nor threatened the safety of white middle-class residents. For example, on June 17, 1963, fifteen-year-old Theodore Furman was attacked and killed by six members of the Camac and Norris Street Gang outside of John Wanamaker Junior High School in North Philadelphia.<sup>310</sup> At 3:15 PM, sixteen-year-old Isaiah McFadden, a pupil of Thomas Edison High School, waited with his friends outside of Wanamaker to retaliate against Furman, a member of the Valley gang, for beating him up three weeks prior at 23rd and Norris Streets.<sup>311</sup> When Furman exited Wanamaker following school dismissal, McFadden and his friends immediately attacked him. As several students watched, the group of boys beat and stabbed Furman four times in the chest with a penknife until he broke away and ran one block to 12th and Columbia Avenue where he

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<sup>310</sup> "Youth, 15, Stabbed to Death In 'Revenge' Attack, 5 Held," *Philadelphia Daily News* (June 18, 1963): 4, Newspapers.com, accessed April 1, 2021, [Clipping from Philadelphia Daily News - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>311</sup> "Boy Stabbed to Death In Teen Gang Attack, Five Youths Charged," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (June 18, 1963): 25, Newspapers.com, accessed April 1, 2021, [Clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer - Newspapers.com](#). In 1963, Thomas Edison High School was located at 8th Street and Lehigh Avenue in Fairhill, while John Wanamaker Junior High School was located at 12th Street and Montgomery Avenue in Yorktown. The two original school buildings (now demolished) were approximately 1.3 miles away from each other. The other teens involved in the gang attack were sixteen-year-olds Allen Chapman and Richard Savoy, fifteen-year-old Leroy Odom, fourteen-year-old Alexander Branch, and thirteen-year-old Larry Braxton.

collapsed in the gutter. Soon the police arrived at the scene, found Furman, and transported him to St. Luke's Children's Medical Center where he was pronounced dead on arrival at 3:40 PM.<sup>312</sup>

When the 1963 black gang murder of Theodore Furman occurred, there was public outrage but no media blitz or tough on crime reaction like what occurred in the 1958 In-Ho Oh murder. As historian Eric Schneider explained, black gang stabbings and shootings that occurred in all-black neighborhoods and housing projects were often not reported in the press or generated additional police patrols and interventions.<sup>313</sup> Although Furman's murder was reported in newspapers like the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *Lebanon Daily News*, and the *Courier-Post*, the story never made the front-page or reached outside of the Mid-Atlantic region of the country.<sup>314</sup> However, the courts responded to Furman's homicide in a manner similar to Oh's murder. At the criminal trial, the boys, held without bail and scheduled to be tried as adults, were castigated by County Court Judge J. Sydney Hoffman as "teenage gangsters who make it impossible for adults and innocent youths to walk city streets without fear."<sup>315</sup> Moreover, while Philadelphia's city officials and police knew that black gang violence was an issue, they were more concerned about black crime affecting white middle-class people. By 1964, police and journalists began to consider tough on crime policing against black gang activity in black neighborhoods when African Americans in North Philadelphia engaged in an uprising and riot against white business owners and police.

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<sup>312</sup> "Boy Stabbed to Death In Teen Gang Attack, Five Youths Charged."

<sup>313</sup> Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide*, 78.

<sup>314</sup> "Gang Slaying," *Courier-Post* (July 10, 1963): 3, Newspapers.com, accessed March 31, 2021, [Clipping from Courier-Post - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>315</sup> "Angry Judge Sentences 5 in Gang Slaying" *Philadelphia Daily News* (July 17 1963): 5, Newspapers.com, accessed March 31, 2021, [Clipping from Philadelphia Daily News - Newspapers.com](#).

Around 1963, North Philadelphia neighborhoods like North Central that were once integrated before white flight became predominantly black in residents, but majority white in business ownership. Many black people in areas like North Philadelphia (where 400,000 of the city's 600,000 black residents lived) often had to patronize white businesses in order to get the food, clothes, and household items they needed for their families.<sup>316</sup> Sometimes African Americans were cheated by white businessmen and other times black families could not afford certain goods because the price was too high. Furthermore, racial tensions simmered between African Americans and white Americans as black people faced inequality and economic disparity in their own neighborhoods. In addition to African Americans' issues with white businessmen, the early 1960s was also a decade when black people were on edge about police brutality.

In 1964, the *Philadelphia Tribune* published many articles on police brutality in Philadelphia that resulted in several officers being brought to trial on criminal charges, but later acquitted.<sup>317</sup> While African Americans in North Philadelphia were aware of the police brutality in the city and race riots in other Northern cities like Harlem and Jersey City, an atmosphere of high racial tension led to a race riot on Columbia Avenue on August 28, 1964.<sup>318</sup> On that day, the riot began at 8:30 PM when an African American married couple, Odessa and Rush Bradford stopped driving their car at the busy intersection of 22<sup>nd</sup> and Columbia Avenue to argue and physically fight in the middle of the street. Two police officers later arrived at the scene, African American Officer Robert

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<sup>316</sup> "The North: Doing No Good," *TIME*, (Sept. 4, 1964), Time.com, accessed May 8, 2015, <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,830558-1,00.html>.

<sup>317</sup> "No Other Life," *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, (Mar. 6, 2001), accessed May 8, 2015, <http://www.upenn.edu/gazette/0301/early4.html>.

<sup>318</sup> "The North: Doing No Good."



Wells and White Officer John J. Hoff, approached the couple and ordered them to move their car. Officer Wells soon got into a confrontation with Odessa Bradford, who refused to move the vehicle, in which Odessa first slapped the officer and then the officer slapped her. Eventually Officer Wells chased Odessa around the car until he and Officer Hoff were able to arrest her and place her in a police wagon.<sup>319</sup>

Then, out of nowhere 41-year-old James Mettles appeared among the police officers and punched Officer Hoff to the ground as a method of protecting Odessa from what he believed to be police brutality. Immediately after, someone threw a brick and then a bottle towards the police officers and the uprising and riot against police began. The uprising and riot became widespread when 25-year-old Raymond Hall, a known “neighborhood agitator,” spread the rumor that a white policeman beat a pregnant black woman to death.<sup>320</sup> During the uprising and riot, which lasted until August 30, 1964, African American residents burned cars, destroyed and looted more than two hundred white businesses and fought with police.

About 1,800 police officers were called to stop the riot and maintain order on Columbia Avenue, including future Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo. In the riot, only one person died, 21-year-old Robert Green who was fatally shot when he attacked an officer with a knife. Once the riot ended, almost all white business owners permanently left North Philadelphia to open their restaurants, furniture stores, groceries and other

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<sup>319</sup> Thomas Ferrick Jr., Doreen Carvajal, and Thomas J. Gibbons Jr., “The 25-year-old Scars Of A Riot Violence Of 1964 Devastated A Vital Neighborhood,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, (Aug. 27, 1989), Articles. Philly.com, accessed May 8, 2015, [http://articles.philly.com/1989-08-27/news/26150452\\_1\\_riot-wells-notice-slides](http://articles.philly.com/1989-08-27/news/26150452_1_riot-wells-notice-slides).

<sup>320</sup> “No Other Life.”

stores outside of the black community, leaving Columbia Avenue to be a dismal business and shopping area unlike what it was before the riot.<sup>321</sup>

Following the events on Columbia Avenue, police and journalists began to conflate “mobs” with “gangs” and use the terms interchangeably to refer to African Americans who committed violent, interracial crimes in groups of three or more.<sup>322</sup> When police and journalists likened black gangs to mobs, they suggested that gangs were inherently violent and capable of theft and destruction similar to the individuals who stole from and destroyed white businesses during the riot on Columbia Avenue. For example, on the night of March 6, 1965, a group of six black teenage boys jumped a Broad Street Subway turnstile at the Race-Vine station near Center City, grabbed a fifteen-year-old white girl from the platform, pulled her onto the trainbed, and attempted to rape her. Although there were several people on the platform, a 23-year-old white Naval airman, James R. George was the only person to intervene before the boys assaulted the girl. George fought with the teens, rescued the girl, and although badly beaten, he reached the cashier cage on the concourse level and told the operator to call the police.<sup>323</sup>

From March 7-15, 1965, journalists wrote *heroic* accounts reminiscent of *The Birth of A Nation*, detailing how George saved the fifteen-year-old white girl from a “mob” of black boys. In the article, “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards,” journalists George J. Murray and Leonard J. McAdams described how George was visiting

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<sup>321</sup> “The 25-year-old Scars Of A Riot.”

<sup>322</sup> George J. Murray and Leonard J. McAdams, “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (March 10, 1965); 1-5, Newspapers.com, accessed April 1, 2021, [Clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>323</sup> “City Leaders Honor Sailor As Subway Attack Hero,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (March 12, 1965); 1, Newspapers.com, accessed April 1, 2021, [Clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer - Newspapers.com](#)

Philadelphia from Chamblee, Georgia for two weeks to complete naval training at Willow Grove Air Station.<sup>324</sup> George was travelling by subway on March 6 to sightsee while on his break from training when he saw the group of boys attack the girl. Murray and McAdams then explained how George unsuccessfully “plead” for six “Negro adults” on the subway platform to help him rescue the girl.<sup>325</sup> When George’s request went unanswered, he “waded into the mob of 15 to 20 youths surrounding the girl” and rescued her. Although the journalists suggested that the six black adults who stood “idle” while the attack happened, other news reports proposed that given the violent reputation “black gangs” had in the city, they were too afraid to assist George in the rescue. Murray and McAdams’ article also mentioned how the very next day a fifteen-year-old black girl was walking alone at night when five black teenage boys grabbed her near 56th and Pine Streets, dragged her into a vacant house, and raped her a half a block away from her home.<sup>326</sup> Despite the shocking nature of the crime, that six-paragraph report of the rape in West Philadelphia was brief and overlooked in the nearly 30-paragraph article focused on the attempted rape and rescue of the white teenage girl.

Murray and McAdams’ mildly exaggerated narrative was similar to Thomas Dixon Jr.’s 1905 novel, *The Clansman: A Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan*, which depicted black men as rapists. Their depiction of George, a white Southerner, saving a white girl from being raped by a group of “black brutes” was a trope that existed in the Civil War, Reconstruction, and Jim Crow eras.<sup>327</sup> As historian Stephen Berry explains in

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<sup>324</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

<sup>325</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

<sup>326</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

<sup>327</sup> Thomas Dixon Jr., *The Clansman: A Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan*, (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1905), 182.

his 2002 book, *All that Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South*, Confederate soldiers fought “honorably” in the Civil War to not only protect white womanhood from “black brute rapists,” in a literal sense, but also the safe, pure, and powerful white society their bodies symbolically represented.<sup>328</sup> Later, mass media revived the trope through mediums like D.W. Griffith’s 1915 white supremacist film, *The Birth of A Nation*, where the Ku Klux Klan protected white women from interracial sex and violence.<sup>329</sup> Moreover, while Murray and McAdams’ article intended to tell a heroic story, their narrative of a “black gang attack” reaffirmed the racist trope of “black male brutes” who needed to be controlled by an authoritative force to maintain a safe white society.

Immediately after the attempted rape, Philadelphia’s police and city officials took major action in implementing tough on crime policing and surveillance at major public transportation stations citywide.<sup>330</sup> On March 9, 1965, Police Commissioner Howard R. Leary announced to the press that the police department would implement a “program of increased protection.” The program involved police dog patrols and civilian emergency call boxes at “strategic locations” on subway platforms and concourses that had flashing lights and “public address speakers” notifying police officers of a crime committed in the area. Later that day, Mayor James H.J. Tate held an emergency session with police officials in City Hall to make plans for improving citizen protection. Those in attendance of the “crime conference” officiated by Mayor Tate were: Police Commissioner Leary,

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<sup>328</sup> Stephen W. Berry, *All that Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1-304.

<sup>329</sup> Raymond A. Cook, *Thomas Dixon*, (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1974), 68.

<sup>330</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

deputy commissioners Frank L. Rizzo and Edward Bell, Chief Inspector Harry Fox, Inspector Frank Nolan, Captain Anthony Wong, Captain Thomas Hannigan, and Lieutenant Joseph Larkin.<sup>331</sup>

During the meeting, Tate expressed his anger with the Philadelphia Transportation Co. (PTC) for its ineffective and time-wasting protocol system where in the event of a crime, employees were instructed to contact PTC dispatchers before they called the Philadelphia Police.<sup>332</sup> He then proposed to “halt crimes of violence” by shutting down subway stations from City Hall in Center City to Girard Avenue in North Philadelphia during the “critical hours” beyond midnight. At the conclusion of the meeting, Tate ordered the police department to increase its patrols on the transit concourses and train cars of the Broad Street Subway and Market-Frankford El. Tate also informed the police officials that he would consider the “possibility of hiring additional police,” to patrol the subway systems, but he would ponder the idea for a month before making a definitive decision.<sup>333</sup>

At 1 PM on March 10, the new police patrol Tate and Leary designed to combat black gang crime in the transit system was put into effect. Leary issued 24-hour police patrols where members of the K-9 Corps rode subway trains and patrolled subway stations with police dogs along the Broad Street and Market-Frankford El lines within the city’s limits.<sup>334</sup> The K-9 Corps more than doubled its number of working dogs from 11 to 25, while 30 officers were added to the 75-man patrol, equipped with walkie talkies. Officers not assigned to the interior of the subway system were ordered to patrol transit stations

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<sup>331</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

<sup>332</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

<sup>333</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

<sup>334</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

every half hour along Broad Street in “jeep patrols.”<sup>335</sup> Furthermore, police and city officials implemented more crime prevention tactics against black gangs following the attempted rape of a white teenage girl than they did for an Asian man like In-Ho Oh, a black boy like Theodore Furman, and a black girl who survived a *gang* rape. Moreover, Philadelphia’s city and police officials focused on public transportation for furthering its major tough on crime policing initiatives not only because of the attempted rape of a white resident on March 6, but also because the transit system was the most desegregated public space in the city where the opportunity for interracial crime was greatest.

Although city officials, police, and journalists often accused the African American community of not taking leadership in solving black gang violence in Philadelphia, there were black leaders in the court system and the black community who attempted to combat black gang violence through punitive and rehabilitative guardianship. In the court system black judges like Juanita Kidd Stout pursued tough on crime sentencing to reform black youth who engaged in violent crime.<sup>336</sup> When Judge Stout was presented with the March 7th rape case involving the fifteen-year-old black girl raped in West Philadelphia, journalists described her as “visibly angry” in court when she stated, “If it’s rape today, it’s jail tomorrow.” During the criminal trial, Judge Stout promised to “swiftly” carry justice “for any rapist who came before her.” She then charged the five teens with rape, statutory rape, assault with intent to ravish, indecent assault, assault and battery and conspiracy. Stout later sentenced the three “ringleaders” of the rape to indeterminate

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<sup>335</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

<sup>336</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.” Juanita Kidd Stout was an Oklahoma-born attorney who began her own law practice in Philadelphia in 1954. In 1988, she became the 1st black woman in the U.S. appointed as judge to a State Supreme Court. In 2012, Philadelphia's Criminal Justice Center was renamed in her honor.

terms at the State Correctional Institution at Camp Hill and gave the two others six months in the juvenile correctional facility, Pennypack House.<sup>337</sup>

When Judge Stout took on the attempted rape case involving the fifteen-year-old white girl, she gave the black boys involved a similar sentence. Among the eight teenagers arrested as participants and onlookers of the assault, Judge Stout sentenced five boys to Camp Hill until they turned 21 years old, two boys to indeterminate terms in Youth Development Centers, and one boy to probation. Additionally, she publicly commended sixteen-year-old Alfonso Dunlap for being the only member of the “gang” who tried to persuade the “mob” to leave the teenage girl alone.<sup>338</sup> While Judge Stout used incarceration to curb violent crime among black youth believed to be gang-affiliated, community activist Herman Wrice used social welfare programs to rehabilitate black children before they could commit gang crimes.

In April 1965, 26-year-old drug laboratory technician Herman Wrice established the anti-gang program, the Young Greats Society (YGS) in Mantua with his friend and neighbor, 29-year-old accountant Andrew Jenkins. Wrice decided to create the organization in West Philadelphia because he was concerned about the rise of black juvenile gang violence in the city.<sup>339</sup> Wrice knew what gang life was like because when he was fifteen years old, he was a member of the West Philadelphia gang, the Flames, headed by a gang leader named “Poppy Tate.”<sup>340</sup> As a gang member, Wrice desired to fit in with his peers so much that he took beatings, witnessed gang fights, and offered to do

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<sup>337</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

<sup>338</sup> “Subway Patrols Beefed Up, Dogs To Join Guards.”

<sup>339</sup> “Shotgun Blast Triggers Young Great Society.”

<sup>340</sup> Jean Horton Berg, *I Cry When The Sun Goes Down: The Story of Herman Wrice*, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), 20-50.

“nearly anything for Poppy,” because he wanted to be part of a group that offered him protection, mentorship, and belonging. By 1962, Wrice left the gang, graduated from Overbrook High School, and earned a Bachelor’s degree from Temple University.<sup>341</sup> However, his concern for juvenile gang members provoked him to create a community organization to end gang violence when he witnessed a gang attack on April 3, 1965.

On that night, Wrice was sitting on Jenkins’ porch in Mantua when they heard a shotgun blast through the window of a grocery store located at 36th and Aspen Streets. A juvenile gang member was aiming at two rival gang members who refused to leave the store but the bullet missed them. Wrice and Jenkins were upset about the violent act, but also angry because their wives were on their way to that store when the shooting happened.<sup>342</sup> By April 5, Wrice and Jenkins established the anti-gang program, the Young Greats Society (YGS) with \$3.20 and a plan to rehabilitate black gang members. According to Wrice and Jenkins, their goal was to foster “closer relationships between neighborhood youngsters and to make the streets safe for adults.”<sup>343</sup> Wrice and Jenkins first hosted a town hall meeting in the Mantua Hall Housing Project at 35th Street and Fairmount Avenue for community members to attend. At the meeting, fourteen gang members, including two gang runners and a war chief, told Wrice and Jenkins that they were involved in violent gang activity because they wanted to “blow off steam among themselves” by “hanging on corners and contenting themselves with singing and shadow

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<sup>341</sup> Horton Berg, *I Cry When The Sun Goes Down*, 151-155.

<sup>342</sup> “Shotgun Blast Triggers Young Great Society.”

<sup>343</sup> “Shotgun Blast Triggers Young Great Society.”



boxing.”<sup>344</sup> Following the meeting, Wrice and Jenkins made plans to rehabilitate youth with recreation and social welfare programs.

By August 1965, the YGS provided over 2500 black youth from five neighborhood gangs with recreation. Wrice’s program offered youth boxing, five singing groups and bands, baseball and basketball teams, drama and art classes, and a Civil Air Patrol Chapter that operated from the community room of Mantua Hall. In addition to offering youth recreation, the organization also focused on communication and mentorship.<sup>345</sup> As Jenkins explained to a *Philadelphia Daily News* journalist in September 1965, “Our tack is never to tell the boys what to do. We ask them. We give them time to express themselves and listen to their problems and suggestions.”<sup>346</sup> Mentors at the YGS also mediated between rival gangs to prevent gang wars. As Wrice explained, “You have to start at the bottom. Find their interest and gain their confidence. When I know a war is scheduled for a particular night, I pretend I know nothing about it and go around to the gang leaders. I take them to a movie or something and there is no fight.”<sup>347</sup> Furthermore, Wrice’s slogan of “stop talking and act,” was based on his technique of talking to gang leaders, settling disputes between rival gangs, conducting a neighborhood watch, and even confiscating weapons from gang members to protect youth and adults from gang violence.

Since the YGS was a private, non-profit organization, Wrice and Jenkins earned the funds they needed to operate by showing movies, conducting raffles, and selling chicken

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<sup>344</sup> “Shotgun Blast Triggers Young Great Society.”

<sup>345</sup> “Shotgun Blast Triggers Young Great Society.”

<sup>346</sup> “Shotgun Blast Triggers Young Great Society.”

<sup>347</sup> “Shotgun Blast Triggers Young Great Society.”

dinners prepared by a professional cook from the local institution, LaSalle College.<sup>348</sup> From 1968 to 1979, the YGS expanded their programs in Mantua. The YGS recruited youth to participate in science projects, football camps, and a “camp work program” involving the clearing of trash and junk from homes, along with the repairing and painting of houses in the community.<sup>349</sup> The YGS also provided resources for working parents. In 1968, Wrice purchased five vacant homes at 32nd and Wallace Streets for use as daycare centers meant to accommodate working mothers who wanted to attend night school. By June 1970, the YGS was even able to sponsor a one-week trip to Puerto Rico where juvenile gang leaders learned about gang problems off the mainland.<sup>350</sup> Although Wrice’s Young Great Society had a major impact on black youth in neighborhoods, it did not completely eliminate black gangs in the city or deter all children from joining gangs. In 1968, the Pennsylvania Crime Commission reported approximately 14,000 juvenile arrests and 83,000 gang members in Philadelphia with “core” gang members being repeat offenders of violent crime.<sup>351</sup> Moreover, as the “gang problem” increased in Philadelphia, police, city officials, and community activists began to consider working together to solve black gang violence instead of tackling the issue on their own.

### **Philadelphia: The “Gang Capital” of America**

In 1969, the *New York Times* named Philadelphia the “gang capital” of America when the city had the highest rates of gang-related murders and violent attacks in the country:

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<sup>348</sup> “Shotgun Blast Triggers Young Great Society.”

<sup>349</sup> “Young Great Society members painting a house,” Photograph, Philadelphia: *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, July 25, 1979, From Temple University Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, <https://digital.library.temple.edu/digital/collection/p15037coll3/id/13844> (accessed April 1, 2021).

<sup>350</sup> “Juvenile gang leaders return from Puerto Rico,” Photograph, Philadelphia: *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, June 26, 1970, From Temple University Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, <https://digital.library.temple.edu/digital/collection/p15037coll3/id/14136> (accessed April 1 2021).

<sup>351</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 19.

45 murders, 267 injuries, and numerous incidents of “burglary and purse snatching” that affected gang members and innocent bystanders, including children.<sup>352</sup> In July 1969, the Pennsylvania Crime Commission released its report on gang violence in Philadelphia stating there were currently 75 active, sporadic, or dormant gangs (each comprised of black, white, or Puerto Rican members), 3,000 gang members known by police, and each gang consisted of 25-250 members ranging from ages 12 to 23 years old. About 84% of gang members were aged sixteen or older.<sup>353</sup> In that same year, the Philadelphia Police Department’s Gang Control Unit reported that approximately 20% of gang violence involving individuals shot, stabbed, or beaten in the city were unaffiliated with a gang.<sup>354</sup> Nevertheless, as gang violence increased, in 1969, Mayor James H.J. Tate (from 1962-1972) told the *New York Times*, “gang violence is giving Philadelphia a bad name.”<sup>355</sup>

In 1969, criminologists, activists, and city officials knew that poverty was the root of crime. However, the socioeconomic interests of city government and the white middle class were more important to city officials than resolving the issue of black poverty in Philadelphia. Sociologists and criminologists of the postwar era accepted the theory that concentrated poverty along with poor housing and education were to blame for the formation of juvenile gangs.<sup>356</sup> Socioeconomic conditions determined an individual’s propensity to join a gang and engage in criminality, not race. Gang violence was not just

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<sup>352</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 2.

<sup>353</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 17-18.

<sup>354</sup> Anderson, *The Gang Unit*, 20.

<sup>355</sup> Donald Janson, “Gangs Face Drive in Philadelphia” *New York Times*, (Feb. 13, 1972), <https://www.nytimes.com/1972/02/13/archives/gangs-face-drive-in-philadelphia-police-open-crackdown-on-youths.html>.

<sup>356</sup> Ken Shuttleworth, “Sennett to Wait For Gang Study Before Acting,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (June 18, 1969):43, Newspapers.com, accessed March 15, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/46732315/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

an issue in Philadelphia, but also in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and several other major cities throughout the country that had histories of racial segregation and concentrated poverty. When national news outlets specifically identified Philadelphia as the “gang capital” of America in 1969, the city’s poorest neighborhoods were suffering from a poverty rate of 25.3%, approximately thirteen points above the national average.<sup>357</sup> Government officials like Pennsylvania State Attorney General William C. Sennett refused to believe those claims by arguing, “You have the same poverty situations in other cities but you don’t have the high incidence of killing.”<sup>358</sup> Since Sennett refused to affirm the assessment of criminologists, Governor Raymond P. Shafer assigned him to be the chairman of a Crime Commission that investigated and acquired testimonies from citizens, gang members, and city officials to discover the roots of juvenile gang activity.<sup>359</sup>

In June 1969, Sennett led State Crime Commission hearings on gang warfare in Philadelphia at the State Office Building located at Broad and Spring Garden Streets. At the hearings, three witnesses made significant proposals on the issue: Mayor Rizzo, anti-gang activist Herman Wrice, and black police officer and Baptist minister Melvin Floyd.<sup>360</sup> Rizzo rejected theories of poverty-induced crime and institutional racism and argued that juvenile criminals deserved incarceration and maximum penalties for felony

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<sup>357</sup> Paul A. Jargowsky, Christopher A. Wheeler, and Howard Gillette, “Poverty,” *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*, (2017), accessed October 8, 2020, <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/poverty/>. In 1969, Philadelphia was named the gang capital of America when it witnessed 45 murders and 267 injuries that were gang related. In 1970, the nation’s poverty rate was 12.2% while Philadelphia’s poverty rate was 15.4%.

<sup>358</sup> “Sennett to Wait For Gang Study Before Acting.”

<sup>359</sup> “Sennett to Wait For Gang Study Before Acting.”

<sup>360</sup> Mary Larkin and John Clancy, “Rizzo Pleads for Funds to Fight Gangs,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (June 24, 1969):1; 23-26, Newspapers.com, accessed October 15, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/61167378/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

crimes because they were “sick,” “lacked education and intelligence,” and used violence “to get even with those more competent” than them.<sup>361</sup> He then proposed that Philadelphia not only eliminate bail for repeat offenders, but also grant more funding for police and juvenile detention centers to curb crime. On the other hand, while Wrice and Floyd were both former gang members who believed scholars who theorized poverty begot crime, they proposed slightly different approaches to solving gang violence. Wrice, a social activist who reformed West Philadelphia youth with education, jobs, and community service under his organization, the Young Greats Society, argued that poverty alleviation programs, jobs, and positive mentors were required to rehabilitate gang members and dissuade them from crime.<sup>362</sup> And Floyd, the supervisor of the North Philadelphia anti-gang, missionary organization, Teen Haven, suggested that gang control workers from the community be assigned to youth, but “hard core delinquents” should face long-term incarceration.<sup>363</sup> Nevertheless, although various recommendations were presented at the hearings, Rizzo’s proposal ultimately won approval when Philadelphia allotted \$88.6 million of its 1970 budgetary spending for police and prisons.<sup>364</sup>

## Conclusion

From 1958 to 1969, police and journalists’ reports of interracial crime committed by black “gangs” and “mobs” reaffirmed the stereotype that poor black people were inherently criminal and had to be policed, incarcerated, and sentenced like adults because they were viewed as a threat to white residents who were constantly contemplating white

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<sup>361</sup> “Rizzo Pleads for Funds to Fight Gangs.”

<sup>362</sup> “Rizzo Pleads for Funds to Fight Gangs.”

<sup>363</sup> “Rizzo Pleads for Funds to Fight Gangs.”

<sup>364</sup> “Billions for Safe Streets Yield Failure, Fear, Fury,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, September 11, 1977.

flight as their homogenous communities desegregated. For many city and police officials, social welfare programs like the Young Great Society that sought to address racial discrimination and poverty did not appear to do enough to solve black gang crime because gang-related assaults, rapes, robberies, and murders were steadily rising. Furthermore, the 1958 “gang” murder of In-Ho Oh was one of many cautionary narratives used to justified tough on crime policing and mass incarceration against black youth to maintain the safety of white and middle-class Philadelphians.

From 1969 to 1976, the rise of gang murders in the all-black neighborhoods of North and West Philadelphia encouraged city officials, police, and community activists to set aside their differences and work together on implementing a rehabilitative anti-gang program rooted in sociological research. Moreover, city officials like District Attorney Arlen Specter would propose the bipartisan anti-gang program, Safe Streets, Inc. as an alternative to tough on crime policing. However, like other community-based programs focused on rehabilitation over incarceration, Safe Streets, Inc. had to compete with the Philadelphia Police Department for financial aid and public approval as Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo, a rising figure in government, vigorously argued for tough on crime initiatives as mayor.

## CHAPTER 4

### "SAFE STREETS, INC.: THE 'HUSTLE' TO END BLACK GANG VIOLENCE IN PHILADELPHIA, 1969-1976"

In the early 1960s, many community activists and politicians viewed North and West Philadelphia as blighted neighborhoods that were in freefall as poverty, inequality, and gang violence exacerbated the stresses of urban life for residents in these communities. From 1962 to 1968, gang-related homicides per year jumped from one to thirty.<sup>365</sup> From 1967 to 1969, over 50% of those gang homicides occurred in North Philadelphia. On June 23, 1969, Democratic State Senator Herbert Arlene, who represented North Philadelphia, was so unnerved by the high rates of gang-related deaths, he told the press, “I am disturbed by the rash of gang killings. Most of these killings have occurred in the black communities.”<sup>366</sup> Additionally, he vowed to unite in racial solidarity with other black community leaders to end gang wars affecting African American youth. Although African American leaders like Arlene were interested in taking guardianship over the black community and solving black gang violence on their own, Philadelphians of different racial, class, and social backgrounds also wanted to use their knowledge, platform, and concern for youth as city officials, police officers, and former gang members to detract from tough on crime policing and invest time and money in community-based, anti-gang programs.

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<sup>365</sup> “Philadelphia Gangs: Gang-related Homicides in Philadelphia 1965-1976,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (May 23, 1976), Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *George D. McDowell Philadelphia Evening Bulletin Collection*, call no. SCRC 170, vol. Gangs--Miscellaneous, *George D. McDowell Philadelphia Evening Bulletin Photographs*, P254Z201411000174B.

<sup>366</sup> “Arlene Urges Talks on Gangs,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (June 24, 1969): 23, Newspapers.com, accessed February 17, 2021, [Clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer - Newspapers.com](#).

After the shocking 1958 murder of 26-year-old international student In-Ho Oh by eleven black teenagers in Powelton Village, a progressive, middle-class, and desegregated neighborhood in West Philadelphia, the murders of young, innocent victims continued to provoke citizens and politicians alike to take action against gang violence in Philadelphia. Residents in North and West Philadelphia who witnessed juvenile gang violence in their community petitioned the city to financially invest in social reform programs instead of tough on crime policing because they believed that limited recreation centers, poor education, and unemployment were the reasons for youth joining gangs like Valley and Dogtown. As black police officer Heywood Matthews put it, “the city just isn’t doing its job. So long as we have slums and no recreation, we’ll have gangs. These kids want...a decent education, a decent home, a steady job...but they’ll never get it so long as the power structure remains apathetic.”<sup>367</sup> In 1969, Matthews himself became one of the few police officers who worked with former gang members in the anti-gang program, Safe Streets, Inc. that Philadelphia District Attorney Arlen Specter founded that year.

From 1969 to 1976, Safe Streets, Inc. operated as a bipartisan, community organization that recruited police officers and gang workers from juvenile gangs like Zulu Nation and the 8th and Diamond Streeters. The goal of Safe Streets, Inc. was to interact with youth through mentorship, education, recreation, community service, and therapy to stop juvenile gang violence. Murder was the impetus and continual force driving community members of diverse backgrounds to unite under this anti-gang

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<sup>367</sup> “City’s Gang Youths Caught in ‘Cycle of Impoverished Existence,’” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 18, 1971):17 Newspapers.com, accessed June 6, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/33557647/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.



program launched in North and West Philadelphia. On April 27, 1970, 21-year-old Temple University graduate student David Fineman was targeted and killed by five members of the Gamma Phi United “club” near 13th and Diamond Streets as he was entering his car to go home from his Monday night class.<sup>368</sup> On June 13, 1970, seven-year-old Antoinette Williams was killed by a stray bullet that struck her in the face as she sat on her stoop at 1904 N. Franklin Street occupied with her coloring book.<sup>369</sup> And on April 20, 1971, nine-year-old Rafael Santiago Jr. was fatally hit in the back by a stray bullet when two rival gangs, Zulu Nation and the 8th and Diamond Streeters, began a shootout outside his father’s grocery store at 532 W. Susquehanna Avenue. Furthermore, the deaths of innocent young people like Fineman, Williams, and Santiago inspired city officials, police, and community activists to solve gang violence through community-led, peaceful initiatives like Safe Streets, Inc. instead of brute police force. Moreover, although Safe Streets, Inc. was a successful, experimental anti-gang program that united community activists, city officials, and the police in rehabilitating black gang members, it failed in its “hustle” to convince to City Council and the Philadelphia Police Department to make long-term financial investments into the organization because it didn’t swiftly lower the rate of violent crime, effectively eradicate juvenile gang activity, or erase the stigma of black gang violence pegged on the African American communities of North and West Philadelphia.

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<sup>368</sup> Frank Dougherty and Ed Griffenberg, “5 Held in ‘Get Anybody’ Killing of Temple Graduate Student,” *Philadelphia Daily News* (April 28, 1970): 3; 53, Newspapers.com, accessed December 10, 2019, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/33626756/philadelphia\\_daily\\_news/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/33626756/philadelphia_daily_news/).

<sup>369</sup> Richard B. Murphy and James S. Lintz, “Bullet Kills Girl, 7, in Street Fighting,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (June 14, 1970):21, Newspapers.com, accessed July 31, 2019, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/33558816/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/33558816/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

## **The Formation of Safe Streets, Inc.**

In Summer 1968, a series of incidents in North Philadelphia encouraged community residents and politicians to invest in a program to end gang violence. When news spread that a boy was shot and killed in a gang fight and gang rivals, Zulu Nation and the 8<sup>th</sup> and Diamond Streeters had declared war, Yorktown residents sent a message to the District Attorney's Office asking for help. On Independence Day, residents and staff from the DA's Office met with leaders of both gangs on a North Philadelphia street corner to end the violence. Following this series of incidents, politicians became more interested in finding a remedial solution outside of policing to address gang activity in the city.<sup>370</sup> Philadelphia DA Arlen Specter, a liberal-minded politician who was a Republican in name only, contacted President Richard M. Nixon to propose his project, Safe Streets, Inc. after taking into consideration the statistics on gang violence, advice from Family Court Judge Paul A. Dandridge, and the community's pleas for solutions. President Nixon responded with the suggestion that Specter apply for a Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) grant to fund the non-profit organization. Specter applied for an LEAA grant in May 1968 to fund the pilot, anti-gang program designed to lower the rate of teenage gang homicides and "*encourage gangs into constructive programs.*"<sup>371</sup> In the LEAA application, Specter stated "gang violence has reached proportions which threaten the entire law enforcement process of the community," to highlight the urgency of a program that would curb gang violence and juvenile delinquency in the city. Among the proposed activities Specter pitched was four-day

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<sup>370</sup> William J. Speers, "The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?" *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Feb. 22, 1970): 1; 3.

<sup>371</sup> "The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?"

retreats at hostels or in rural settings where gang members could gain free counseling from group therapists, an idea inspired by the New York City drug addiction treatment organization, Daytop Village, founded in 1963 by psychiatrist Daniel Casriel and Roman Catholic priest Monsignor William B. O'Brien.<sup>372</sup>

In Spring 1969, Specter formally established the organization to lower juvenile delinquency and crime, while also ensuring there was proper procedural action in criminal cases. By June 1969, Safe Streets received a \$80,267 LEAA grant for youth gang control in North and West Philadelphia.<sup>373</sup> The LEAA program granted \$215 million to state and local governments to improve police forces, the courts, and correction systems. One of the conditions for LEAA-approved organizations was state and local agencies had to fund between 40-50% of the organization's budget. If an LEAA-approved organization did not meet local and state standards, those agencies could deny it funding. The Pennsylvania Crime Commission disbursed discretionary funding to Safe Streets approximately every six months. As a federally-approved organization, Safe Streets received a list of priorities from the local government, but its LEAA grant status could not be revoked by local or state agencies when it did not meet its goals. In 1969, approximately 75% of Safe Streets' funding came from the LEAA grant, while the remaining 25% (\$25,000) came from a grant given by affiliates of the Greater Philadelphia Movement.<sup>374</sup>

In August 1969, Safe Streets was in operation with a mixture of politicians, police officers, and community activists from the neighborhood surrounding the two centers. At

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<sup>372</sup> "The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?"

<sup>373</sup> "U.S. gives DA \$80,000 for Gang Control," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (June 26, 1969).

<sup>374</sup> "The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?"

each center, there was a unit director who planned and supervised activities, an assistant director who worked directly with gangs on the street, eight youth workers who worked with gang members, two teachers for tutoring, and a community organizer who facilitated parental and community support for the center's activities.<sup>375</sup> In 1969, the organization's board consisted of: Specter as the program chairman; Police Detective Heywood Matthews as executive director; Clarence Fowler as unit director of the North Philadelphia center; Assistant District Attorney Walter W. Cohen as the project administrator of federal funds; and Assistants Dave Johnson and Bernard Rhodes. The staff at Safe Streets were often men like Bennie Swans, a former gang member turned community activist, who were paid to facilitate recreational and community service activities with youth in and or vulnerable to gang activity near its two locations.<sup>376</sup>

From its inception, the mission of Safe Streets was to be a “*one-stop juvenile center*” where police officers, former gang members, and community activists worked together to teach at-risk teenagers “responsibility and concern for themselves and society” so that they did not end up dead or incarcerated.<sup>377</sup> North and West Philadelphia were chosen as locations for the centers because gang activity was most entrenched in those poor and working-class, black neighborhoods.<sup>378</sup> In its early stages, Safe Streets saw 35 to 50 juveniles enter each center daily with youth workers attempting to develop one-on-one

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<sup>375</sup> “The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?”

<sup>376</sup> “The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?” When 21-year-old Bennie Swans joined the staff of Safe Streets, Inc. around 1970, he was a Vietnam veteran looking to volunteer after hearing news about the rise in gang violence in Philadelphia. In 1975, Swans left Safe Streets, Inc. to establish the non-profit, anti-gang organization, the Crisis Intervention Network (CIN) which remained in operation until 1991.

<sup>377</sup> “The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?”

<sup>378</sup> The North Philadelphia location was a rowhome in a residential neighborhood, while the West Philadelphia location was a storefront connected to a row of businesses.

relationships with attendees. Among the activities offered to hundreds of teenaged visitors were academic tutoring, job training, neighborhood cleanup projects, sports, newspaper writing, and publishing. Since many youth who were “directed” to the centers were “troubled,” lived disadvantaged lives, and or faced inequality in schools, housing, and employment, Safe Streets provided group therapy sessions (facilitated by residents from the North Philadelphia drug treatment center, Gaudenzia House) and annual trips to the theater and the Poconos to rehabilitate and provide positive recreation for attendees. According to Specter, events like the four-day retreat to the Poconos for 100 boys during the Summer was a great opportunity to reduce gang violence and end turf wars between rival gangs.<sup>379</sup>

The same year that Safe Streets was established, the Philadelphia Police Department under Police Commissioner Rizzo petitioned city officials to increase its budget spending on tough on crime initiatives. With Rizzo in charge of the police department, violence between black males and white police officers began to spike with the use of police policies and procedures of stop and frisk, quotidian surveillance, illegal house raids, *public* strip searches, false criminal accusations and arrests, and verbal and physical assaults on suspects, average law-abiding citizens, political activists, and protestors at peaceful demonstrations.<sup>380</sup> Nevertheless, City Council still supported the police department by awarding it a LEAA grant of \$19,733 to create a closed-circuit television system linking the city’s police districts.

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<sup>379</sup> “U.S. gives DA \$80,000 for Gang Control.”

<sup>380</sup> Frank Donner, “Rizzo’s Philadelphia: Police City” in *Protectors of Privilege: Red Squads and Police Repression in Urban America*, (Oakland: University of California Press, 1992), 197-244.

For Safe Streets, there was always a struggle to convince City Council to disinvest from tough on crime spending and increase funding for anti-gang programs that identified poverty and social inequality as the main cause of crime. Safe Streets' mission was to demonstrate to City Council that social welfare and rehabilitation could eliminate gang activity among youth. Other local Great Society programs like Start Towards Eliminating Past Setbacks (STEPS) and Philadelphia's Leaders of Tomorrow (PLOT) also promoted rehabilitation over incarceration because they believed that therapy sessions, recreation, and employment for youth would not only eradicate gang activity, but also police-community tensions.<sup>381</sup> Even community and civil rights organizations like the North City Congress (NCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) attempted to curb gang activity and juvenile delinquency by arranging truce meetings between major North Philadelphia gangs, citizens, and police.<sup>382</sup> Unfortunately, politicians like Mayor James H. J. Tate doubted these social programs would lead to major crime reduction. In 1969, the Tate Administration attempted to persuade the federal government to allocate only \$44,000 to Specter's program and give the Philadelphia Police Department \$56,000 for crime-fighting initiatives.<sup>383</sup> Moreover, this was the beginning of a long-term battle between liberals and conservatives over how federal funding would be distributed and spent to combat juvenile delinquency, crime, and rioting.

### **Specter vs. Rizzo: The Fight for LEAA Grant Funding**

In 1970, *Philadelphia Inquirer* journalists William J. Speer and Tom Ferrick reported on their visits to Safe Streets' North Philadelphia center in February and July respectively

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<sup>381</sup> Tyree Johnson, "Men Needed to Share Skills with Boys," *Philadelphia Daily News*, (May 15, 1974).

<sup>382</sup> Timothy Lombardo, *Blue-Collar Conservatism: Frank Rizzo's Philadelphia and Populist Politics*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 140-141.

<sup>383</sup> "U.S. gives DA \$80,000 for Gang Control."

of that year. Their report exposed the organization as a high-stakes program operating on a shoestring budget. When Speer arrived at 2201 W. Stewart Street, he saw a three-story, six room storefront that looked like a “neglected 50-year-old building with a swift paint job.”<sup>384</sup> He described Safe Streets as an “experimental program” open six days a week from 9 AM to 9 PM where juveniles received help with “scholastic and job difficulties” and rival gangs could “rap out” their differences in intense group therapy instead of resorting to violence with “pipes, cleavers, knives, and guns.”<sup>385</sup> For the girls who attended the center, there were “local women” who taught them sewing and other homecrafts, but the organization primarily wanted the girlfriends of gang members as an exploitative measure in which their presence could “win the confidence” of the young men and help them get reformed.<sup>386</sup> In Ferrick’s article, his description of the contents in the North Philadelphia center demonstrated the financial difficulties the organization had: chairs, a few “ancient desks,” a blackboard, a ping pong table, and a record player “that looks too old to play.”<sup>387</sup>

In Speer’s article, he depicted the centers’ economic struggles to provide educational resources by describing how the staff at the West Philadelphia center (sharing a facility with the Christian Young Life organization) were tutoring youth with thirty and forty-year-old reading and math books as they awaited the arrival of books donated by the Board of Education. The centers offered meager success in employment for gang members because the facilities did not provide adequate job training in vocational

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<sup>384</sup> “The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?”

<sup>385</sup> “The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?”

<sup>386</sup> “The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?”

<sup>387</sup> Tom Ferrick, “Safe Streets Center Seeks to Expand Effective Work,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, (July 13, 1970).

skills.<sup>388</sup> Speer noted that while the Philadelphia Tutorial Project offered study help to juveniles, the State Bureau of Employment Security provided job counseling, despite its rare visits to the center.

Speer's report on Safe Streets also cast doubt on the organization's long-term success when he suggested it had to successfully prove it could solve youth gang violence since it was "being watched" by civic and law enforcement agencies. Safe Streets was not only concerned about attendee retention at the centers, but also possible gang activity at night when the centers were closed.<sup>389</sup> Additionally, the lack of parental, community, and gang member support for the organization troubled not only Speer, but also Unit Director Clarence Fowler:

If the problem doesn't hit them [parents] in their own parlor, they just don't get concerned about it...If you get the [gang] leader on your side, you got the whole gang with you...In many cases, the leader has more power over the gang members than the boys' parents...We want the boys to look beyond their present situation. We want them to see that there is no future in being a gang member.<sup>390</sup>

Nevertheless, the staff at Safe Streets remained committed to their mission to reduce gang violence, as voiced by Project Administrator Walter W. Cohen: "Our central aim is to stop killing, but that is not our final aim—our final aim is to enable these kids to see the senselessness of killing and to participate in normal activities."<sup>391</sup> Nine days after Ferrick's article was published, the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* reported the LEAA allocated \$150,000 for "Philadelphia's emergency juvenile gang control project." Once Specter learned about the allocation, he asked Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott to

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<sup>388</sup> "The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?"

<sup>389</sup> "The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?"

<sup>390</sup> "The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?"

<sup>391</sup> "Safe Streets Center Seeks to Expand Effective Work."



expedite the funds since the organization was in immediate need of them to continue operations.<sup>392</sup> The City of Philadelphia also received an LEAA grant (a month prior) in the amount of \$80,267. Despite the brewing competition Safe Streets had with the police department for funds, Specter reiterated the significance of his program in a press release by stating his grant would be used to “increase job opportunities, overcome functional illiteracy, and set up guidance group interaction techniques to instill a more mature social responsible attitude and behavior pattern in juveniles.”<sup>393</sup>

Despite the financial and political hardships Safe Streets experienced, the organization had many supporters from the community. One supporter was a Philadelphia mechanic who read in the newspaper about the organization and volunteered to fund transportation to his shop so that he could teach youth from the centers his trade.<sup>394</sup> In August 1971, Willard Scott, a 66-year-old black proprietor of an auto repair business since 1929, heard about Safe Streets’ mission and called the DA’s Office requesting to train gang members to be mechanics.<sup>395</sup> Scott was concerned about what he saw as the senselessness of gang violence in his West Philadelphia neighborhood. But he also thought he knew how to solve the problem:

These black kids need jobs and a challenge. But they keep killing each other and tilling up the jails. I know my own 16-year-old—he’s so crazy about hot-rod engines, he can’t get into trouble..Send me some of those gang members. I’ve got a car business and I’ll teach them how to work on engines. If it works, maybe we can get some of ‘em jobs.<sup>396</sup>

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<sup>392</sup> “U.S. Gives City \$150,000 for Gang Control,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, (July 22, 1970).

<sup>393</sup> “U.S. Gives City \$150,000 for Gang Control.”

<sup>394</sup> “The Safe Streets project—Inroads on Phila. Gang Control?”

<sup>395</sup> “Sandy Grady...On the Loose: Garage Man Tries to Salvage a Program,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, (March 9, 1972).

<sup>396</sup> “Garage Man Tries to Salvage a Program.”

According to Safe Streets' Executive Director Heywood Matthews, Scott was the first businessman to volunteer a vocational training program for the cash-strapped organization. Scott soon welcomed eight youths to his garage at 1501 N. 61<sup>st</sup> Street and was immediately impressed by their work ethic: "I couldn't believe how nice they were, how hard they'd work. I had 'em tearing down engines eight hours a day, learning the basics. They wouldn't go across the street for cigarettes without asking my permission."<sup>397</sup>

Once Christmas 1971 arrived, attendance decreased when six youth dropped the program because they could not afford the bus fare and lunch required to participate. Safe Streets tried to procure a \$40 a week subsistence for the boys' expenses, but the organization struggled to acquire the funds. Instead, Scott, Reverend Marshall Shepard's congregation at Mt. Olivet Tabernacle Church, and Reverend Joseph Whearty of Our Lady of Victory Church raised money to cover the costs.<sup>398</sup> By February 1, 1972, Scott accepted a class of ten gang members with the goal of getting them jobs as mechanics after ten weeks of training at one of the 50 garages and service stations in his community. The *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* journalist covering the story about Scott's partnership with Safe Streets in March 1972 not only demonstrated how appealing and vital vocational training was for gang members, but also concluded his article with a sharp critique of the police state in America's major cities: solving gang violence this way is a "bargain" in the "era of \$100 million police budgets."<sup>399</sup> By 1975, Scott was the program's director who oversaw the granting of certification in auto mechanics to dozens

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<sup>397</sup> "Garage Man Tries to Salvage a Program."

<sup>398</sup> "Garage Man Tries to Salvage a Program."

<sup>399</sup> "Garage Man Tries to Salvage a Program."

of boys.<sup>400</sup> Moreover, Scott's auto program at Safe Streets, Inc. was evidence of how peaceful, community-centric activities were more appealing and effective in rehabilitating youth than incarceration.

### **“No Longer a Civilized Neighborhood”: Police Tensions with Black Radicals Lead to Increased Tough on Crime Advocacy**

While Safe Streets operated as a community-based organization rehabilitating black juvenile gang members, tensions between the police and black men in Philadelphia were growing as anti-police violence and black radicalism became major concerns for the police department. Nevertheless, a series of events in 1970 led to the reaffirming of black criminality tropes and increasing advocacy for tough on crime policing in black communities. In August 1970, Police Commissioner Rizzo conflated black radicals with black criminals and ordered the raid of multiple offices of the Black Panther Party (BPP) following the shootings of four policemen in two days. On August 29, 1970, 39-year-old Park Policeman James Harrington was sitting in his police wagon a hundred yards from the Cobbs Creek Guardhouse in West Philadelphia when five black men from the revolutionary group, the Black Unity Council, shot him at point-blank range.<sup>401</sup> The men then entered the guardhouse and shot 43-year-old Fairmount Park Police Sergeant Frank Von Colln five times, murdering him as he sat at his desk.<sup>402</sup> On the night of August 30, 1970, twenty-five-year-old Patrolman Thomas J. Gibbons Jr. (the son of former Police

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<sup>400</sup> "Gang members who have taken auto mechanic course," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Aug 1, 1975), Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *George D. McDowell Philadelphia Evening Bulletin Collection*, call no. SCRC 170, vol. Gangs--Miscellaneous, *George D. McDowell Philadelphia Evening Bulletin Photographs*, P254061B.

<sup>401</sup> Joseph R. Daughen and Peter Binzen, *The Cop Who Would Be King: The Honorable Frank Rizzo*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977), 149-150.

<sup>402</sup> Daughen and Binzen, *The Cop Who Would Be King*, 149.

Commissioner Gibbons), and his partner, 28-year-old John J. Nolen were shot after they stopped two black men in a stolen car in Southwest Philadelphia. After two days of anti-police violence from black men, Rizzo spoke to the media about both incidents.

Following Rizzo's visit to Gibbons and Nolen at Misericordia Hospital, he told news reporters "this is no longer a civilized neighborhood."<sup>403</sup> Rizzo then erroneously announced that the Panthers were responsible for Sergeant Von Colln's murder instead of the Black Unity Council.

Rizzo was already unhappy with the Black Panthers because, since 1966, the BPP's goal for black youth was to take a Marxist, black nationalist view and educate them on how institutional racism, poverty, and police brutality damaged the black community.<sup>404</sup> The Panthers' pamphlet, *Ten-Point Program*, outlined the goals the organization had for the community, which included demanding the government provide full employment, decent housing, and education for black people. In the BPP's pamphlet, *Eight Points of Attention*, outlined moral principles for its members to follow as role models in the black community, such as "do not hit or swear at people," "do not take liberties with women," and "do not damage property of the oppressed masses." Additionally, the Panthers provided numerous missions programs to alleviate some of the socioeconomic burdens lower-class blacks faced each day.<sup>405</sup> These programs included a community ambulance service, free medical and legal clinics, a police patrol (where Panthers openly carried guns and followed police cars to preemptively prevent police brutality), community

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<sup>403</sup> Daughen and Binzen, *The Cop Who Would Be King*, 150.

<sup>404</sup> *The Black Panther Party*, (New York: Merit Publishers, 1966).

<sup>405</sup> Erin Blakemore, "How the Black Panthers' Breakfast Program Both Inspired and Threatened the Government," (February 6, 2018), History.com, accessed May 3, 2018, <https://www.history.com/news/free-school-breakfast-black-panther-party>.

centers, and the Free Breakfast for School Children Program.<sup>406</sup> Since the Panthers provided these free resources to impoverished blacks in the city, their political propaganda appealed to the black community because it identified institutional racism and the failure of social welfare programs as causes for the struggles of the urban black poor.

In the early morning hours of August 31, Rizzo assisted 100 police marksmen on a series of raids on BPP offices in North and Northwest Philadelphia and the organization's main headquarters in West Philadelphia.<sup>407</sup> As they took them away, the officers publicly strip searched seven Panthers on a residential street, effectively humiliating them in front of onlookers and news media. The image of several bare-chested, barefoot, or completely nude Panthers lined up against a wall was captured by *Daily News* photographer, Elwood P. Smith, and later distributed around the world by United Press International. In press conferences, Rizzo responded to the incident unabashed:

This was an excellent job. They can hide weapons, grenades and so forth, in their clothing... We did nothing wrong... Their feelings were hurt. The big Black Panthers with their trousers down... We had information from infiltrators and informers and from the black community that they did have guns in there... Some black leaders spew out. Why did they not speak out before? I didn't hear them speak out when Von Colln was shot. As far as I'm concerned, they can go wash their necks.<sup>408</sup>

Furthermore, this incident not only demonstrated how black activists and criminal suspects were negligently categorized as one threatening entity to police, but also how

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<sup>406</sup> The BPP's Free Breakfast for School Children Program began in January 1969 in Oakland, California. BPP members and volunteers consulted nutritionists on breakfast options and went to local grocery stores requesting donations to buy healthy food (specifically eggs, chocolate milk, meat, cereal, and fresh oranges) to feed tens of thousands of kids nationwide. The BPP's breakfast program later influenced the federal government to authorize free breakfast in public schools by 1975.

<sup>407</sup> Daughen and Binzen, *The Cop Who Would Be King*, 147-155.

<sup>408</sup> Daughen and Binzen, *The Cop Who Would Be King*, 150-155.

organizations promoting alternative methods to solving the societal problems of urban life would be discredited publicly by city officials who believed government spending on crime-fighting was more useful than social programs meant to uplift citizens.

### **Mayor Rizzo Cracks Down on Black Gangs with Tough on Crime Initiatives**

Since 1969, Rizzo argued that to combat gang violence city budget spending should go to tough on crime initiatives like adding more police officers to city streets and building more detention facilities for juvenile offenders.<sup>409</sup> When Rizzo appeared at the State Crime Commission's June 1969 hearing on gang warfare in Philadelphia he told State Attorney General William Sennett that the city needed stronger gun control laws, the elimination of bail for juvenile gang members, and adult criminal trials for youth sixteen and older. Additionally, he “called” for “massive federal and state funds” to combat juvenile gang members who were often “half-bombed by wine.” In Rizzo’s opinion, Philadelphians had two choices in solving gang violence: “Do you wish unwarranted cries of police brutality, or safe streets and an elimination of this needless loss of life?”<sup>410</sup>

When Rizzo became mayor on January 3, 1972, he immediately began a crackdown on gangs in the city. In 1972 there were approximately 200 gangs in operation (with 96% of members being black males) and citizens and politicians alike were concerned that gang violence was interfering with the everyday lives of Philadelphians.<sup>411</sup> In

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<sup>409</sup> Mary Larkin and John Clancy, “Rizzo Pleads For Funds to Fight Gangs,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (June 24, 1969); 1-23, Newspapers.com, accessed March 28, 2021, [Clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer - Newspapers.com](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/100000000/Rizzo-Pleads-For-Funds-to-Fight-Gangs/).

<sup>410</sup> “Rizzo Pleads For Funds to Fight Gangs.”

<sup>411</sup> Donald Janson, “Gangs Face Drive in Philadelphia” *New York Times*, (Feb. 13, 1972), <https://www.nytimes.com/1972/02/13/archives/gangs-face-drive-in-philadelphia-police-open-crackdown-on-youths.html>.

communities deemed gang territory, merchants had to close their businesses early, parents had to transport their children to and from school, and residents often feared turf wars between rival gangs. There were even news reports of innocent bystanders getting caught in the middle of gang crossfire, like 42-year-old Pearl Cooper who was shot in the chest and arm as she travelled home from the grocery store.<sup>412</sup> Ultimately, the goal of the crackdown was to enforce Pennsylvania's law on the prohibition of concealed deadly weapons while also invoking the city ordinance requiring citizens to register if they wanted to carry a weapon in a public place.

Beginning on January 30, 1972, the city ran a two-week moratorium on the prosecution of gang members who turned in their weapons at neighborhood firehouses with no questions asked. Although some gang members refused to turn in their weapons for fear they would be disarmed and vulnerable to rival gangs, the city recovered a total of 58 rifles and revolvers.<sup>413</sup> Following the moratorium, the city proposed mass arrests of gang members to expeditiously eliminate gang activity. In reference to the police policy of "stop and frisk" for weapons, City Managing Director Hillel S. Levinson was quoted as confirming the procedure as necessary action: "The city is looking very seriously at gang activities. It is not going to accept them any longer."<sup>414</sup> Rizzo himself was also quoted by the press for his "tough on crime" approach as mayor:

We know who they are. They're going to be stopped on the street by the police and we're going to talk to them. They had better hope they don't have weapons on them. We are going to move against gangs and we are not going to take any stuff from them. If they want to fight hand-to-hand, we'll take them on. That's the challenge.<sup>415</sup>

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<sup>412</sup> "Gangs Face Drive in Philadelphia."

<sup>413</sup> "Gangs Face Drive in Philadelphia."

<sup>414</sup> "Gangs Face Drive in Philadelphia."

<sup>415</sup> "Gangs Face Drive in Philadelphia."

After the moratorium, the Confederation for the Conservation of Our City asked churches and synagogues to be open 24 hours a day on the weekend of February 12-13, 1972 as sanctuaries for gang members if mass arrests occurred. While the city proposed mass arrests, local anti-gang organizations similar to Safe Streets such as the West Philadelphia organization Umoja, Inc., run by Falaka and David Fattah, arranged peace talks with about 500 gang members to avoid the crackdown.<sup>416</sup> According to journalists, organizations like this were in agreement with sociologists and gang members that the solution to gang activity was adequate job training programs and jobs for unemployed, unskilled, high school dropouts.

From 1973 to 1974, gang violence decreased but there remained a visible presence of gangs in Philadelphia. In Summer 1973, newspapers like the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Philadelphia Daily News* pegged the progress of anti-gang programs like Safe Streets, Inc. as disappointing when 27-year-old gang worker Harvey Wearing was murdered in Southwest Philadelphia.<sup>417</sup> Wearing spent two years with the Department of Welfare's Youth Conservation Corps before working with Safe Streets, Inc. alongside two other gang workers assigned to Southwest Philadelphia, 24-year-old Diane Scurry and 39-year-old Robert Malone.<sup>418</sup> As gang workers, Wearing, Scurry, and Malone talked with youth on street corners and participated in recreational activities in the community to foster trust with "gang-prone" youth. Wearing himself worked an eight-hour shift until 10 PM

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<sup>416</sup> "Gangs Face Drive in Philadelphia."

<sup>417</sup> Kitty Caparella, "Gang Leader Who Pledged Peace Held in Killing," *Philadelphia Daily News* (Aug 13, 1973): 31, Newspapers.com, accessed January 14, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/40868306/philadelphia-daily-news/>.

<sup>418</sup> Tyree Johnson, "'He Said Somebody Would Be Killed,'" *Philadelphia Daily News* (June 29, 1973):4, Newspapers.com, accessed February 27, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/40867735/philadelphia-daily-news/>.



and volunteered as the basketball team's coach at Meyers Recreation Center located at 58<sup>th</sup> and Kingsessing Avenue.<sup>419</sup>

Although Wearing had no college education, his peers and mentees viewed him as “having a genuine understanding of young people and an instinctive ability to reach them.”<sup>420</sup> The night Wearing was killed, he was reportedly talking “peace” and then “rapping” about boxer Bennie Briscoe with gang members 90 minutes after his work shift ended. Anti-gang programs sponsored by the city instructed youth workers to wear “dress clothes” so they would be easily identified as social workers while they interacted with gang-involved youth.<sup>421</sup> According to Scurry, the gang control workers refused and chose to wear “open-collared shirts, turtlenecks, and blue jeans” instead to avoid being perceived as pretentious and paternalistic: “We could have worn the clothes, but they (gangs) would be turned off. They might feel we were trying to be better than they are.” The dedication the gang workers demonstrated to the youth who received them gave Malone the impression that the gang members “dug” them.<sup>422</sup> Nevertheless, when gang workers like Wearing and Malone realized that the gang members accepted them, they believed that they earned the youths’ trust.

On June 27, 1973 at approximately 11:30 PM, Wearing was talking to four members from the gang Mongo Nation three doors away from his home at 5506 Warrington Avenue when a “youth” appeared across the street.<sup>423</sup> The “youth” took out a gun wrapped under his jacket and fired one shot, striking Wearing in the head. The shooter,

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<sup>419</sup> Acel Moore, “Slain Gang Worker to be Honored Today,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 15, 1973):31, Newspapers.com, accessed January 13, 2020, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/40868057/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/40868057/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

<sup>420</sup> “Slain Gang Worker to be Honored Today.”

<sup>421</sup> ““He Said Somebody Would Be Killed.””

<sup>422</sup> ““He Said Somebody Would Be Killed.””

<sup>423</sup> ““He Said Somebody Would Be Killed.””

believed to be a rival of Mongo Nation, then dropped his weapon, picked it up, and fled around the corner. Following Wearing's murder, gang members including 23-year-old Edward "Boo" Benn, a "runner" (leader) of Mongo Nation, vowed an oath of peace in Wearing's memory: "Nobody talks about gang warring now. We are trying to get ourselves together. We are trying to carry on in a manner in which Harv would have wanted us to."<sup>424</sup> According to Wearing's supervisor, Michael Hillegass, two other gang workers had been injured while on duty, but Wearing was the first to die on the job. Nevertheless, many individuals were moved by Wearing's murder. The West Philadelphia Parents Group to Eradicate Youth Violence helped sponsor his memorial service and members of Mongo Nation reportedly collected nearly \$1,000 for Wearing's wife and two daughters.<sup>425</sup>

From June to July, both the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Daily News* ran several stories and updates about Wearing and his death. On July 15, 1973, reporters released interview-laced stories about residents, community service workers, gang members, and patrolmen who knew, missed, and respected Wearing in honor of his 3 PM funeral and memorial service at White Rock Baptist Church that day.<sup>426</sup> Mrs. Miles, a resident who helped organize the memorial service described the community's collective sentiment over Wearing's death: "Everybody in the community was deeply touched by his death. He gave so much to the community and his death has brought a lot of attention to the gang problem."<sup>427</sup> Seventeen-year-old Fred Ransom, a basketball player on the team Wearing coached at Meyers Recreation Center detailed the respect many youth had for him: "He

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<sup>424</sup> "'He Said Somebody Would Be Killed.'"

<sup>425</sup> "Slain Gang Worker to be Honored Today."

<sup>426</sup> "Slain Gang Worker to be Honored Today."

<sup>427</sup> "Slain Gang Worker to be Honored Today."

was a real cool guy and had a lot of check (influence) around here.”<sup>428</sup> Following the memorial, many believed gangs like Mongo Nation, Woodland Avenue, and Market Street would stop “warring” and embrace “peace,” but August news reports helped cultivate a renewed sentiment of hopelessness when another gang murder occurred less than a mile from where Wearing died.<sup>429</sup>

From August 13-14, 1973, journalists from the *Philadelphia Daily News* and *Inquirer* reported how the 26th gang-related shooting victim of the year occurred when Mongo Nation’s Edward Benn used a zip gun to shoot and kill 22-year-old rival gang member Lawrence Drummond.<sup>430</sup> The incident occurred around 1AM on August 12th when Benn and his fellow gang members attempted to “crash” a birthday party hosted by members of the Market Street gang at 5822 Ashland Avenue and a confrontation ensued outside. In *Daily News* reporter Tyree Johnson’s article, “Gang Slaying Kills Peace Dream” he recalled how the gang killing occurred nearly a month after Wearing’s memorial where Benn stated: “We now want to be productive members of society. That is what Harvey worked for. That was his dream.”<sup>431</sup> Johnson’s article emphasized how members of Mongo Nation felt pressured to war again because there were rival gangs surrounding their turf and they believed the community only cared about peace after someone was “bumped off” because gang members weren’t invited to town hall meetings to discuss the issues that caused the violence.<sup>432</sup> Gang members like Benn argued that they agreed with

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<sup>428</sup> “Slain Gang Worker to be Honored Today.”

<sup>429</sup> Warren Brown, “‘Peacemaker’ Held in Murder: Leader Disavowed Gangs a Month Ago,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Aug 13, 1973):31, Newspapers.com, accessed January 13, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/33570324/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>430</sup> Tyree Johnson, “Gang Slaying Kills Peace Dream,” *Philadelphia Daily News* (Aug 14, 1973):8, Newspapers.com, accessed February 27, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/40867922/philadelphia-daily-news/>.

<sup>431</sup> “Gang Slaying Kills Peace Dream.”

<sup>432</sup> “Gang Slaying Kills Peace Dream.”

community members that gang violence had to end in Philadelphia, but they were skeptical of the motives police officers and social workers had to reform them out of gang activity. Gang members only trusted a few mediators like Wearing who could navigate and unite both worlds to establish peace. Moreover, when effective gang workers like Wearing were killed, both gang members and community residents lost hope in eradicating gang violence in the city.

### **“Too Much for Too Many”: Safe Streets, Inc. Becomes at Risk of Closure**

By 1974, the Philadelphia Police Department estimated that there were approximately 250 youth gangs in Philadelphia alone, with membership for each gang ranging from 18 to 200 individuals between the ages of ten to twenty-two years old. According to police, gang activity was strongly active within the black communities of North and West Philadelphia, leading city officials to concentrate more on curbing crime in those neighborhoods.<sup>433</sup> With these statistics, City Council put pressure on Safe Streets to demonstrate that its efforts were lowering gang-related crime rates. City Council decided to conduct a six-month evaluation of Safe Streets and if the organization failed to meet the officials’ expectations, the Philadelphia Regional Planning Council planned to “discontinue” its disbursement of funds on December 31, 1974. Furthermore, if Safe Streets could not reduce gang violence rapidly, the program would be shut down. Progress reports were regularly sent to the Governor's Justice Commission where they were transferred to Keith Miles at the Office of Evaluation, LEAA-NILECJ within the Department of Justice.<sup>434</sup>

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<sup>433</sup> Youth in Conflict Cooperative Service Project, *Safe Streets, Inc. (Six Month Evaluation Report, July-December 1974)*, December 31, 1974.

<sup>434</sup> *Safe Streets, Inc. (Six Month Evaluation Report, July-December 1974)*.

In July 1974, Philadelphia's city officials invited an evaluation team from the historically-black college, Lincoln University to visit Safe Streets' centers, conduct interviews with staff and juvenile attendees, review the program's components, and request records of operation to determine whether the organization was impactful in ending gang violence in the city.<sup>435</sup> Once their evaluation was complete, the team determined that Safe Streets "tried to do too much for too many" and given its difficulties with efficient record-keeping, sufficient and highly-experienced staff, and proper coordination with the Youth Service Commission (YSC) that arranged training programs for juveniles, the non-profit should close its doors and allow the program to "go on where it can until the new plan is developed."<sup>436</sup>

According to the Lincoln evaluation team, one of the main reasons for Safe Streets' "failures" was financial support. The organization had poor record-keeping because data on juveniles and program affairs were often handwritten and these documents were only accessible to evaluators when staff had the time and means to produce typewritten copies.<sup>437</sup> The staff who ran the centers were often former gang members who had neither a college education nor formal training in vocational skills or group therapy, therefore the organization had to hire or solicit volunteers who were trained in the fields necessary to meet the needs of juveniles. Additionally, staff at the centers were often paid low wages and pressured to work long hours so that juveniles could remain at the centers all day, instead of spending time on the streets where gang activity occurred.<sup>438</sup> Lastly, poor record-keeping and low morale among overworked staff members made program

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<sup>435</sup> *Safe Streets, Inc. (Six Month Evaluation Report, July-December 1974).*

<sup>436</sup> *Safe Streets, Inc. (Six Month Evaluation Report, July-December 1974).*

<sup>437</sup> *Safe Streets, Inc. (Six Month Evaluation Report, July-December 1974).*

<sup>438</sup> *Safe Streets, Inc. (Six Month Evaluation Report, July-December 1974).*

partnerships with the YSC an extra burden.<sup>439</sup> Although evaluators from Lincoln University believed the sports and recreation programs for youth were sound, they “lacked coordination and were weak in social service referral and follow up.”<sup>440</sup> Nevertheless, the Lincoln evaluation team concluded that while Safe Streets ideally wanted to end gang violence with the resources it provided, the organization did not have enough manpower or finances to achieve its goals.

In November 1974, the Philadelphia Regional Planning Council rejected Safe Streets’ funding application because they received poor evaluations from Lincoln University and therefore saw no comprehensive planning to reduce gang activity from the organization’s current efforts. Director of the Philadelphia Regional Council, Yvonne Haskins, later stated in a press release the disapproval was because “funding for ineffective programs was wrong” and before additional federal funds are spent, the city’s Youth Services Commission must “devise an overall plan aimed at curbing gang violence.”<sup>441</sup> Even though Safe Streets was scheduled to close that December, city officials like Arlen Specter attempted to win more funding for the program by petitioning multiple politicians.<sup>442</sup>

On January 6, 1975, the Governor’s Justice Commission met in Harrisburg to consider funding Safe Streets and two other social programs City Council identified as “low-performing,” the Intensive Area Youth Workers and Youth Development, operated by the Philadelphia Public Welfare Department. At the conclusion of the meeting, Safe

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<sup>439</sup> *Safe Streets, Inc. (Six Month Evaluation Report, July-December 1974).*

<sup>440</sup> Robert W. Kotzbauer, “Safe Streets Gang Control Gets \$30,000,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, (January 7, 1975).

<sup>441</sup> “Safe Streets Gang Control Gets \$30,000.”

<sup>442</sup> “Millions for Safe Streets, and Crime Still Climbs,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, (March 10, 1974).

Streets, having already received \$942,165 in LEAA funds over the years, was granted two more months to operate with \$30,000 in federal subsidies. Initial responses to the news of unexpected funding was mixed. Executive Director of Safe Streets, Lewis Taylor Jr. responded with elation stating that the added funds would safeguard the organization's basketball, job counselling, vocational training, and educational programs for 400 youth because 27 staff workers would be retained. City Managing Director, Hillel Levinson responded with a cautious sense of relief in that the three programs were crucial to curbing gang activity on the community level because they were the only municipal entities outside of the police department that directly tackled gang issues: "to discontinue them would severely restrict our ability to handle gangs other than by police action."<sup>443</sup> Unfortunately, the Intensive Area Youth Workers and Youth Development were denied additional funding, a fate Safe Streets hoped to avoid after its two-month extension ended.

Less than six months after Safe Streets won additional funding from the Governor's Justice Commission, the organization was in jeopardy again when the city's budget for social programs and the police department was under consideration by the Philadelphia Regional Planning Council. On the evening of June 19, 1975, the council met at Midtown Holiday Inn to review Safe Streets' application for \$217,496 in federal funds.<sup>444</sup> The council criticized the organization for continuously relying on LEAA grants and not searching for other financial supporters. The council then denied Safe Streets' application

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<sup>443</sup> "Safe Streets Gang Control Gets \$30,000."

<sup>444</sup> "Gang-Control Loses Bid for U.S. Aid," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, (June 20, 1975).

with an 8-7 vote, leaving the final decision on funding to the Governor's Justice Commission.<sup>445</sup>

At the same meeting, the council reviewed the city's application for \$1.04 million to install a computerized police radio dispatching system for the police department. As early as August 1974, the city noticed a 16% increase in police calls and argued that this rise in police requests left the department "overtaxed" and unable to respond quickly."<sup>446</sup> Believing rising crime rates required advanced policing techniques to remedy the issue, city officials hired an independent consultant who recommended the police department use a computer system to keep logs of 911 calls, the precise locations of callers, and the availability of police cars to arrive at crime scenes or emergency situations. State criminal justice planner, Ted Shoemaker praised the approach, stating that if Philadelphia carried out this plan it would be the "first in the country" to do so, especially since the city preferred a private consultant to set up the system rather than rely on computer firms to simply supply the necessary equipment.<sup>447</sup> Ultimately, the council approved the city's request to spend additional funds on policing. Moreover, City Council largely gave up on rehabilitative social welfare programs and chose tough on crime policing to combat black gangs.

Since June 1975, Safe Streets was repeatedly granted additional funding by the Governor's Justice Commission to stay open "temporarily," but the organization always existed with the threat of closure as it survived on an insufficient budget. Although city officials knew Safe Streets was a financial failure, they believed the organization had a

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<sup>445</sup> "Gang-Control Loses Bid for U.S. Aid."

<sup>446</sup> "Gang-Control Loses Bid for U.S. Aid."

<sup>447</sup> "Gang-Control Loses Bid for U.S. Aid."



quasi-effective approach to remedying gang activity, rising crime rates, and juvenile delinquency. Additionally, it remained clear that gangs continued to be an issue in the city when Philadelphia was one of the locales analyzed at Harvard Law School's Center for Criminal Justice by Philadelphia-born anthropologist Walter B. Miller.

In Miller's 1975 monograph, *Violence by Youth Gangs and Youth Groups as a Crime Problem in Major American Cities*, he explained how after several years of studying the gang situation in twelve cities nationwide based on statistical data and observations he received from 450 representatives from police departments, courts, and youth service agencies, "Youth gang violence is more lethal today than ever before." Miller identified Philadelphia and five other cities as having "high levels" of gang violence greater than the gang activity of the 1950s because youth in gangs were less formally organized, more likely to use guns, and more active in schools. In New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago, and San Francisco alone there were 760 gangs and 28,500 gang members. Philadelphia had the highest estimated rate of youth affiliated with gangs or involved in law-violating groups of the six "gang problem cities" ranging from 59.1-88.6%. From 1973 to 1975, Philadelphia was reported to have between 88-400 gangs, 4,700-15,000 gang members, and approximately one out of ten juveniles (between the ages of 8 and 22) was in a gang.<sup>448</sup> According to Miller, gang activity was "concentrated in low-income ghettos" and schools where neighborhood buildings were marked as gang turf and teachers and children could fall victim to intimidation, shootings, killings, and extortion of "protection money."

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<sup>448</sup> Walter B. Miller, *Violence by Youth Gangs and Youth Groups as a Crime Problem in Major American Cities*, (Cambridge: Center for Criminal Justice Harvard Law School, 1975), 1-10.

When Miller's research identified "low-income ghettos" as havens for gang violence, he suggested that poverty begot crime, but also argued that youth of color were more prone to criminal activity than their white counterparts. In his study, Miller argued that throughout American history ethnic populations with recent migrants and low-skilled laborers "produced" gangs. Miller claimed that in the 1880s through 1920s, "white ethnics" from Irish, Italian, Jewish, and Slav backgrounds dominated gangs during a period of mass immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe.<sup>449</sup> In the 1970s, youth from "recently migrated groups" like African Americans from the South, Latinos from "Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Cuba," and Asians from "Hong Kong and the Philippine Islands" were "most heavily represented" in the gang populations of major cities like Philadelphia and Los Angeles. Since Miller's statistical data portrayed "classic white ethnics" of British, German, and Scandinavian descent as "underrepresented in contemporary urban gangs," he came to the conclusion that "ethnic and social class status" were valid indicators of future gang activity among certain groups.<sup>450</sup> Moreover, Miller's research triggered fear amongst city officials who wanted to curb gang violence to prevent white flight from neighborhoods adjacent to all-black communities. His report of neighborhoods and schools filled with gang shootings, robberies, rapes, and murders in areas like North and West Philadelphia convinced City Council that the best way to retain the white and middle-class taxpayers of Philadelphia was to fortify the police

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<sup>449</sup> Walter B. Miller, *Violence by Youth Gangs and Youth Groups as a Crime Problem in Major American Cities*, 27.

<sup>450</sup> Walter B. Miller, *Violence by Youth Gangs and Youth Groups as a Crime Problem in Major American Cities*, 27.

department's budget and divest from anti-gang programs benefiting black youth like Safe Streets, Inc.

In late August 1976, the Board of Managers of the Philadelphia Youth Study Center wanted to send “troubled and cast-off children” between the ages of nine and seventeen to temporary foster and group homes while they awaited their hearings in Juvenile Court for minor criminal offenses.<sup>451</sup> City officials, believing that jail was an inappropriate institution for low-risk youth to await trial, considered Safe Streets a potential facility to lodge at least six juveniles at each center overnight since its mission was to rehabilitate and steer children from violence and crime.<sup>452</sup> However, by December 1976, the organization was finally forced to shutter its doors when its grants from the city and federal governments were discontinued.

### **Tough on Crime Spending Reigns**

From 1970 to 1976, Philadelphia gradually spent more money funding the police, prisons and the courts than it did on juvenile commitment and the Youth Study Center.<sup>453</sup> In 1976, approximately 89% of Philadelphia's \$236 million budget for fighting crime went to the police department, prisons, and the courts. Programs committed to rehabilitating juvenile delinquents received only 3.7% of budgetary spending.<sup>454</sup> The City Council believed that curbing black juvenile gang violence through tough on crime initiatives was best because the city was in financial debt and its tax base was dropping

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<sup>451</sup> Robert W. Kotzbauer, “Cast-off Kids Will Go to Foster Homes, Not Lockup,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, (August 31, 1976).

<sup>452</sup> “Cast-off Kids Will Go to Foster Homes, Not Lockup.”

<sup>453</sup> “Billions for Safe Streets Yield Failure, Fear, Fury,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, (September 11, 1977).

<sup>454</sup> “Billions for Safe Streets Yield Failure, Fear, Fury.”

because of white flight. To curb citizens' fears of gang violence and white flight, city officials and the police department supported tough on crime initiatives focused on incarceration because it was an immediate solution to the gang problem in the city.

For Philadelphia's City Council, the signs of financial distress were visible as early as 1939, when city officials recognized a need for additional revenue to finance municipal services. Under Mayor Bernard Samuel's administration (1941-1952), the city wage tax was implemented to supplement the insufficient revenue gained from the real estate tax. Although "postwar prosperity" brought in adequate funds from taxation in the 1950s, Philadelphia's population decline by 3.3% later forced city officials to implement an annual increase of the real estate and wage taxes to finance certain necessities like schools by 1961.<sup>455</sup> Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, city officials including Mayors Joseph S. Clark, Jr., Richardson Dilworth, and James H.J. Tate petitioned and lobbied the federal and state governments for grants to finance improvements to health and welfare programs, public housing, highways, the airport, and subway but over time the city was denied its request.

By Summer 1970, Philadelphia's population declined further by 3.7% and its surrounding suburban counties grew by 30%.<sup>456</sup> As city depopulation worsened, the city struggled to reduce crime with 700 police vacancies, limited judges and district attorneys, and inadequate rehabilitation of prisoners and repeat criminal offenders despite the municipal budget's increase from \$100,720, 633 in 1947 to \$535,361,000 in 1970. In

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<sup>455</sup> Joseph S. Clark, Jr. and Dennis J. Clark, "Rally and Relapse, 1946-1968" in *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History*, edited by Edwin Wolf, Nicholas B. Wainwright, and Russell Frank Weigley, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982), 664-668.

<sup>456</sup> S.A. Paolantonio, *Rizzo: The Last Big Man in Big City America*, (Philadelphia: Camino Books, 1993), 240.

fact, Mayor Tate was so concerned about financing core municipal services that year he rejected City Council's appropriation of \$400,000 toward anti-gang initiatives to prevent gang violence and death.<sup>457</sup>

By Summer 1972, Mayor Frank Rizzo contemplated how to fulfill his campaign pledge to "bring the city together" and not create new taxes despite the city's issues with racial tension, high unemployment, a bankrupt school system, a crumbling mass transit system, and a high crime rate.<sup>458</sup> Under the Rizzo administration, City Finance Director Lennox L. Moak attempted to balance the budget while Director of Commerce Harry Belinger attempted to implement a program to entice new businesses, industries, and corporate executives to operate and reside in the city in spite of Philadelphia's 11% corporate tax and 3.5% wage tax.<sup>459</sup> In Spring 1975, Rizzo wanted to maintain a four-year streak of no taxes, but Moak discovered that it would be difficult to balance the 1975-1976 budget without an additional \$65 million in revenue. Somehow, Moak was able to fulfill Rizzo's request but during the next fiscal year city taxes increased, particularly the real estate tax which rose by 30%.<sup>460</sup>

In the late 1970s, Philadelphia's economic issues gave government officials like Mayor Rizzo more leeway to argue that unpoliced black crime contributed to the city's financial difficulties. Few factories remained in Philadelphia as many companies moved their headquarters and production factories to the suburbs to reduce business expenses and increase profit margins. As factories left cities, so did jobs. In the summer of 1977, Philadelphia and South Jersey saw the disappearance of more than 11,900 jobs in

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<sup>457</sup> Joseph S. Clark, Jr. and Dennis J. Clark, "Rally and Relapse, 1946-1968," 676.

<sup>458</sup> Fred Hamilton, *Rizzo: From Cop to Mayor of Philadelphia*, (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 202-203.

<sup>459</sup> Hamilton, *Rizzo: From Cop to Mayor of Philadelphia*, 202-203.

<sup>460</sup> "In Memoriam: Lennox L. Moak," *Public Budgeting & Finance*, (Summer 1983):120-122.

construction, factories, services, and government, resulting in the region's unemployment rate teetering between 7.1 and 8.8%.<sup>461</sup> Although 1,339,400 people were employed, and 447,300 new jobs were created in August 1977, the increase in residents quitting the job search made citizens and politicians alike cynical about the city's economic future.

Additionally, from 1972-1977, Philadelphia experienced depopulation when nearly 250,000 people moved out of the city.<sup>462</sup> With Philadelphia losing business, property, and sales taxes from job flight and white flight, the city's tax base was struggling to finance the public services of water, sewage, street paving, street cleaning (including snow removal), street lighting, police, and fire services.<sup>463</sup> Therefore, conservative city officials like Rizzo thought it was more viable to curb crime with massive funding for the police, prisons, and courts to quickly undo the job flight and depopulation issues that plagued Philadelphia. Moreover, City Council's concern about solving the city's issues of financial debt, depopulation, and gang violence would lead to the police department implementing hyper-policing initiatives like Operation Find against black gangs and individuals in crime hotspots located in the most stigmatized areas of the city, black-inhabited housing projects.

### **The Legacy: North Philly Peace Park**

Today, if you go to 2201 W. Stewart Street, the former location of the North Philadelphia center of Safe Streets, you will find a vacant lot. Throughout the neighborhood of Sharswood where Safe Streets, Inc. once stood are signs of desolation,

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<sup>461</sup> *Amateur Night at City Hall: The Story of Frank L. Rizzo*, Dir. Robert Mugge, MVD Entertainment Group, 1978, Kanopy, Web, Accessed November 24, 2017.

<sup>462</sup> *Amateur Night at City Hall*.

<sup>463</sup> Elizabeth M. Geffen, "Industrial Development and Social Crisis, 1841-1854" in *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History*, edited by Edwin Wolf, Nicholas B. Wainwright, and Russell Frank Weigley, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982), 307-362.

poverty, but also hope. There are boarded up buildings and housing projects, well-kept homes, murals, revitalization projects under construction, and major landmarks—remnants of the demolished and infamous Blumberg Housing Projects, the Moderne-Art Deco styled Vaux High School, and the Free Library dedicated to 1960s civil rights activist Cecil B. Moore. Interestingly, in that vacant area is the North Philly Peace Park, an organization established in 2012 by community activist Tommy Joshua. As in the era of Safe Streets, the North Philly Peace Park is a safe space in the middle of gang territory. Children and adults can enter the large patch of land knowing that in Sharswood weapons, drugs, trash, and violence are prohibited. At the park, there is a community garden, wooden park benches, and brightly-painted car tires as decoration and recreation for children. The volunteers who work there tend to the garden, distribute free food to community residents in need, and sell trinkets and apparel to raise money for community projects like a vocational school for neighborhood children. Although gang activity there has not dissipated and Safe Streets, Inc. has been defunct for over forty years, the mission of the organization still lives on in the North Philly Peace Park as community residents and activists work to fulfill the goals that Specter and his board once proposed.

## CHAPTER 5

### **“‘WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE’: HARD LIVING, DISCRIMINATORY POLICING, AND CIVILIAN RETALIATION, 1970-1976”**

“Andre said he was going to get him a cop. A cop shot one of his brothers. He knew it was a cop who he shot. He picked out one and he shot him.” -Robert Chambers, Suspect in Police Murder, March 11, 1976 <sup>464</sup>

In the 1970s, the Philadelphia Police Department often used excessive force in marginalized black neighborhoods because they believed the stereotype that criminality and anti-police sentiment was the inherent “nature” of poor and non-white people who belonged to the “culture of poverty.” Juvenile criminal court cases and news stories about crime, “broken black families,” and horrible living conditions at public housing projects provided tough on crime advocates, like former police commissioner Mayor Frank L. Rizzo, the evidence they needed to justify police tactics that violated the civil rights of African Americans, such as Operation FIND. Operation FIND was originally designed in 1968 by Police Commissioner Rizzo as a mass police search and arrest tactic to apprehend groups of criminals involved in armed robbery and automobile theft. However, the tactic was later used frequently in all-black neighborhoods and housing projects to capture suspects who committed violent crimes like murder. When Operation FIND was ordered, black men and boys faced arrest, interrogation, and abuse whether they were innocent or guilty of a crime. Moreover, from 1970 to 1976, the Philadelphia

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<sup>464</sup> Joseph D. McCaffrey, “Didn’t Know it was a Cop says Officer-Slaying Suspect,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Mar 11, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.



Police Department's use of Operation FIND to fight crime stigmatized poor black communities, terrorized black residents, and criminalized not only black gangs, but also black individuals who were found in hyper-segregated environments like housing projects. One case that exemplified the evolution of this tough on crime approach was *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Andre Martin* (1976).

### **Officer Down at Wilson Park Project**

Around 8:10 PM on the night of February 25, 1976, Andre Martin knew his life was over. At fifteen, Martin made the biggest mistake of his life by shooting a police officer, 29-year-old John Trettin, who was a five-year veteran of the Philadelphia Police Department.<sup>465</sup> The crime would garner a maximum sentence of death by electric chair. Before that, Martin lived a life of dysfunction. His mother, Shirley Munson, was a divorcee struggling with mental health issues as she lived with her five children in public housing for almost a decade.<sup>466</sup> Wilson Park Housing Project at 2506 Jackson Street was Martin's home. Life at Wilson Park in the 1970s was one of inequitable isolation. Built in 1953, Wilson Park served as low-income housing for "refugees" of slum clearance from dilapidated and eyesore homes in the city and World War II veterans (who struggled to find employment) and their families.<sup>467</sup> In the 1950s, the low-rise and red brick high-rise

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<sup>465</sup> John F. Morrison and Robert Bridgeo, "Policeman in Critical Condition," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Feb 26, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

<sup>466</sup> Gunter David, "To Live in Fear Everyday of Your Life," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Sept 15, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

<sup>467</sup> "Violence is a way of life at project," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Feb 25 1976): 2. Newspapers.com, accessed November 7, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9053474/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9053474/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

apartments featured 742 sizable units with well-functioning appliances and elevators, clean hallways, efficient laundry and medical facilities, and an outdoor playground.<sup>468</sup>

In 1954, Wilson Park stirred controversy when white *and* black families began to move into the all-white neighborhood surrounding the housing project.<sup>469</sup> Since Wilson Park was bounded by the I-76 expressway to the south and a stream of rowhouses inhabited by Italian families to its east and west, many black children and adults feared racial violence every time they left their “island” of safety to attend school and work.<sup>470</sup> By the 1970s, Wilson Park drastically changed in demographics and living conditions. White flight turned Wilson Park, still surrounded by a “hostile” white neighborhood, into a majority black community, and diminished federal and local funding for public housing resulted in derelict care for the housing project and its tenants.<sup>471</sup> On any given day at Wilson Park, Martin saw shattered glass on the sidewalk, overgrown weeds, and mud on the grassy lawn, along with trash and graffiti in hallways filled with the stench of urine. Martin witnessed illegal drug and gun sales and heard numerous stories of robberies, random shootings, and children injured and killed because they fell through broken window panes or down elevator shafts. Wilson Park in 1976 was (in the words of tenants galore) a “hellhole resort.”<sup>472</sup>

Three blocks away from the housing project was Vare Junior High School, the school Martin stopped attending to drink, smoke, and spend time with his friends from the

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<sup>468</sup> “Wilson Park Homes Set for Use,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (March 14 1954): 17, Newspapers.com, accessed November 7, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9053873/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9053873/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

<sup>469</sup> Mary Walton, “Trapped: Housing Project an Island of Fear,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 14, 1975): 1-2-A, Newspapers.com, accessed November 7, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9052664/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9052664/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

<sup>470</sup> Interstate 76 (I-76), which travels through South and Southwest Philadelphia was built in 1964.

<sup>471</sup> “Violence is a way of life at project.”

<sup>472</sup> “Trapped: Housing Project an Island of Fear.”

neighborhood. When Martin's nineteen-year-old friend, Ellis Croft, was shot five times by police in an alley after he did an armed robbery at Pantry Pride supermarket (a block away from the housing project) on September 26, 1975, Martin angrily vowed to get revenge on the police for what he believed to be police brutality.<sup>473</sup> Five months later, Martin selected Trettin to be the sacrificial lamb who would pay for all the injustices he experienced in his life.

On the night of February 25, 1976, Martin spent hours smoking marijuana with his two friends, sixteen-year-old Robert Chambers and fifteen-year-old Alonzo Shands in the 4-B apartment of Chambers' grandmother, Catherine Beeme at Wilson Park Housing Project.<sup>474</sup> Soon Martin and his friends wanted to get "higher," so they left the bedroom of Chambers' sister, Christina "Tina" Lockwood, bought Valium in front of the building at 2506 Jackson Street, and ingested the pills.<sup>475</sup> The teens later smoked more marijuana in Tina's bedroom. Soon Chambers reached under his sister's bed and retrieved a 1963 .22 caliber Winchester rifle (covered in Christmas wrapping paper) that he and his friends bought earlier from their 25-year-old neighbor "Kitt" and loaded it.<sup>476</sup> Although the boys were unaffiliated with a gang, they decided to take turns shooting out the window at three

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<sup>473</sup> "Mindless tragedy ruins six lives," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Mar. 7, 1976):15-A, Newspapers.com, accessed March 9, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9054211/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9054211/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

<sup>474</sup> Gunter David, "Murder Trial Told of Bullet Casings," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Sept 4, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

<sup>475</sup> Gunter David, "Youth Falters at Murder Trial," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Sept 9, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

<sup>476</sup> "Shot Fatal to Officer Came from Youth's Rifle, Jury is Told," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Sept 10, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

boys who appeared to be from the Passyunk Gang behind Building 2508.<sup>477</sup> Then, as Shands would later testify in Common Pleas Court, there was “confusion” and Housing Authority guards arrived in the courtyard.<sup>478</sup>

Around 7:33 PM, Officer Trettin and his partner were among several officers called to Wilson Park Housing Projects to investigate reports of shots fired.<sup>479</sup> Although Trettin was scheduled to be off-duty that day and at the Philadelphia Civic Center playing with his Quaker City band at the *Show of Shows* event, he had to work because the city required extra security while U.S. Vice President Nelson Rockefeller was in town for a testimonial dinner at the Sheraton Hotel in Center City.<sup>480</sup> While officers searched the courtyard, Martin told Chambers and Shands he was going to shoot the police for “his brother” Ellis. Shands and Chambers tried to talk him out of it. When that didn’t work, Chambers grabbed the rifle and stuck it in the corner and then he left with Shands.<sup>481</sup> Martin was then left alone in the room with the gun. No one knows what he was thinking at that moment. Did Martin think about how Croft was shot and critically injured by police for stealing money for his family?<sup>482</sup> Did he know and think about how another black teenager, Michael Sherard, was shot and killed by police after he fled two white

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<sup>477</sup> It is unknown whether the youths Martin identified as boys from the “Passyunk Gang” were actually gang members. What is known is that Wilson Park Housing Project security guards ordered boys from the housing project, the Passyunk Homes, to disperse and leave Wilson Park following the shooting.

<sup>478</sup> Gunter David, “Murder Trial Pits Youth Against Pal,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Sept 8, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

<sup>479</sup> “Sniper shoots down policeman, setting off a massive manhunt,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Feb. 26, 1976):2-A, Newspapers.com, accessed March 9, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9053474/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9053474/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

<sup>480</sup> “Shooting Jars Band,” *Philadelphia Daily News* (Feb. 26, 1976):3, Newspapers.com, accessed March 9, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9054118/philadelphia\\_daily\\_news/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9054118/philadelphia_daily_news/).

<sup>481</sup> “Murder Trial Pits Youth Against Pal.”

<sup>482</sup> “Policeman’s death: Was vengeance the motive?” *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Mar. 7, 1976):1-E, Newspapers.com, accessed March 31, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9054144/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9054144/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

officers who suspected him of stealing ten days prior in Germantown?<sup>483</sup> What is known is what Martin did next.

As officers searched the courtyard, a “sniper” from the fourth floor of one of the three high rise buildings suddenly shot Officer Trettin (who was standing in the doorway of one of the buildings near a lamppost) with a .22 caliber rifle in the head, slightly above his left eye around 8:10 PM.<sup>484</sup> Officer Malinowski initially had no idea what was wrong with his partner when he “suddenly slumped to the ground,” until he noticed a hole just above the visor of Trettin’s cap.<sup>485</sup> Although Trettin was wearing a bulletproof vest, the shot to the head left him critically wounded and he was immediately taken to Methodist Hospital while officers and police helicopters descended on the complex searching for the shooting suspect. Soon an Operation FIND alert was issued citywide and over one hundred police officers, including Trettin’s fellow stakeout officers, arrived at the courtyard armed with shotguns to find the “sniper.” Police Commissioner Joseph F. O’Neill, Deputy Commissioner Harry Fox, and several police officials set up a “command post” at the housing project’s security office, while other police officers searched every unit of two of the 12-story buildings at the housing project.<sup>486</sup>

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<sup>483</sup> “\$3 Million Suit Over Death,” *The Pocono Record*, (April 3, 1976): 2, accessed May 8, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/newspage/44308430/>.

<sup>484</sup> “Sniper shoots down policeman, setting off a massive manhunt.” In the 1960s and 1970s, police used the military term “sniper,” to refer to unidentified shooters who operated from elevated positions in undisclosed areas like windows in high-rises and on roofs. Following the Civil Rights Movement, the term became popular when racial uprisings against police brutality like the 1967 Newark Riots occurred in the era of the Vietnam War (1955-1975).

<sup>485</sup> John F. Morrison and Robert Bridgeo, “Policeman in Critical Condition,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Feb 26, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

<sup>486</sup> “Policeman in Critical Condition.”

According to the *Philadelphia Tribune*, Wilson Park residents were treated poorly by police who behaved “lawlessly” as they searched for the shooter.<sup>487</sup> When officers went down the corridors of each floor of the housing project, they shot off door locks and broke down apartment doors when no one responded to their knocks. When inside, some police dragged people out of bed for an interview and ransacked apartments. A police helicopter was also used to investigate “movement” on the rooftop of Building 2506.<sup>488</sup> Several housing project residents, including children, were taken to police headquarters for questioning. Mayor Frank Rizzo soon arrived at the crime scene to get an update on the search for the sniper.<sup>489</sup>

At the hospital, Trettin had no idea where he was as he laid on the operating table half-dead with his head clean shaved for surgery. Emergency room doctors first X-rayed his head and found a .22 caliber bullet lodged in the base of his skull.<sup>490</sup> Then the ER physicians delivered the disappointing news to the surgeons that an operation was useless because Trettin was brain dead. At the Trettin home on the 1800 block of Wensley Street, Claire Trettin (who had last seen her husband when he left for work at 5 PM) was personally notified by a policeman that her husband was shot and she collapsed to the floor.<sup>491</sup> At 9:54 PM, Claire and Officer Trettin’s parents and sister arrived at the hospital with a police escort. Soon Reverend Raymond McHale of the Roman Catholic Church of the Epiphany administered last rites to the Protestant Trettin and members of the Police

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<sup>487</sup> “Police Were Lawless in Terror at Wilson Park,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (March 6, 1976): 1, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed June 26, 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/532722673?accountid=14270>.

<sup>488</sup> “Sniper shoots down police, setting off a massive manhunt.”

<sup>489</sup> “Policeman in Critical Condition.”

<sup>490</sup> “Policeman in Critical Condition.”

<sup>491</sup> “Policeman in Critical Condition.”

Wives and Interested Citizens arrived at the hospital to comfort Trettin's wife.<sup>492</sup> Around 10 PM, Mayor Frank Rizzo and Police Commissioner Joseph O'Neill arrived at the hospital and offered their condolences to Trettin's family.

Back at the housing project, Martin went to the apartment of his aunt, Debbie Martin and told her: "One of us shot a cop. I think it was me." At some point, Shirley Munson instructed her son to go with his aunt and turn himself in to police at 22<sup>nd</sup> and Tasker Streets. Martin took a walk and then followed his mother's directions.<sup>493</sup> Hours later, police took the three black teenagers, Martin, Shands, and Chambers to the Homicide Unit of the Police Administration Building at 8<sup>th</sup> and Race Streets for questioning. The teens gave conflicting statements, but enough of their stories connected and later Martin was identified as the sniper.<sup>494</sup> Martin himself confessed to shooting Trettin as revenge for the shooting of his friend Croft, but he also tried to lie by saying he thought Trettin was a boy from the Passyunk Gang, not a police officer. Soon all three teenagers were charged with attempted murder, aggravated assault and battery on a policeman, recklessly endangering other persons, possession of an instrument of crime, and possession of a prohibitive offensive weapon.<sup>495</sup> Four days later, Trettin's family decided to take him off life support and he died that Sunday, February 29<sup>th</sup> at 3:55 AM.<sup>496</sup>

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<sup>492</sup> "Policeman is shot by a sniper," *Beaver County Times*, (Feb. 27, 1976):3, accessed, May 7, 2015, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2002&dat=19760227&id=HA0vAAAAIABAJ&sjid=atsFAAAAIABAJ&pg=3346,5236469&hl=en>.

<sup>493</sup> Joseph D. McCaffrey, "Didn't Know it was a Cop says Officer-Slaying Suspect," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Mar 11, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

<sup>494</sup> "Didn't Know it was a Cop says Officer-Slaying Suspect."

<sup>495</sup> "Policeman in Critical Condition."

<sup>496</sup> "Policeman Loses Fight with Sniper's Bullet," *Philadelphia Daily News* (Mar. 1, 1976):3, Newspapers.com, accessed March 9, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/8974211/trettin\\_case\\_found\\_on\\_21617/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/8974211/trettin_case_found_on_21617/).

## Operation F.I.N.D

Operation FIND (Fugitive Interception Net Deployment), the police tactic used to arrest Martin, Chambers, and Shands following the shooting death of Patrolman Trettin, was first designed by Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo in Spring 1968 as a way to apprehend suspects who committed forcible felonies like armed robbery and murder.<sup>497</sup> Rizzo described the plan as ideal because it made use of the police department's over 200-foot patrol officers and 1,341 police cars without additional city funds. After four and a half months of planning, the police department implemented the response procedure on September 18, 1968. By January 1969, newspapers across Pennsylvania deemed Operation FIND a success when they featured stories of how two bank robbers who targeted Girard Trust Bank at 3rd and Arch Streets were caught within eight minutes.<sup>498</sup> Additionally, police officials from eleven U.S. cities along with the deputy superintendent of Hong Kong police came to Philadelphia to study Operation FIND, while the FBI lauded the plan as a breakthrough in policing when it published a five-page story about the police tactic in their November 1971 issue of the *Law Enforcement Bulletin*.<sup>499</sup> However, from the 1970s onward, Operation FIND evolved from a tough on crime tactic used to capture bank robbers to a strategy for apprehending suspects who murdered police officers in "dangerous" neighborhoods.<sup>500</sup>

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<sup>497</sup> Kendall Wilson, "Philadelphia Police Put Net Over Crime Area in Minutes," *The Daily Item* (Feb 1, 1969): 16, Newspapers.com, accessed July 31, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/53142088/the-daily-item/>. Operation FIND was a revamped version of the previous Fugitive Search Plan where police were assigned to "strategic" locations along the perimeter of the city. See the appendix for a chart of "successful" apprehensions under Operation FIND.

<sup>498</sup> "Philadelphia Police Put Net Over Crime Area in Minutes."

<sup>499</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, Vol. 40 No. 11, (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Justice, November 1971).

<sup>500</sup> Operation FIND is not commonly known by name to Philadelphians today, but it is still used in manhunts for suspects who murder police officers. For example, on October 31, 2007, 25-year veteran



Around midnight on January 30, 1970, twenty-five-year-old rookie Patrolman Frederick J. Cione Jr. was working the graveyard shift driving solo around the neighborhood surrounding 17th and Oxford.<sup>501</sup> At 1:08 AM, Cione exited his red patrol car and approached three black men (at least one of whom was wearing a leather jacket) in a black and white Chevrolet convertible. Not long after Cione was laying on the street, shot three times in the chest and abdomen. The suspects fled south in their car on 17th Street.<sup>502</sup>

Several witnessed the shooting and immediately called the police as Cione lay dying in the street. Within minutes, the Philadelphia Police Department broadcasted an “Operation FIND” alert on all police radios.<sup>503</sup> This plan divided the city into 50 geographical areas and instructed officers from 35 to 45 patrol cars citywide to cordon off the crime scene at key intersections and to search streets, homes, and roofs within a six block radius of 17th and Oxford Streets to question and interrogate anyone who looked like the suspects or might know something about the shooting.<sup>504</sup> Even before they

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Philadelphia Police Officer Charles “Chuck” Cassidy was shot in the head and killed by 21-year-old Lewis M. Jordan (known as John Lewis) when he interrupted an armed robbery at a Dunkin Donuts at North Broad Street and Old York Road. Operation FIND was immediately implemented in the surrounding Northwest/North Philadelphia area and remained in effect for several days. Some residents even reported that police broke down their home’s doors during the police’s search of the neighborhood. Jordan was later apprehended in Florida. Once in police custody, Jordan confessed to the crimes of robbery and murder. He was later sentenced to death in 2009 and he currently sits on Death Row at SCI-Phoenix in Skippack, Pennsylvania.

<sup>501</sup> Frank Dougherty and Ed Griffenberg, “Rookie Cop is Slain in N. Phila. Street,” *Philadelphia Daily News* (Jan. 30, 1970): 3, Newspapers.com, accessed July 31, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/49506194/frederick-cione-killed-pt-1/>.

<sup>502</sup> Sharon Foley, *The Unsolved Shooting of Patrolman Frederick Cione* (Self-Published 2017), 1-50.

<sup>503</sup> “Rookie Cop is Slain in N. Phila. Street.”

<sup>504</sup> “Philadelphia Police Put Net Over Crime Area in Minutes.”

started the intensive search, Cione was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital. He died there at 1:30 AM.<sup>505</sup>

Following the 1970 murder of Patrolman Cione, Operation FIND remained a trusted police tactic.<sup>506</sup> However, Operation FIND would not only terrorize fleeing criminal suspects, but also innocent residents who experienced excessive police force, when the plan was activated in their neighborhood. Residents of neighborhoods designated as crime hotspots faced the threat of double victimization: social inequity and hard-nosed policing. The executive committee of the Council of Black Clergy even pursued an injunction lawsuit against Police Commissioner Rizzo and three other high-ranking police officials explaining that they observed that following the murder of Patrolman Cione, black residents were deprived of their constitutional rights and privileges to be treated with respect during police investigations and not beaten, repeatedly detained, or insulted with racial epithets: "Operation FIND involved the Philadelphia Police Department in warrantless and illegal arrests of close to 1,000 non-white residents of the City of Philadelphia."<sup>507</sup> Additionally, Harvey N. Schmidt of the Community Legal Services (CLS) told the press at the *Philadelphia Tribune* that Operation FIND encouraged many citizens who had never been "outspoken" before to express how they were "very disturbed" by the new police tactic and "concerned that there is over-policing in some areas, especially those dealing with young people, and underpolicing in other

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<sup>505</sup> Foley, *The Unsolved Shooting of Patrolman Frederick Cione*, 5-97. After more than fifty years since the murder of Patrolman Cione and subsequent investigation of the crime by the police department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.), the case remains unsolved today.

<sup>506</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, 3-6; 29.

<sup>507</sup> "Black Clergy Give Support to Suit Against Top Police," *Philadelphia Tribune* (April 28, 1970): 16, ProQuest.com, accessed March 15, 2021, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/black-clergy-give-support-suit-against-top-police/docview/532546616/se-2?accountid=14270>.

areas.”<sup>508</sup> When certain communities were red-flagged as gang-prevalent or home to the “criminally inclined,” police sought to segregate and contain groups and individuals within their “perceived” neighborhood with force. The failure of Operation FIND to locate the “gang” of black youths responsible for the unsolved murder of Patrolman Frederick Cione inspired the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) to revamp its use of the apprehension tactic in future cases.<sup>509</sup>

Nevertheless, the police department enhanced Operation FIND by identifying more crime hotspots in several predominantly black and working-class neighborhoods, hyper-policing housing projects, and stereotyping residents from those locations as potential criminals and gang members. At 8:55 AM on December 23, 1974, this scenario became a reality at the Southwark project when 27-year-old Patrolman Joseph Cavallaro was shot in the stomach by nineteen-year-old Derrick Mays who was fleeing arrest for an attempted “bar holdup” two days prior.<sup>510</sup> When hundreds of police and Housing Authority guards arrived at the project to find the suspect, they went door to door forcibly entering apartments without a search warrant, using “abusive language,” ransacking and firing gunshots in homes, and killing a resident’s dog that attempted to protect its owner.<sup>511</sup> Many tenants reported being stopped, searched, strong armed, questioned, and even falsely arrested by police during the search. Resident and tenants’ council

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<sup>508</sup> “Black Clergy Give Support to Suit Against Top Police.”

<sup>509</sup> Foley, *The Unsolved Shooting of Patrolman Frederick Cione*, 5-97.

<sup>510</sup> Scott Heimer, “Man, 20, Arrested in Cop Shooting,” *Philadelphia Daily News* (Dec. 24, 1974): 3, Newspapers.com, accessed June 26, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/54173259/philadelphia-daily-news/>.

<sup>511</sup> Len Lear, “Southwark Residents Protest PHA Giving Apartment Keys to Police,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (Feb. 4, 1975): 8, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed June 26, 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/532695762?accountid=14270>.

representative Mrs. Jennie Haynes told the *Philadelphia Tribune* up to ten police officers (with guns and rifles visible) greeted her at the door when she finally decided to permit them in her apartment for questioning. By January 4, 1975, Tenants' Council President Jearline Brown organized a petition signed by 193 tenants, along with five protest letters that were sent through a lawyer to Police Commissioner Joseph O'Neill condemning the "illegal, terroristic Gestapo tactics" of the police so that an incident like that never occurred again.<sup>512</sup>

Less than two years later, *Philadelphia Tribune* reporter Linn Washington would describe similar police mistreatment at another South Philadelphia project after a patrolman was shot.<sup>513</sup> Washington's March 1976 story even highlighted the discriminatory search procedure police used at Wilson Park housing project versus those implemented in December 1975 at a high-rise in Rittenhouse Square when a 30-year-old millionaire was murdered in his home.<sup>514</sup> The article argued socioeconomic bias motivated police to solve *Knight Ridder* newspaper heir John S. Knight's murder by being "polite," "professional," and law-abiding in questioning residents at the 32-story luxury Dorchester Apartments because it was a place where "doctors, lawyers, and professional persons" lived.<sup>515</sup> Nevertheless, the use of Operation FIND expanded into a preferred strategy for solving violent crimes at housing projects, while excessive and

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<sup>512</sup> Len Lear, "Southwark Residents Say Police Used 'Gestapo Tactics' in Hunt For Gunman in Apartment Complex," *Philadelphia Tribune* (Jan. 4, 1975): 1, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed June 26, 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/532682259?accountid=14270>.

<sup>513</sup> "Police Were Lawless In Terror At Wilson Park."

<sup>514</sup> Paul Muskil, "Murder of a Millionaire," *The Times-Tribune* (Aug. 22, 1976): 62, Newspapers.com, accessed June 26, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/54173277/the-times-tribune/>.

<sup>515</sup> "Police Were Lawless in Terror at Wilson Park."

deadly force against alleged nonviolent criminal suspects became normalized behavior in working-class, non-white, and “blighted” neighborhoods.

### **The Culture of Poverty: A Theory in Support of Tough on Crime Policing**

City officials and police justified the use of Operation FIND and other police tactics involving excessive force because they believed in the sociological theory, the “culture of poverty.” During the late 1950s through the 1960s, social theories about poverty, urban blight, and crime explored how race, culture, and upbringing influenced human criminal behavior. Many anthropologists and sociologists were curious about why certain racial groups experienced generational poverty and marginalization at higher rates than others. Additionally, social scientists wanted to know why urban blight and crime appeared to be much more common with the poor and nonwhite than the middle-class, white majority. In 1959, anthropologist Oscar Lewis released his book, *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty* in which he discussed how some families living in Mexico City’s slums developed a “culture of poverty” marked by a lack of class consciousness and an internationalist mindset that not only led to a bleak outlook on life, but also the establishment of a generational “value system” different from their white counterparts.<sup>516</sup> Throughout Lewis’ career, his research on Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, along with his brief analytical work on African Americans in poverty, he essentially argued that there was something pathologically different about how these groups

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<sup>516</sup> Oscar Lewis, *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty*, (New York: Basic Books, 1959).

responded to poverty (compared to white ethnics) because they refused to acknowledge that class hierarchy was the reason for their socioeconomic struggles not racism.<sup>517</sup>

In Oscar Lewis' research, he explained how some African Americans in poverty rightly "perceived" the existence of racial discrimination, but expressed a conundrum in why many black people remained marginalized and stuck in a generational cycle of poverty.<sup>518</sup> His research implicitly implied the sentiment that if the Irish, Italians, and Eastern European Jews can overcome obstacles such as employment, housing, and education discrimination, then black people should be able to as well. Lewis' culture of poverty theory suggested that the nonwhite underclass was either unwilling or unable to pull themselves out of poverty because they subscribed to a value system in which life is reduced to satisfaction with disadvantage and indulgence in vices to soothe one's pain.<sup>519</sup> His work did not consider how social institutions in America like housing, education, and employment discriminately affected the underclass to keep them entrenched in poverty and prone to criminality. Nevertheless, Lewis' conclusions reaffirmed long-standing stereotypes identifying the nonwhite poor as lazy, ignorant, and dependent on welfare when uncontrolled and left to their own devices.

Not long after Lewis' theory was disseminated throughout academia, in 1965, sociologist and the Assistant Secretary of Labor during President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration Daniel P. Moynihan released a federal report on poverty and the black family entitled, *The Negro Family: The Case For National Action*, later known

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<sup>517</sup> Oscar Lewis, "The Culture of Poverty," *Scientific American* 215.4 (October 1966):19-25.

<sup>518</sup> Lewis, "The Culture of Poverty," 19-25.

<sup>519</sup> Lewis, "The Culture of Poverty," 19-25.

colloquially as the *Moynihan Report*.<sup>520</sup> In the *Moynihan Report*, which took much inspiration from black sociologist E. Franklin Frazier's 1939 monograph *The Negro Family in the United States*, Moynihan nodded toward Lewis' culture of poverty theory in his explanation of why African Americans were struggling the most socioeconomically in American society. In Daniel P. Moynihan's 1965 report, *The Negro Family*, he argued that while slavery and racial discrimination have hindered the socioeconomic success of African Americans in comparison to white Americans, black culture and single-parent, matriarchal households are also to blame for the setbacks blacks face in education, employment, wealth, and family life.<sup>521</sup> Although the report led to the creation of social uplift programs under the Great Society, it further stigmatized African Americans, especially the working-class and poor, as socially inept and dependent on the federal government to achieve socioeconomic stability. Moynihan's contribution to the culture of poverty stereotype was that he suggested black people's criminality was influenced by a dysfunctional family life. Nevertheless, black youth like Andre Martin who grew up in poverty and lived in a "broken home" were labelled by policymakers as doomed to falling into a never-ending cycle of criminality, unless the government intervened in their lives with social welfare programs.

As Lewis' culture of poverty theory gained acceptance in federal and local government, several social scientists chose to examine and challenge the controversial conclusions he made through their own research. As anthropologist Carol Stack argued in her 1974 book, *All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community*, theories like

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<sup>520</sup> United States Department of Labor Office of Policy Planning and Research, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Print, 1965).

<sup>521</sup> United States Department of Labor, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Print, 1965).

the “culture of poverty” erroneously portrayed impoverished people as “fatalistic” individuals who lacked a value system similar to the middle-class that involved dreams and goals of success.<sup>522</sup> Stack further explained that the “culture of poverty” theory was a beneficial tool for policymakers, social workers, and the rich who wanted to cut welfare benefits to the poor and nonwhite and “blame the victim” for not being able to pull themselves “up by their bootstraps like everyone else.”<sup>523</sup> Furthermore, Stack’s research argued that Lewis failed to realize the intersectionality of stigmatizing identities of race, class, gender that operated simultaneously in a person’s life.<sup>524</sup>

As for city officials and police in Philadelphia, people like Mayor Rizzo believed that poverty was no excuse for crime. Rizzo’s unyielding support for tough on crime policing as mayor was based on his experience as a Philadelphia police officer from 1943 to 1972. As police commissioner from 1967 to 1972, Rizzo believed “objectionable people” *caused* the crime, unemployment, and white flight that ruined the social, political, and economic reputation of the city.<sup>525</sup> In the 1960s, Rizzo implemented “stop and frisk” and emergency curfews, and even purchased armored personnel transports that his critics likened to “military tanks.” Additionally, Rizzo did not support the Police Advisory Board (PAB), thought police brutality was rare, and required no departmental investigation of misconduct. If a riot happened, he wanted it to be “treated with a firm hand.”<sup>526</sup> During the 1970s, “objectionable people”--nonwhites, the poor, homosexuals, hippies, liberals, or political dissidents--who did not fit the police department’s image of

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<sup>522</sup> Carol Stack, *All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community*, (New York: Basic Books, 1974).

<sup>523</sup> Stack, *All Our Kin*, (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 24.

<sup>524</sup> Angela Davis, *Women, Race, and Class*, (New York: Vintage, 1981).

<sup>525</sup> Frank Rizzo was police commissioner of Philadelphia from 1967 to 1972 and mayor from 1972 to 1980.

<sup>526</sup> Timothy Lombardo, *Blue-Collar Conservatism: Frank Rizzo's Philadelphia and Populist Politics*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 140.



a patriotic law-abiding citizen experienced discriminatory policing tactics that included excessive force and civil rights violations.<sup>527</sup> Activists like Spencer Coxe, the Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union's (ACLU) Philadelphia Branch, frequently received complaints regarding Police Captain Rizzo ordering the illegal raids of coffee houses, public squares, and political offices to disperse "undesirable" people who would offend his "law and order" constituency.<sup>528</sup> As mayor, Rizzo extended these "tough on crime policies" to maintain his occupancy of public office and meet the expectations of "law and order" citizens. Rizzo often encouraged police officers, through political rhetoric at press conferences and in interviews, to use excessive force, even against juveniles in marginalized communities.

In Rizzo's opinion, the "culture of poverty" argument was a sociological excuse liberals used to justify social welfare programs and reduced criminal sentences for the poor. Furthermore, Rizzo believed that high crime statistics about non-white juveniles were proof that non-white children who committed crime were either inherently criminal and or the product of bad parental upbringing. In June 1973, Rizzo attended the Pennsylvania Sons of Italy Convention in the Poconos where he gave a speech outlining his reasoning for supporting tough on crime initiatives in Philadelphia:

One trait that distinguishes Italo-Americans is a firm respect for decency, for properly constituted authority, and for the law. I have learned these things the way most of you learned them—at my mother's knee, and from the back of my father's hand. And we're all better citizens because of it. When I look at the crime statistics today, I realize there are not enough people around like my mother and father, and your parents. Today, whenever a man in politics talks about law and order, the radical liberals call him a dictator. But I do wish to emphasize that in the old days, respect for the law was something that decent people took for granted. It was the

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<sup>527</sup> *Amateur Night at City Hall: The Story of Frank L. Rizzo*, Dir. Robert Mugge, MVD Entertainment Group, 1978, Kanopy, Web, Accessed November 24, 2017.

<sup>528</sup> *Amateur Night at City Hall*.

left-wingers who made law and order a political issue. Beginning in the early sixties, Americans were fed the malarkey that criminals were not really responsible for their crimes—that society was to blame. We were told that criminals are the product of their environment, rather than of their own character deficiencies....And, sad to say, some people swallowed that nonsense.<sup>529</sup>

In Rizzo's speech, he denied sociological research from scholars like Frederic Thrasher, William Foote Whyte, Lewis Yablonsky, and Walter Miller who suggested in their studies on gangs and juvenile delinquency that the "underprivileged were more likely to commit crimes."<sup>530</sup> He claimed that the "do-gooders" and "bleeding hearts" who advocated leniency and reduced sentences in the criminal justice system were neither effectively reforming juvenile criminal offenders nor protecting society from violent crime. Rizzo then went on to discuss his concern for law-abiding citizens who reported *terrifying* stories of elderly residents "barricading" themselves in their homes, women walking at night fearful of being robbed and raped, and people on welfare "racing the crooks to the mailbox to get their check." Moreover, Rizzo argued that "law enforcement must be taken out of the sociology classes and put back in the police station" so that penal reforms like the death penalty could be used against juveniles like Andre Martin who committed violent crimes like murder.<sup>531</sup>

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<sup>529</sup> City of Philadelphia Office of the Mayor News Release, "Remarks by Mayor Frank L. Rizzo of Philadelphia at Pennsylvania Sons of Italy Convention Tamiment-in-the-Poconos," (June 30, 1973), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Peter Binzen Papers*, call no. (SPC) MSS SP 053, collection URB.

<sup>530</sup> "Remarks by Mayor Frank L. Rizzo of Philadelphia at Pennsylvania Sons of Italy Convention Tamiment-in-the-Poconos."

<sup>531</sup> "Remarks by Mayor Frank L. Rizzo of Philadelphia at Pennsylvania Sons of Italy Convention Tamiment-in-the-Poconos."

## **“Getting Hassled, Getting Hustled”<sup>532</sup>: Containment and Isolation in Housing Projects**

While Rizzo argued that bad childhood upbringing and familial culture was no excuse for black juvenile crime, journalists insinuated the idea that poverty induced crime. However, when journalists wrote crime narratives about shootings, gang rapes, and the destruction of property at housing projects, they suggested that some poor black people may be stuck in a culture of poverty where African Americans are not only victimizing outsiders to their community, but also each other. In 1957, the *Philadelphia Tribune* began publishing news stories of how tenants of public housing sites like the Raymond Rosen Project in North Philadelphia met with city officials and police officers from seven organizations including the Gang Unit and Juvenile Aid Bureau to discuss how police could work with parents to control “wayward children” from the impoverished area.<sup>533</sup> In one news story from 1961, a journalist from the *Philadelphia Tribune* described how a gang of four shot a patrolman with his own gun following a report of a “disturbance” at a wedding reception near the Raymond Rosen Project.<sup>534</sup> In the late 1960s, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Philadelphia Daily News* began to pick up stories on juvenile gang activity near housing projects and recreation centers and like the *Philadelphia*

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<sup>532</sup> Dave Grusin, Alan Bergman, and Marilyn Bergman, *Good Times (Theme Song)*, CBS Television, 1974.

<sup>533</sup> Dorothy Anderson, “Project Tenants Confer with Law to Curb Crime,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (Aug. 6, 1957): 2, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed July 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/532142041?accountid=14270>.

<sup>534</sup> Art Peters, “Triggerman Suspect Arrested in Rosen Cop Shooting,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (Nov. 11, 1961): 2, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed July 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/532454833?accountid=14270>.

*Tribune*, they mentioned how this issue was tied to the poor living conditions residents experienced in these locations.

In the early years of the “public housing project experiment,” conditions in low-rise and high-rise units had skip-stop elevators (which stopped at every third floor) along with minimal living arrangements that included cheap cabinets, door knobs and latches that fell apart after limited use.<sup>535</sup> Basic household appliances were installed into apartments to encourage residents to live there temporarily and seek economic upward mobility.<sup>536</sup> Although both black *and* white residents of housing projects were dependent on the government for housing, black residents faced stigmatization for living in these developments because they were the predominant inhabitants of public housing.<sup>537</sup>

From the 1950s to the 1960s, government funding for public housing dwindled and as a result housing projects experienced filth, deteriorating infrastructure, and crime (like drugs and gang activity) because the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) could not afford to pay workers to do adequate outdoor cleanup or infrastructural maintenance.<sup>538</sup> As a result, tenants suffered from dangerous and poor housing conditions like the absence of security guards, dimly-lit or completely dark hallways and stairwells, no heat, water leaks, and “foul odors” from the incinerators.<sup>539</sup> PHA also was unable to properly

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<sup>535</sup> Benjamin Alexander Lawson, *The Pruitt-Igoe Projects: Modernism, Social Control, and the Failure of Public Housing, 1954-1976*, (Stillwater: Oklahoma State University, 2007), 20-21.

<sup>536</sup> John F. Bauman, “Black Slums/Black Projects: The New Deal and Negro Housing in Philadelphia.” *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 41.3 (July, 1974), 336.

<sup>537</sup> Ta-Nehisi Coates, “The Case for Reparations,” *The Atlantic* (June 2014), TheAtlantic.com, accessed July 2020, [https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/?gclid=EAlaIqobChMImcvvzq396gIVtwiICR3K9Qd3EAAYASAAEgKzhPD\\_BwE](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/?gclid=EAlaIqobChMImcvvzq396gIVtwiICR3K9Qd3EAAYASAAEgKzhPD_BwE).

<sup>538</sup> Bauman, “Black Slums/Black Projects,” 320-323.

<sup>539</sup> Linn Washington, “Women Live in Fear in Southwark Unit.,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (Dec. 2, 1975): 2, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed July 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/532712110?accountid=14270>.

regulate entrance requirements for incoming residents, especially when the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) enacted new policies in 1971 that eliminated background checks and evictions for problem tenants who committed crimes, did not pay rent, or kept their apartments unsanitary.<sup>540</sup> To make matters worse, crime in the United States rose in the 1960s due to the surging population of “baby-boom teenagers, increasing availability of handguns, and deteriorating relations between police and minority communities.”<sup>541</sup>

At the Wilson Park housing project, residents saw a steady decline in quality of living from the 1960s to 1970s. Aside from the ever presence of rats and roaches, residents often complained to PHA about trash buildup, malfunctioning elevators, and the lack of security guards patrolling the buildings. In April 1976, residents became so fed up with elevators being out of order they threatened to hold a rent strike until the infrastructure was fixed.<sup>542</sup> Their anger stemmed from experiencing a six-week elevator outage the previous September and knowledge of the handicapped and pregnant women being forced to climb the stairs. Although the story made the front page of the *Philadelphia Tribune*, PHA spokesman Bob Alotta responded with an explanation of how vandalism was to blame for the breakdowns and elevator service would return in two weeks.<sup>543</sup>

Furthermore, in the late 1960s drastically reduced government funding and increased crime rates in major cities exacerbated the horrid conditions housing project residents

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<sup>540</sup>“Trapped: Housing Project a High-Rise Island of Fear.”

<sup>541</sup>D. Bradford Hunt, *Blueprint for Disaster: The Unraveling of Chicago Public Housing*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 173.

<sup>542</sup> Linn Washington, “Tenants Vow to Hold Rent Over Idle Elevators at S.P.,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (April 10, 1976): 2, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed July 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/532714491?accountid=14270>.

<sup>543</sup> “Tenants Vow to Hold Rent Over Idle Elevators at S.P.”

nationwide experienced. For example, at St. Louis' Pruitt-Igoe, residents occupying over 700 units at the 33-building project in the mid-1960s through the 1970s regularly witnessed robbery, rape, drug use, gang activity, and murder. Public spaces like hallways, stairwells, elevators, and courtyards were all potential sites of criminal behavior or assault.<sup>544</sup> Gangs often operated open-air drug markets at projects, engaged in shootouts with rivals, and exerted "control" over multiple buildings at the complex by using fear and intimidation to keep residents silent about the violence and crime that occurred at their doorstep. At Pruitt-Igoe, gangs like Woods engaged in multiple activities at once: they fought to keep rivals from nearby projects like Carr Square off their turf, earned between \$100-100,000 a day from heroin sales, and maintained their control of the drug market at the project through gun violence.<sup>545</sup> Additionally, criminal activity at housing projects occurred at higher rates than other residential areas of a city because of the concentrated poverty and lack of surveillance at these derelict-run government facilities. In the 2010 monograph, *Blueprint for Disaster: The Unraveling of Chicago's Public Housing*, social scientist D. Bradford Hunt described in his summation of life in Chicago's high-rise public housing into the 1970s:

The earliest project-specific report on crime showed that at Cabrini-Green's four largest high-rises in 1972, residents were five times more likely to be raped, three times more likely to be robbed, four times more likely to be victims of aggravated assault, and six times more likely to be murdered. With the exception of homicide, these figures likely underreport actual crimes, as public housing residents feared retaliation and distrusted the largely white police force. Many of the crimes occurred in public spaces—hallways, elevators, and project grounds—adding to the

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<sup>544</sup> Lawson, *The Pruitt-Igoe Projects*, 58-59.

<sup>545</sup> Anthony E. Glover, "Factions May Fight Over Drug Market," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (April 8, 1973):21, Newspapers.com, accessed March 24, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/47288494/st-louis-post-dispatch/>.

fear of residents, many of whom became reluctant to leave the confines of their apartments after dark.<sup>546</sup>

In fact, violence at other housing projects across America assisted in the stigmatization of crime, gang activity, and the dangers it posed for police. On July 17, 1970, Chicago's Cabrini-Green made national news when two police officers were killed by gang members at one of the project's courtyards nicknamed the "shooting gallery."<sup>547</sup> Eighteen-year-old Johnny Veal and 23-year-old George Knight targeted Sergeant James Severin and Officer Anthony Rizzato from atop one of the 23 high-rise buildings in celebration of a truce between their gangs, the Cobra Stones and Blacks respectively, as the officers crossed a baseball diamond.<sup>548</sup> The alleged motivation behind the violence against police was rooted in a police brutality incident in which Chicago police destroyed their rapport with residents at Cabrini-Green nearly two years prior. On an Autumn day in 1968, officers chased teens into the project for throwing stones, maced a one-year-old child during the melee, and made a hollow attempt to rectify the situation by sending in 45 black officers to calm residents.<sup>549</sup>

In Philadelphia, citizens had local news stories of crime and gang violence to color their perception of housing projects. The residents of housing projects themselves often identified the prime reason for the proliferation of crime and sometimes mistrust of law enforcement as the absence of PHA security guards patrolling the buildings and the faulty protocol system of police as second responders to emergency calls. In many projects,

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<sup>546</sup>Hunt, *Blueprint for Disaster*, 170-174.

<sup>547</sup> "4th Suspect Sought in Killing of 2 Chicago Policemen," *Philadelphia Daily News* (July 20, 1970):33, Newspapers.com, accessed March 17, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/46852935/philadelphia-daily-news/>.

<sup>548</sup> Ben Austen, *High-Risers: Cabrini-Green and the Fate of American Public Housing*, (HarperCollins Publishers: New York, 2018), 74-75.

<sup>549</sup> Austen, *High-Risers*, 74-75.

PHA security guards were severely understaffed, never available 24/7, and they only safely escorted case workers around the complex.<sup>550</sup> Much of the violence at projects were neighborhood gang wars among juveniles. On April 2, 1968, forty teens from the newly merged gang, 22nd and South Street, stormed the recreation center at Hawthorne Square housing project in South Philadelphia.<sup>551</sup> Around 8:15 PM, one gang member drew a .32 caliber revolver and fired six shots into a crowd of thirty people, hitting two teenagers and a gang worker. The incident was retaliation for a confrontation the 22nd and South Street gang had with the 13th and Fitzwater gang at South Philadelphia High School that afternoon.<sup>552</sup>

Additionally, gang rape against women at housing projects was a reoccurring issue as well. In November 1972, an 84-year-old widow living alone in a sixteenth floor unit at the Fairhill Apartments was raped and tortured for five days by four boys aged ten to thirteen.<sup>553</sup> In April 1973, news media reported the robbery and rape of a 70-year-old woman by five boys (aged eleven to fifteen) in the seventh floor hallway of the Martin Luther King Plaza housing project where she lived.<sup>554</sup> And yet again in December 1975, more rapes were reported, this time from the eleventh floor of the Southwark project

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<sup>550</sup> "Women Live in Fear in Southwark Unit."

<sup>551</sup> William Weisenbach, "Social Worker, 2 Teens Shot in Gang Ruckus," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (April 3, 1968):45, Newspapers.com, accessed March 14, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/46700088/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>. In 1965, Martin Luther King Jr. gave a speech at the Hawthorne Square housing project during the Freedom Rally in Philadelphia. In 1970, the housing project was renamed Martin Luther King Plaza.

<sup>552</sup> "Social Worker, 2 Teens Shot in Gang Ruckus."

<sup>553</sup> Robert L. Terry, "5 Boys Seized in Rape Robbery of Woman in Housing Project," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (April 3, 1973):15, Newspapers.com, accessed March 16, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/46812326/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>554</sup> "5 Boys Seized in Rape Robbery of Woman in Housing Project."



where two women were raped in one week while residents heard their screams as they hid inside their apartments.<sup>555</sup>

In 1974, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* published a front-page article encapsulating the belief that “uncontrollable” violent crimes, especially by *groups* of young men, reigned at housing projects with the story of the October 12th assault on Louise Seals at the Norman Blumberg project.<sup>556</sup> Around 2 AM that day, 53-year-old Seals was beaten, raped, and robbed for the sixteenth time when her rowhome at the housing project was burglarized by seven young men. When interviewed, Seals and her neighbors asserted that the suspects most likely lived in the 23rd and Jefferson Street project containing 18-story towers surrounded by 108 rowhomes.<sup>557</sup> Additionally, Seals stated that over the course of three years she lost a kitchen and living room set, Christmas gifts, four televisions, three radios, and two stereos to burglary from the home she shared with her children. Like the previous times when Seals’ home was intruded upon, she feared for her life at the project, telling reporters: “It’s too dangerous. The Lord only gives you one soul. I don’t want to get killed in a place like that.”<sup>558</sup> In response to this attack on Seals’ home and body, a spokesman from the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA), Robert Alotta explained to the press these crimes were common at other projects and the police were working hard to investigate. Alotta also added that if Ms. Seals wanted to be transferred to another project then the request would be granted but her safety there could not be guaranteed.<sup>559</sup>

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<sup>555</sup> “Women Live in Fear in Southwark Unit.”

<sup>556</sup> Jim Mann, “The Perils of a Housing Project: Crime,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Oct 22, 1974):1-2, Newspapers.com, accessed July 5, 2019, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/33570952/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>557</sup> “The Perils of a Housing Project: Crime.”

<sup>558</sup> “The Perils of a Housing Project: Crime.”

<sup>559</sup> “The Perils of a Housing Project: Crime.”

Unlike the 1950s, when newspapers like the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Philadelphia Tribune* described these incidents of “gang” violence in the 1970s they didn’t habitually refer to the suspects as “thugs” and “street thieves,” but sometimes sought to humanize them by describing their troubled family life, impoverished circumstances, and the unaddressed psychological trauma “ghetto life” had on juveniles.<sup>560</sup> Journalists signaled in their articles that poor and volatile conditions at housing projects had a psychological effect on residents, which sometimes triggered not just gangs but also individuals to prey on others in their community. However, crimes like gang rape incensed journalists. In a 1973 editorial published by the *Philadelphia Tribune*, an author disregarded race and poverty to vent the disgracefulness of “hoodlums” and “wolfpacks” who violated elderly women at housing projects and demand that Mayor Rizzo (despite his history of police brutality) take aggressive action against youth who committed those crimes.<sup>561</sup> Nevertheless, journalists were often unsure how to portray poor African Americans as they received more and more stories from citizens about the structural problems that black people could not control, such as poor conditions in public housing and the police’s use of excessive force in their neighborhood. Journalists relied too heavily on the reports they received from either police or citizens and as a result, their crime narratives reflected the informants they trusted the most.

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<sup>560</sup> Maurice M. Lewis Jr., “Gang Murders Korean Student in West Phila.: Police Round Up 6 Youths after Savage Assault,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (April 26, 1958), Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169A, vol. 2412/ Oh, In-Ho— (Murdered).

<sup>561</sup> “Stop Gang Rapings,” *Philadelphia Tribune* (April 7, 1973): 8, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune, accessed July 2020, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.temple.edu/docview/532599684?accountid=14270>.

Although violence and crime were known realities at housing projects by the 1970s, marginalization and lax government responsibility for uplifting the underclass were not strongly pitted as the root of gang activity and poverty-induced crime. Therefore, stereotypes labeling black people living in housing projects as impoverished, lazy, violent, and criminal were cemented and supported with consequential facts and gang narratives that clearly pointed to a broken system of social equality. Nevertheless, this perception of black gangs and youth at housing projects shaped how police, courts, and the public viewed juvenile crime from teens like Andre Martin who went on trial in September 1976 for murdering Patrolman John Trettin.

**“Save the Children”: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Andre Martin<sup>562</sup>**

During Andre Martin’s criminal trial, police, court officials, and journalists faced a conundrum of whether the culture of poverty or poverty-induced crime played a role in black juveniles at housing projects committing violence as gangs and individuals. In *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Andre Martin*, Martin was placed on trial for murdering Philadelphia Patrolman John Trettin while in the company of his two friends. The incident was a major news story from February to December 1976 because it encompassed issues of police brutality, gang violence, the horrors of failed public housing, and the “culture of poverty.” When Trettin was shot and killed, his story and subsequently the life of Martin was heavily publicized in news media throughout the Philadelphia metropolitan area. Journalists described Trettin as a 29-year-old father of three children (six-year-old Tracey, four-year-old Wendy, and ten-month-old John Jr.), a

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<sup>562</sup> Al Cleveland, Renaldo Benson, and Marvin Gaye, *Save the Children*, UMG Recordings, Inc., 1971.

homeowner in Kensington, a law enforcement student at Philadelphia Community College, and devoted banjo player of the Mummers' Quaker City String Band.<sup>563</sup> After five years' service on the police force, Trettin received five commendations and he (along with his partner Officer Richard Malinowski) was scheduled to receive his sixth commendation at an award ceremony at the Police Administration Building on March 1, 1976 for apprehending Robert Sanchious, a rifle-wielding, West Philadelphia man who killed his mother-in-law.<sup>564</sup>

On the other hand, the news media portrayed Martin as a troubled youth from a "broken home" and wronged by a "broken system" meant to mollify the social ills that caused juvenile delinquency. In news articles from newspapers like the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* and the *Reading Eagle*, journalists summed up his home life by mentioning when Martin was ten years old his mother was charged with larceny-shoplifting and assault and battery during Christmastime 1970. Munson was arrested, found guilty of both charges, and Municipal Court Judge Michael Conroy later sentenced her (in her absence from court) to confinement for the crimes.<sup>565</sup> As for Martin's own brushes with the law, he was identified as being arrested for the first time at age eleven when he was cited for a violation of malicious mischief for throwing stones.<sup>566</sup> In July 1974, Martin was arrested for possession of a handgun and later sentenced to nine

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<sup>563</sup> Walter H. Trettin, "A Dad's Final Tribute to a Slain Policeman," *Philadelphia Daily News* (Mar. 4, 1976):4, Newspapers.com, accessed March 9, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9054166/philadelphia\\_daily\\_news/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9054166/philadelphia_daily_news/).

<sup>564</sup> "Policeman dies of wounds," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Mar. 1, 1976):4, Newspapers.com, accessed March 9, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9055334/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9055334/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

<sup>565</sup> *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Shirley Munson*, Municipal Court of Philadelphia County, (12 Dec. 1970), *The Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania Web Portal*, Web, 31 Mar. 2017, <<https://ujportal.pacourts.us/DocketSheets/MC.aspx>>.

<sup>566</sup> "In Our Opinion: Willing to Kill," *Philadelphia Daily News* (Sept 24, 1976): 17, Newspapers.com, accessed March 31, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/8979008/philadelphia\\_daily\\_news/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/8979008/philadelphia_daily_news/).

months' probation by Juvenile Court. At fifteen, Martin entered Juvenile Court again for possession of marijuana and shoplifting (in the words of his mother) a "cheap necklace" worth \$33.00 (\$145.00 today). He was later referred to STEPS (Start Towards Eliminating Past Setbacks), a part-time, Great Society-era day program that paired him with an adult who would teach him a trade.<sup>567</sup> Martin was later "dropped" from the program "for lack of interest" when he missed two of the mandated biweekly sessions.<sup>568</sup> Amid his personal troubles with the legal system, Martin also had to deal with his mother's mental health issues. Although Munson received individualized psychiatric treatment, Martin and his siblings once had to participate in a psychiatric family conference to ensure progress in their mother's treatment.<sup>569</sup> From the press, readers learned of Trettin's bright and unfulfilled future while Martin's life appeared to be destined for disaster.

In this criminal case, Martin was also suspected of being a gang member because he committed the crime in the company of two other youths. When Martin gave his confession to police while under interrogation, he claimed that he, Shands, and Chambers used the rifle to fire at a gang of boys from the housing project, the Tasker Homes prior to the shooting of Trettin.<sup>570</sup> Furthermore, Philadelphians were inclined to believe this gang narrative because from the 1950s through the 1970s, newspapers like the *Philadelphia Tribune* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* explained how black juvenile gangs

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<sup>567</sup> "In Our Opinion: Willing to Kill."

<sup>568</sup> Gunter David, "Jurors Can't Agree: Cop Killer Gets Life," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Sept 22, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

<sup>569</sup> "Jurors Can't Agree: Cop Killer Gets Life."

<sup>570</sup> "Martin May Claim Accidental Shooting," *Philadelphia Daily News* (Sept. 13, 1976):4, Newspapers.com, accessed February 15, 2017, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/8974466/trettin-case-phila-daily-news-13-sept/>.

began to proliferate housing projects. With these facts about the Martin case laid before the courtroom in tandem with the storied violence news media described as daily life at housing projects since the 1960s, the stigmatizing image of black gang activity latched itself firmly to the residences where some of the most marginalized black families in the city lived.

On the night of March 1, 1976, Martin, Shands, and Chambers “solemnly” faced arraignment in Municipal Court by Judge Harry Melton and were held without bail on murder charges. In court, Chambers and Shands took public defenders as their legal counsel and Martin accepted his family-hired lawyer Daniel Preminger as counsel.<sup>571</sup> Over the course of six months, charges of murder were dropped for Chambers and Shands, but they remained for Martin.<sup>572</sup> With the help of Assistant District Attorney (ADA) David Strawbridge, Chambers and Shands’ cases were sent to Juvenile Court (where they could be sentenced to a maximum of five years’ jail time) after they agreed to be “state’s evidence” during Martin’s criminal trial and testify against him.<sup>573</sup>

During the two-week murder trial held in Common Pleas Court in September 1976, Martin never took the stand to tell his version of events.<sup>574</sup> Instead, ADA Strawbridge had Chambers and Shands testify that Martin vowed he was “gonna get a cop” because of the shooting of his friend Croft at the hands of the police one block away from the

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<sup>571</sup> Thomas J. Gibbons Jr., “3 Youths Held Without Bail in Sniper Killing of Officer,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (March 2, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

<sup>572</sup> *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Andre Martin*, Municipal Court of Philadelphia County, (1 Mar. 1976), *The Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania Web Portal*, Web, 5 Dec. 2016, <<https://ujportal.pacourts.us/DocketSheets/MC.aspx>>.

<sup>573</sup> “Youth Falters at Murder Trial.”

<sup>574</sup> Marilyn Schaeffer, “Defense Rests in Police Slaying at Project,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Sept 16, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

housing projects where he lived.<sup>575</sup> ADA Strawbridge also brought up Martin's confession to police that his decision to specifically shoot Trettin with a rifle was not a complex one: Trettin was shot because he was the tallest officer at the scene, standing at 6'7'' tall.<sup>576</sup>

On the defense side, Attorney Preminger took many approaches to winning the case for his young client. Preminger tried to argue that Martin was not the shooter and was taking the blame for one of his friends who was the real sniper. Preminger brought in medical experts like toxicologist Dr. Richard Phillips of Upton Pharmaceutical Co. and Dr. Sidney Schnoll of Eagleville Hospital to testify that Martin was impaired after he consumed Valium and marijuana on the night of the shooting.<sup>577</sup> Preminger even attempted to claim Martin was of too low intelligence to commit the crime when he asked clinical psychologist, Dr. Gerald Cooke to testify that Martin was "bordering on the mentally retarded" because he had a verbal IQ of 67, appeared "fearful," and saw "the world as a hostile place where he [Martin] doesn't know what to do." Moreover, the defense's strategy was to play on the racial stereotype of black inferiority and argue that Martin was too mentally incompetent to commit first-degree murder against Trettin.

On September 21, 1976, a jury found Martin guilty of murder. Before the sentencing hearing took place, Munson pled before the jury and Judge Robert A. Latrone to spare her son's life from the death penalty. She said, "...take my boy off the streets and place

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<sup>575</sup> "Mindless tragedy ruins six lives," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Mar. 7, 1976):15-A, Newspapers.com, accessed March 9, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9054211/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9054211/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

<sup>576</sup> "Murderer Draws Life," *Reading Eagle*, (Sep. 23 1976): 9, accessed, May 7, 2015, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1955&dat=19760923&id=iJAjAAAAIIBAJ&sjid=CKEFAAAAIIBAJ&pg=4162,1515778&hl=en>.

<sup>577</sup> "Defense Rests in Police Slaying at Project."

him in a juvenile home...I was begging him [Juvenile Court Judge] to take my child off the streets...I told him something bad would happen...gangs...drugs.”<sup>578</sup> Although Munson was unaware of her son’s daily activities, she knew that gangs, drugs, and other negative external elements that were prevalent at housing projects were potential influences on Martin. Therefore, she shared that information with Judge Latrone hoping that he would empathetically sentence her son to prison instead of death.

At the sentencing hearing on September 22, 1976, the jury remained deadlocked on whether to sentence Martin to the death penalty and Judge Latrone sentenced him to life in prison.<sup>579</sup> On December 8, 1976, Shands and Chambers pled guilty to charges of possession of a gun and conspiracy in Juvenile Court and were respectively sent to Cornwell Heights and Glen Mills institutions for juvenile delinquents.<sup>580</sup> The immediate legacy of Martin’s case was it not only caused citizens’ to question the validity of racist theories like the culture of poverty, but also triggered public outcry about the potential for violence and crime to happen in blighted neighborhoods. The case also inspired public interest and concern from investigative journalists about the social conditions of public housing that drove young men like Andre Martin to engage in delinquency, join gangs, and commit violence in their neighborhoods. Criminal cases like Martin’s would not only inspire the Philadelphia Police Department to heavily police gangs, but also any black

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<sup>578</sup> Gunter David, “Jury Hears Mother Plead For Son’s Life After Slay Verdict,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Sept 21, 1976), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.

<sup>579</sup> *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Andre Martin*, Municipal Court of Philadelphia County, (1 Mar. 1976), *The Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania Web Portal*, Web, 5 Dec. 2016, <<https://ujportal.pacourts.us/DocketSheets/MC.aspx>>.

<sup>580</sup> “2 Youths Freed in Cop Slaying,” *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* (Jan 14, 1977), from Temple University Special Collections Research Center, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* clippings, call no. SCRC 169, vol. Andre Martin, collection URB.



male body in the city, particularly hyper-segregated, impoverished black communities that represented the "jungle."

From 1970 to 1978, tough on crime policing would lead to hyper-policing and police brutality in black and poor neighborhoods. This technique would support a system of racial capitalism that expropriated value from black communities and bestowed financial wealth to the police department and City Council. The arrest and incarceration of black men and boys for real and manufactured crime provided police officers with extra income through paid overtime for hours served during criminal interrogations and court appearances. The City Council also benefited from tough on crime policing because the crime prevention program could be used as a tool to convince the white middle-class to stay in the inner-city, pay taxes, and protect the tax base as Philadelphia struggled with financial debt.

## **Conclusion**

On September 27, 2017, forty-one years after he was first sentenced to life imprisonment for killing Patrolman John Trettin, a teary-eyed and handcuffed Andre Martin stood before Trettin's family in Room 506 of the Juanita Kidd Criminal Justice Center and publicly apologized for his crime at his resentencing hearing:

I am deeply sorry for the tremendous pain and loss I have caused each of you. By killing your father, I have hurt you every day and in so many ways. I think of the times you needed advice or a hug, or just the comfort of a loving father. I know I took that from you, and I'm sorry. I'm getting this chance, and I'm so sorry it means you have to relive that awful night that gave you a lifetime of pain. I pray every day for your peace and comfort.<sup>581</sup>

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<sup>581</sup> Samantha Melamed, "For juvenile lifer who killed policeman, 44 years to life," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, (Sept 27, 2017), Philly.com, accessed November 24, 2017,

For two days, the Trettin and the Martin family sat together (for a second time) in a courtroom as prosecutors and defense attorney Louis Natali recounted the series of events that led up to Trettin's murder. Members of both families (Martin's siblings and Trettin's three children) gave witness testimonies of the night when Trettin was killed. Martin's family talked about the troubled childhood he had, filled with poverty, abandonment from his father, and domestic abuse from his mother. Trettin's family testified about how Martin should remain imprisoned, arguing that every day they painfully mourn Trettin's death, Trettin's children have been cheated out of sharing special milestones with their father (like birthdays, graduations, marriages, the births of grandchildren), and Trettin's wife lived the rest of her life for her kids—still broken-hearted over the death of her husband.<sup>582</sup> After all witness testimonies were made by family members, prison staff, a psychologist, and one of Martin's fellow inmates, the Judge Barbara McDermott resented Martin to 44 years to life stating that he was rehabilitated, but "needed a few more years."<sup>583</sup>

With opposing feelings of happiness and sorrow engulfing Martin and Trettin's families respectively, both sides were able to make some peace over the judgment when one of Martin's relatives embraced one of Trettin's daughters. In 2020, 59-year-old

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<http://www.philly.com/philly/news/crime/for-juvenile-lifer-who-killed-policeman-44-years-to-life-20170927.html>.

<sup>582</sup> "For juvenile lifer who killed policeman, 44 years to life."

<sup>583</sup> Bobby Allyn, "Prosecutors seeking 20 more years for Philly juvenile life who killed cop," WHYY, (Sept 27, 2017), WHYY.org, accessed November 24, 2017, <https://whyy.org/articles/prosecutors-seeking-20-years-philly-juvenile-lifer-killed-cop/>.

Martin was released from Phoenix Maximum Security Prison in Skippack Township, PA after serving 44 years in prison.<sup>584</sup>

Martin's second chance at freedom was granted to him because the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled unanimously that life sentences for juvenile offenders without parole was unconstitutional in June 2017. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court argued that the sentence was "not appropriate" because a juvenile's "transient immaturity" makes it difficult for prosecutors to successfully argue that a murder committed in adolescence was "deliberate," "premeditated," or the result of a "permanent" character trait of violence.<sup>585</sup> Furthermore, although many people familiar with Martin's case disagree that a juvenile murderer like him shouldn't have received parole, his case highlighted how acts of violence often stem from anger and frustration over some perceived inequality in life. Societal inequalities like racism, nativism, discrimination, poverty, and abuse affect people in unique ways. Martin's choice to react to social inequality and police brutality by rebelling against society with random violence was not the only option he had, but the one he chose to take given the uncontrollable circumstances he was offered in life.

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<sup>584</sup> "Information About inmate: AF9705 (Andre Martin)," InmateLocator.cor.state.pa.us, accessed May 7, 2015, <http://inmatelocator.cor.state.pa.us/inmatelocatorweb/InmLocator.aspx>.

<sup>585</sup> Mark Scoloro, "Pennsylvania Supreme Court Rejects Juvenile Life Sentences," *Associated Press*, (June 27, 2017), [nbcphiladelphia.com](http://nbcphiladelphia.com) Accessed, November 24, 2017, <https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/Pa-Supreme-Court-Rejects-Juvenile-Life-Sentences.html>.

## CHAPTER 6

### **“A TRIP TO 8TH AND RACE: HYPER-POLICING, FALSE ARRESTS, AND POLICE BIASES, 1970-1978”**

“I submit that until the people of Philadelphia admit to themselves, in the face of incontrovertible evidence, that the police are human and can commit crimes like any other human, we shall have no real justice in our city.” -Victoria A. Brownworth, Witness to the 1977 police beating of William Cradle<sup>586</sup>

On April 29, 1977, 23-year-old William Cradle was driving in his 1971 Mercury after midnight in Society Hill on his way to pick up his wife Carol from work at 5th and Walnut.<sup>587</sup> When Cradle reached 3rd and Fitzwater Streets, he was stopped by police for speeding after he ran a stop sign. Patrolman Lyle Sprague questioned Cradle, who over the course of approximately seven minutes expressed that he was anxious to pick up his wife. There was a brief but tense verbal exchange between Cradle and Sprague, and eventually Cradle slowly drove off after the officer insulted him by saying, “Take your black ass back into the car.”<sup>588</sup>

Cradle soon reached 5th and Spruce Streets where he was stopped again, this time by multiple officers. According to nine witnesses at the scene, including 21-year-old Victoria A. Brownworth who stood just twenty feet away, Cradle was dragged out of his

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<sup>586</sup> Victoria A. Brownworth, “Cradle beating witness says justice was not served,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Nov. 29, 1977):13, Newspapers.com, accessed August 12, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/57241301/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>587</sup> Jonathan Neumann and William K. Marimow, “City policeman charged in beating,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 8, 1977): 1, Newspapers.com, accessed December 4, 2020, 08 Jul 1977, Page 1 - The Philadelphia Inquirer at Newspapers.com.

<sup>588</sup> Jonathan Neumann and William K. Marimow, “A policeman is charged,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 8, 1977): 4, Newspapers.com, accessed December 4, 2020, Clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer - Newspapers.com.

car by three officers. They punched, kicked, and severely beat Cradle with nightsticks hitting him on the head, shoulders, chest, back, and legs. Two nightsticks broke from the impact. Five other patrolmen looked on and said nothing. Cradle was taken to Metropolitan Hospital and treated for cuts, bruises, a broken rib, and multiple injuries to his head and limbs.<sup>589</sup>

On July 8, Judge Lynne Abraham issued a warrant for the arrest of Officer Sprague on seven charges, which included aggravated assault and falsifying police reports.<sup>590</sup> If he was found guilty at the trial, he faced a maximum of thirty years in prison.<sup>591</sup> In November 1977, Sprague along with two other officers, Patrolmen Roy Land and Raymond Casper were placed on trial for charges of police brutality and the violation of Cradle's civil rights. At the trial, the prosecution presented nine citizens who witnessed the beating and argued that the incident was a case of brutality.<sup>592</sup> The defense responded with testimony from eight policemen who claimed there was an altercation between Cradle and the officers which provoked the use of force. During the trial, the defense asked Patrolman Land to testify that he punched Cradle in the face after Cradle slapped him to demonstrate to the court that the accusations of a police beating were exaggerated by witnesses who were telling untrue stories for the "money" or because of "psychedelic imagination."<sup>593</sup> On November 21, 1977, the three officers were acquitted by an all-white Federal jury of eight men and four women with *only* one juror being an actual

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<sup>589</sup> "A policeman is charged."

<sup>590</sup> Dave Racher, "Cop Faces Charges in 'Beating,'" *Philadelphia Daily News* (July 8, 1977): 4, Newspapers.com, accessed December 4, 2020, [Clipping from Philadelphia Daily News - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>591</sup> "City policeman charged in beating."

<sup>592</sup> Tyree Johnson, "Cradle: Philly Folks Would Believe Me," *Philadelphia Daily News* (Nov 23, 1977): 4, Newspapers.com, accessed December 4, 2020, [Clipping from Philadelphia Daily News - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>593</sup> "Cradle: Philly Folks Would Believe Me."

Philadelphia resident.<sup>594</sup> Two days later, Philadelphia's First Assistant District Attorney John Morris announced that the D.A.'s office had rescinded its decision to prosecute Sprague, Land, and Casper because "it would be unfair to attempt to proceed against the three defendants in light of their acquittal after a full, fair trial."<sup>595</sup> DA Morris also explained to news media outlets that he did not want to risk committing "double jeopardy" by prosecuting the men under charges similar to those made in the federal trial.<sup>596</sup>

Victoria A. Brownworth, a court witness and aspiring journalist, was so shocked by the outcome of the case that she wrote an editorial for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.<sup>597</sup> In her November 1977 opinion piece, she argued that justice was not served in a case of blatant use of excessive police force. She not only expressed disgust for the failure of the justice system to find the officers guilty of a crime she witnessed with her own eyes, but also fear of corrupt patrolmen who unknowingly walk the streets and have access to such unlimited police power: "I have lived in Philadelphia all my life and I shall continue to live here. I want to feel safe here and I want to know that the police are the good and just people they should be. I don't want to live in fear of the police, nor do I want anyone else to share in that fear."<sup>598</sup> Additionally, Brownworth's editorial "took issue" with the Fraternal Order of Police, Mayor Frank Rizzo, and "anyone else" who believed she was exaggerating in her accusation of police brutality. In the second to last column of her

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<sup>594</sup> "Cradle: Philly Folks Would Believe Me."

<sup>595</sup> "Cops Off the Hook," *Philadelphia Daily News* (Nov 23, 1977): 4, Newspapers.com, accessed December 4, 2020, [Clipping from Philadelphia Daily News - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>596</sup> "Cops Off the Hook."

<sup>597</sup> "Cradle beating witness says justice was not served."

<sup>598</sup> "Cradle beating witness says justice was not served."

half-page news editorial, Brownworth concluded with the argument that for society to be fair and equal there must be blind criminal justice, even for police:

The people of Philadelphia must take the blinders from their eyes and see the realities that exist. Crime is a reality and it has many sources...I do not call for a wholesale indictment of the police department. However, Philadelphians, and the police themselves, must have the courage to punish crimes where they exist, irrespective of their source.<sup>599</sup>

The 1977 police beating of William Cradle was one of many examples of injustice surrounding tough on crime policing in Philadelphia. In the 1970s, many Philadelphians harbored criticism and animosity toward the police because anyone, from a doctor to juvenile delinquent, could experience excessive and authoritarian police power and violence during this tough on crime era. The Philadelphia Police Department often made the newspapers (locally and nationally) for its many cases of alleged police brutality. Residents throughout the city regularly petitioned the police department to investigate officers and detectives for manhandling, verbal abuse, false arrests, torture-filled interrogations, and deadly force. These cases publicized the evolution of how commonplace excessive force was against not just African American males, but also non-white and working-class citizens near low-income neighborhoods and housing projects in the city.

In June 1972, the Pennsylvania State Committee published an investigative report on the use of excessive force against other socioeconomic groups and corruption by the Philadelphia Police Department.<sup>600</sup> This was the beginning of a series of investigations

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<sup>599</sup> “Cradle beating witness says justice was not served.”

<sup>600</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia: A Report to the United States Commission on Civil Rights by the Pennsylvania State Committee to the Commission*. Philadelphia: United States Commission on Civil Rights, (June 1972).

on police brutality conducted by government and non-profit organizations in Philadelphia. By April 1977, local journalists were publishing groundbreaking articles on how Philadelphia beat officers and detectives were profiting from the existence of “crime” by arresting marginalized citizens: the non-white, poor, or anyone appearing to be outside of their residential neighborhood.<sup>601</sup> Nevertheless, state investigations into police brutality revealed police and city officials’ biases, insecurities, and improprieties, while serial exposés written by investigative journalists in Philadelphia revealed a system of racial capitalism where many police officers falsely arrested, interrogated, and brought people to lengthy court trials to gain financial rewards like paid overtime as salaried government officials.

### **“As If I Were Some Criminal”: The Pennsylvania State Committee Investigates Police Brutality in Philadelphia**

From March 3-23, 1971, the Pennsylvania State Committee investigated the prevalence of excessive force used by police. The Pennsylvania Committee was established under Section 105 (c) of the Civil Rights Act of 1957.<sup>602</sup> The committee consisted of eleven appointed state residents (serving without compensation) to investigate citizens’ reports of police brutality in Philadelphia. The United States Commission on Civil Rights, an agency of the federal government’s executive branch, requested the investigation because since 1969 the commission collected news reports, police reports, and citizens’ complaints about the Philadelphia Police Department’s tense relationship with African Americans, which one journalist described as a “war of the

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<sup>601</sup> Jonathan Neumann and William K. Marimow, “The Homicide Files, Parts I-IV,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, (April 1977).

<sup>602</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, iii-vi.



cops.”<sup>603</sup> The commission decided to take action in 1970 when following the shooting of three police officers, the police raid of the Black Panther Party’s headquarters, and black residents reporting to Secretary William Wilcox of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs that at one moment in their lifetime they experienced some kind of “excessive police harassment,” “psychological brutality,” or “physical brutality.”<sup>604</sup> The committee’s investigation consisted of ten hours of closed executive sessions and nineteen hours of open town hall meetings to discuss, document (in over 600 pages of transcript), and evaluate incidents of police brutality.<sup>605</sup> After the investigation, the Pennsylvania State Committee sent its report to the United States Commission on Civil Rights detailing how police not only engaged in excessive force against alleged criminals, but also attempted to cover-up their illegal behaviors through evidence tampering. The Pennsylvania State Committee’s major achievement in its investigation was discovering that officers’ use of excessive force against suspects was not limited to impoverished black males, but also poor whites, working-class Latino men, and middle-class black men.<sup>606</sup>

From March 4-5, 1971, forty-one Philadelphians testified before the Committee about their experiences with police brutality. The common goal among these witnesses was not to argue for the abolition of the police force, but to insist that their civil rights be protected, and abusive police were held accountable for their actions.<sup>607</sup> From these testimonies, the Committee discovered that the “role of the police in the minority

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<sup>603</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, iii-vi.

<sup>604</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, iii-vi.

<sup>605</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, iii.

<sup>606</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 1-88.

<sup>607</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, iii-14.

community appears to be one of containment and control rather than protection and service.”<sup>608</sup> This observation was made once the Committee learned from the testimonies of black teenagers that police often committed false arrests, physical and verbal abuse (like slapping, manhandling, beating, and using slurs), unlawful detention at the “Roundhouse” (the Police Administration Building and the city’s main jail located at 8<sup>th</sup> and Race), and “turf dropping” (abandoning a released individual in a racially hostile neighborhood or gang territory) against them. When the Committee heard similar testimonies of police violence from poor white teenagers and other non-white witnesses, it concluded that the “powerlessness that comes from poverty and minority group membership substantially increases an individual’s chance of being a victim of police abuse.”<sup>609</sup> Nevertheless, the Committee determined that police brutality in Philadelphia was contingent upon police officers’ racial and class biases.

Among the forty-one witnesses at the town hall meeting was a working-class Puerto Rican man who described how in August 1970 he was falsely arrested by police in North Philadelphia after a bar fight between a white teen and a Puerto Rican youth erupted in his neighborhood.<sup>610</sup> The witness stated (through an interpreter) that as he was leaving his mother-in-law’s house with his two children, a policeman “attacked” him from behind, separated him from his children, and arrested him. The witness was then taken to the 26<sup>th</sup> Police District (serving the majority Latinx neighborhoods of Fairhill, Juniata Park/Feltonville, and Hunting Park) and then transferred to the 25<sup>th</sup> District (serving the predominantly white neighborhoods of Norris Square, Kensington, and Fishtown) where,

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<sup>608</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 13.

<sup>609</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 9.

<sup>610</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 32-33.

in addition to police forcibly tightening his handcuffs, he was detained for seventeen hours without water or a phone call to his family.<sup>611</sup> Even though this witness was later released, he was upset not only because of the police brutality he faced, but also for acquiring an arrest record:

I had to pay \$12.50 as a fine, and this spoiled my record because I never been involved in police problems at all in the past, so [now] I have a record...Now whenever I have something else happening, I have that record to condemn me in the future.<sup>612</sup>

Another witness at the town hall meeting was a middle-class black man, pharmacologist Raymond Ragland Jr. In Ragland's testimony, he stated that on May 19, 1970 he was walking four blocks away from his Mt. Airy home (where ten to fifteen percent of neighborhood residents were black) to buy cigarettes at a nearby store when an unmarked police car riding down the opposite side of the street made a U-turn and stopped him at 10:30 PM.<sup>613</sup> Dr. Ragland was then questioned, pinned against a police car, searched, and arrested. During his testimony, Dr. Ragland shared his thoughts as police falsely arrested him:

For one thing, the school that my oldest son goes to was right across the street. I had lived in this neighborhood. I just didn't think it was right for me to be leaning against a police car as if I were some criminal.<sup>614</sup>

When Dr. Ragland resisted officers who roughly handcuffed him and threatened to "twist his black arm over," one officer "jabbed" his spine with a nightstick and "spun" him around and "punched him in the stomach." The pharmacologist then feared that his confrontation with the officers would result in him being shot. Once the police wagon

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<sup>611</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 32-33.

<sup>612</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 32-33.

<sup>613</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 33-36.

<sup>614</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 33-36.

arrived to take Dr. Ragland to jail, the arresting officer lied to the approaching officer stating that he found the doctor “hiding in the bushes.”

At the police station, Dr. Ragland was detained for over three hours, questioned, and charged with assault and battery, threatening a police officer, and resisting arrest.<sup>615</sup> After a detective recognized that Dr. Ragland was his wife’s employer, the charges were dismissed, and the doctor was released following an argument between the detective and the arresting officer. Within two months after the incident, Dr. Ragland filed a complaint with the police department, hired a lawyer, and filed a lawsuit when police refused to investigate the incident. Dr. Ragland concluded his testimony with this statement: “You hear some slogans about people being innocent until proven guilty. When I was there [police headquarters] ...I was less than a human being. I was an animal that could not drink out of the fountain...Unfortunately, that’s the way it works.”<sup>616</sup>

A third testimony came from the Executive Director of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Edwin Wolf, who insinuated that local investigations into cases of police brutality were hindered, delayed, or dismissed to protect corrupt police officers.<sup>617</sup> In Wolf’s testimony, he described how six men—black, white, teenaged, young adult, and middle-aged—were shot and or killed by police in six separate incidents in two days for allegedly committing a crime and attempting to attack an officer with a gun or knife. In one incident of blatant excessive force, police shot and wounded a “20-

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<sup>615</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 33-36.

<sup>616</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 33-36.

<sup>617</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 46-47.

year-old boy” who allegedly did not pay his subway fare because he “drew a knife” forty feet from an officer.<sup>618</sup>

Wolf’s testimony also provided another example of flagrant police brutality when he described an incident of evidence tampering and cover-up by the police department after a “white youth” who “allegedly failed to stop at the scene of a burglary” was shot. In this case, Wolf suggested that police intentionally withheld the bullet-pierced clothing of the alleged suspect from the chemical experts at the Philadelphia Textile Institute for two months and then cut out the bullet hole because two eyewitnesses were prepared to testify in court that officers shot the suspect in the back as he laid on the sidewalk face-down.<sup>619</sup> Overall, Wolf gave his statement before the State Committee to persuade them to investigate incidents in which police officers frequently and unjustifiably wounded and killed suspects but never faced prosecution for blatant police brutality.

Throughout the 1970s, the Philadelphia Police Department condoned officers’ use of martial law and excessive force on suspects regardless of the race and or class of the suspect. In 1970, police violence against citizens spiked after three police officers (black officer Charles R. Reynolds in October 1969; white officer Frederick Cione, Jr. in January 1970; and black officer Harry Lee Davis in April 1970) were shot and killed during confrontations with a criminal.<sup>620</sup> One day that Wolf describes as particularly violent was August 29, 1970, when white Fairmount Park Police Sergeant Frank Von

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<sup>618</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 46-47.

<sup>619</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 46-47.

<sup>620</sup> “Fallen Officers-Philadelphia Police Department, 1960-1999,” *Officer Down Memorial Page*, accessed, May 8, 2015, [www.odmp.org](http://www.odmp.org). The three officers murdered were: black officer Charles R. Reynolds in October 1969; white officer Frederick Cione, Jr. in January 1970; and black officer Harry Lee Davis in April 1970.

Colln was ambushed, shot five times, and killed by five members of the revolutionary group, the Black Unity Council, as he worked alone at his desk inside a Cobbs Creek guardhouse.<sup>621</sup> Certainly, these police murders made officers paranoid, prompting Wolf to suggest that police officers used excessive force against suspects because they feared for their safety, were angry about recent police murders, and influenced by the police department itself to thwart crime with force.

As the Pennsylvania State Committee gathered testimonial evidence on police brutality cases, it discovered that several high-ranking city officials refused to hold abusive officers accountable for their actions. In the first place, the Committee's investigation found that countless complaints of police abuse filed by the city's Commission on Human Relations, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Philadelphians for Equal Justice, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and Community Legal Services were unresolved by the city and police department.<sup>622</sup> Secondly, numerous participants in the town hall meetings expressed that former police commissioner, Mayor Rizzo contributed to the "deterioration of police-community relations for minorities and white dissidents" because his politically-charged, anti-protest responses to events in the city "escalated tensions" that led to violence between the two groups.<sup>623</sup> And third, several city officials and aspiring politicians ignored the issue of police-community conflict to maintain or attain their seat in public office.

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<sup>621</sup> Sean Patrick Griffin, *Philadelphia's Black Mafia: A Social and Political History*, (New York City: Springer Science & Business Media, 2003), 73.

<sup>622</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 9.

<sup>623</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 12.

During the investigation, several incumbent city officials, including Mayor Frank L. Rizzo, dismissed citizens' complaints of police brutality and refused to attend the town hall meetings hosted by the Committee.<sup>624</sup> From January 7, 1971 to April 13, 1972, representatives from the United States Commission on Civil Rights and the Pennsylvania State Advisory Committee exchanged letters with Police Commissioner O'Neill, District Attorney Arlen Specter, Mayor James H. J. Tate, and Mayor Rizzo requesting that they attend the town hall meeting and respond to citizens' complaints of police violence or provide support in the investigation.<sup>625</sup> Only DA Specter responded positively to Director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Isaiah T. Creswell, Jr.'s request by attending the town hall meetings, testifying before the Committee, reviewing the meetings' transcripts, and proposing the creation of a Municipal Advisory Board to further investigate problems in police-community relations.<sup>626</sup>

When Police Commissioner O'Neill responded to Chairman Richard K. Bennett of the Pennsylvania State Advisory Committee in March 1971, he declined the invitation by arguing that he had to prioritize reevaluating police policies after the murders of two policemen over listening to community complaints about police abuse, an issue that may have originally triggered anti-police violence.<sup>627</sup> In Mayor Tate's January 1971 response letter to Assistant Director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Theodore W. Robinson, he declined to participate in the Committee's investigation, claiming he did not

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<sup>624</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 89-103.

<sup>625</sup> Police Commissioner Joseph O'Neill was in office from 1971-1980, District Attorney Arlen Specter was in office from 1966-1974, Mayor James H. J. Tate was in office from 1962-1972, and Mayor Frank Rizzo was in office from 1972-1980.

<sup>626</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 99-100.

<sup>627</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 89-90.

want to aggravate police-community tensions.<sup>628</sup> In Mayor Rizzo's April 1972 response letter to Director Creswell, Jr., he vehemently chastised Creswell for hosting town hall meetings that were (in Rizzo's opinion) anti-police:

The record, of course, does not include the testimony of police...who have paid the supreme sacrifice. Call upon the families of Officers Fred Cione, Frank Von Colln and other officers who were assassinated without provocation while performing their duties.<sup>629</sup>

In March 1974, the Pennsylvania Crime Commission published its eighteen-month investigative report on corruption in the Philadelphia Police Department. While the Pennsylvania Crime Commission did not investigate police brutality, it focused on collecting citizens' testimonies to uncover all the reasons many citizens mistrusted the police. Like in the 1940s, Philadelphians complained there were a slew of officers who engaged in, permitted, or financially benefited from the operation of illegal drug dealing, prostitution, speakeasies, and numbers racketeering in black and white communities.<sup>630</sup> Furthermore the Pennsylvania Crime Commission's investigation opened the door for another organization to delve into the issue of police brutality in Philadelphia.

By 1977, police violence had not waned. The Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia (PILCOP) had received dozens of citizens' complaints about abusive patrolmen and detectives who violated their rights. The abuse complainants made against officers ranged from being denied an attorney to having a chair thrown at them during an interrogation.<sup>631</sup> PILCOP's attorneys then addressed letters to Police Commissioner

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<sup>628</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 91.

<sup>629</sup> Pennsylvania State Committee, *Police-Community Relations in Philadelphia*, 101-103.

<sup>630</sup> Pennsylvania Crime Commission, *Report on Police Corruption and the Quality of Law Enforcement in Philadelphia*, (St Davids: Pennsylvania Crime Commission, March 1974).

<sup>631</sup> Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia (PILCOP), Miscellaneous Letters, PILCOP (Sharon Hill WHS Archives Box 17), Folder: "Letters to the Commissioner, 1976-1977," (April 1978).



Joseph O'Neill on behalf of their clients detailing how some juveniles, men, and women were persecuted and brutalized while in police custody. In 1976 alone, PILCOP received 201 complaints of police abuse that took place on streets, in district police stations, clients' homes, the police van, and the Roundhouse.<sup>632</sup> Some complaints entailed harassment and false arrest like a December 1976 case where a fourteen-year-old boy was arrested at his job at Levi's Hotdog Stand in South Philadelphia for possessing a toy gun.<sup>633</sup> Other cases described visceral brutality like the April 1976 beating of a Cedarbrook man by multiple officers which led to him being hospitalized for lacerations of the skull and face, a broken jaw, and subconjunctival hemorrhages.<sup>634</sup> Moreover, despite the presence of state investigations, lawsuits, and press coverage on police brutality, the issue remained unresolved on an institutional level.

### **“An Eye for an Eye”: Fighting Back Against Racial Violence**

In the 1970s, police violence was sometimes met with retaliation when African American suspects killed white policemen as a response to past black-police confrontations they believed to be police brutality. Some of these incidents involved *groups* of two or more young black men targeting white patrolmen in black neighborhoods red flagged by the police department as crime hotspots. Consequently, when African American men retaliated against white policemen for police brutality

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<sup>632</sup> Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia (PILCOP), Miscellaneous Notes, PILCOP (Sharon Hill WHS Archives Box 17), Folder: “Letters to the Commissioner, 1976-1977,” (April 1978).

<sup>633</sup> Project Attorney Lucy J. Weidner of Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia (PILCOP), “September 14, 1977 Letter to Commissioner Joseph O'Neill on the December 24, 1976 Arrest of Troy Brooks,” PILCOP (Sharon Hill WHS Archives Box 17), Folder: “Letters to the Commissioner, 1976-1977,” (April 1978).

<sup>634</sup> Staff Attorney Ann K. Seidman of Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia (PILCOP), “January 4, 1977 Letter to Commissioner Joseph O'Neill on the April 10, 1976 Beating of Leroy Jenkins of 7943 Woolston Avenue,” PILCOP (Sharon Hill WHS Archives Box 17), Folder: “Letters to the Commissioner, 1976-1977,” (April 1978).

happening in the city, some police officers not only stereotyped black men as violent but also felt justified in using excessive force in black-police confrontations.

According to criminologist Sean Patrick Griffin, when the Black Unity Council murdered Police Sergeant Frank Von Colln in 1970, their motivation for the killing was to fulfill their philosophy of “killing the pigs and declaring war on police officers for what they thought was brutality in their community.”<sup>635</sup> The five suspects were later charged with murder and sentenced to life in prison.<sup>636</sup> On February 21, 1971, two white officers were found shot dead in their patrol cars within five hours of each other, in two different city neighborhoods.<sup>637</sup> Around 10 PM on February 20<sup>th</sup>, twenty-five-year-old Officer John McEntee was found slumped over his steering wheel with two gunshots to the back of the head in Stanton, a predominantly black neighborhood in North Philadelphia. Police Commissioner Joseph O’Neill would later report to the news media that before McEntee was “executed” he “stopped two youths for questioning.” Early the very next day, forty-five-year-old Officer Joseph Kelly was found slumped over in his patrol car with two gunshots to the chest in Roxborough. When police arrived at the scene, they discovered Kelly with his police radio microphone in his right hand and his revolver on the car floor. Kelly fired five shots before his death.<sup>638</sup>

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<sup>635</sup> “Slain Fairmount Park police officer, Frank Von Colln,” Photograph, Philadelphia: *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, August 30, 1970, From Temple University Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, Slain Fairmount Park police officer, Frank Von Colln - George D. McDowell Philadelphia Evening Bulletin Photographs - Digital Collections (temple.edu), (accessed March 31, 2021).

<sup>636</sup> Griffin, *Philadelphia’s Black Mafia*, 73.

<sup>637</sup> “Two Philadelphia Policemen Killed in Shooting Attacks,” *St. Petersburg Times* (Feb. 22, 1971), GoogleNews.com, accessed May 7, 2015, [https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=888&dat=19710222&id=l\\_wyAAAAIBAJ&sjid=4nUDAAAAIBAJ&pg=5927,1975067&hl=en](https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=888&dat=19710222&id=l_wyAAAAIBAJ&sjid=4nUDAAAAIBAJ&pg=5927,1975067&hl=en).

<sup>638</sup> “Two Philadelphia Policemen Killed in Shooting Attacks.”

The killings were news across the country. A journalist from the *St. Petersburg Times*, wrote that Philadelphia Police “refused to speculate” whether the killings of McEntee and Kelly were done in retaliation for the shooting and wounding of a 22-year-old African American man, Roger Allison, who threatened police with a whiskey bottle on February 15, 1971. Furthermore, the journalist suggested that since Allison was shot six blocks away from where McEntee was killed, it was possible that the murderers may have killed the white officers to avenge the shooting of an allegedly mentally disabled black man.<sup>639</sup> Since Von Colln, McEntee, and Kelly were killed by African American suspects who wanted to retaliate against police, it is possible that fear and anger drove some white police officers to mistrust certain members of the black community that appeared to hate white patrolmen. Since all the suspects involved in killing these four officers were black males, this pattern developed a stereotype that all black men were violent, especially against police. This stereotype has great importance in the second half of the decade when police killed several black males for alleged crimes.

As Rizzo grew to be an influential police commissioner and mayor throughout the 1970s, some officers adopted his stance on using excessive force in black communities to keep crime rates down. As a result, there were many incidents where police wounded and killed unarmed black men and teens suspected of crime. Three cases that impacted the city at large morally and financially were the shooting deaths of Michael Sherard, Michael Carpenter, and Cornell Warren.<sup>640</sup> Additionally, Rizzo and the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) consistently petitioned the city to provide higher wages and overtime to

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<sup>639</sup> “Two Philadelphia Policemen Killed in Shooting Attacks.”

<sup>640</sup> Anthony E. Jackson, Esq., “Statement of Anthony E. Jackson, Esq., Director, Police Project, PILCOP, April 19, 1979,” April 19, 1979, PILCOP.org, accessed May 7, 2015, [www.pilcop.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Deadly\\_Force\\_1.pdf](http://www.pilcop.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Deadly_Force_1.pdf).

patrolmen and detectives who wanted to work beyond their eight-hour shift, while also blindly defending officers who violated the civil rights of citizens.<sup>641</sup>

At noon on February 15, 1976, twenty-five-year-old Police Officer Donald Woodruff saw sixteen-year-old Michael Sherard walking down a street in Germantown carrying a portable television set as he sat in his patrol car near the Queen Lane Apartments housing project.<sup>642</sup> Woodruff suspected the television was stolen and ordered Sherard to stop. Sherard continued walking until Woodruff got out of the car and followed him. Sherard then ran and threw the television towards Woodruff, who chased the teenager into an alley and a playground before fatally shooting him in the back of the head.<sup>643</sup> Days after Sherard was killed, Germantown residents called for Officer Woodruff's suspension from the police force.<sup>644</sup> Woodruff was later charged with manslaughter.<sup>645</sup> Months later, Woodruff faced a two-week trial in Common Pleas Court in which he testified that he "didn't want to do it [kill Sherard]" and he now believed it was "better for him [Sherard] to escape than to take his life." By November 4, 1976, the jury acquitted Woodruff of manslaughter and he was released.<sup>646</sup> Despite the court ruling, Sherard's family pursued a

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<sup>641</sup> Gerald McKelvey and Howard Shapiro, "Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, (March 21, 1971): 21-24, Newspapers.com, accessed July 20, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/55743876/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>642</sup> "\$3 Million Suit Over Death," *The Pocono Record*, (April 3, 1976): 2, Newspapers.com, accessed May 8, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/newspage/44308430/>.

<sup>643</sup> "\$3 Million Suit Over Death."

<sup>644</sup> "News Briefs: Philadelphia," *Gettysburg Times*, (Feb. 18, 1976): 2, accessed May 8, 2015, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2202&dat=19760218&id=VnElAAAIIBAJ&sjid=xvIFAAAAIIBAJ&pg=1325,779508&hl=en>.

<sup>645</sup> *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Donald Woodruff*, Municipal Court of Philadelphia County, 18 Feb. 1976, *The Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania Web Portal*, Web, 05 Dec. 2016, <<https://ujportal.pacourts.us/DocketSheets/MC.aspx>>.

<sup>646</sup> "Policeman Acquitted," *Reading Eagle*, (Nov. 4 1976): 45, accessed May 8, 2015, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1955&dat=19761104&id=u8ktAAAAIIBAJ&sjid=zKAFAAAAIIBAJ&pg=3578,2158628&hl=en>.

\$3 million damage suit against Officer Woodruff, the city, Mayor Frank Rizzo, and Police Commissioner O'Neill.<sup>647</sup>

On February 27, 1978, nineteen-year-old Michael Carpenter was riding in a Thunderbird (with broken headlights) with four friends in their Kensington neighborhood when a 25th district patrol wagon spotted them.<sup>648</sup> The police signaled for Carpenter to pull over at the red light near Tioga Street and Aramingo Avenue (located eight minutes away from the Whitehall Apartments housing project), but Carpenter sped off and a police chase ensued. Soon the police broadcasted the incident and Officer Marcus Giardino and his partner, William Atkinson joined the chase. Officers Giardino and Atkinson soon caught up with Carpenter and stopped the car for a traffic violation.<sup>649</sup> During the traffic stop, Carpenter fled from the vehicle and Giardino pursued him into an alley and then fatally shot him in the back. The officers later discovered Carpenter's friends hiding nearby, found beer and five dollars' worth of marijuana in the car, and arrested the men for drunk driving.<sup>650</sup> In April, District Attorney Ed Rendell obtained a murder warrant for Giardino. When detectives interrogated Giardino, he lied to them stating that when Carpenter threatened him he shot the teen in the chest.<sup>651</sup> By September, an autopsy of Carpenter's body reported that Giardino did not shoot Carpenter in the chest, but in the teen's back. Giardino later confessed the truth, pled guilty to manslaughter, and resigned from the police force.

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<sup>647</sup> "\$3 Million Suit Over Death."

<sup>648</sup> Karen Scanlon and Scott Heimer, "Cop Kills Kensington Youth," *Philadelphia Daily News*, (Feb. 27, 1978): 16, Newspapers.com, accessed February 20, 2017, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9055282/philadelphia-daily-news/>.

<sup>649</sup> "Cop Kills Kensington Youth."

<sup>650</sup> "Cop Kills Kensington Youth."

<sup>651</sup> "2 Policemen Arrested, Deadly Force Not Warranted," *The Daily News*, (Oct. 12, 1978): 19, Newspapers.com, accessed May 8, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/newspage/17355898/>.

In October, Judge Robert Latrone sentenced Giardino to five years' probation, ordered him to pay \$5,000 in funeral expenses to Carpenter's family, and instructed him to join the Big Brothers Association as part of his rehabilitation program.<sup>652</sup> After the sentencing, members of the Big Brothers Association stated that Giardino was unfit to mentor children because of his involvement in Carpenter's death. Judge Latrone responded with surprise stating that Giardino was "not a criminal type," but a "good father" and he did not understand why an organization in need of volunteers would refuse Giardino. Judge Latrone later stated that he would not force the organization to accept Giardino, but place him in another community-based organization, the Police Athletic League (PAL).<sup>653</sup>

On September 23, 1978, twenty-year-old Cornell Warren, a North Philadelphia resident, was stopped by white Officer Thomas Bowe and black Officer Daryl Bronzeill. They suspected Warren of speeding in a stolen car in the Tasker Homes housing project located in Grays Ferry.<sup>654</sup> Warren was later arrested, handcuffed by officers, and placed in a police van. The police officers later took Warren to the Police Administration Building to further investigate his case, but Warren escaped and ran down the street, still handcuffed.<sup>655</sup> The officers pursued Warren and shot him in the head two blocks from the

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<sup>652</sup> "'Brothers' Object to Order," *The Times New* (Nov. 15, 1978): 5, accessed May 8, 2015, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1665&dat=19781115&id=MEQaAAAAIBAJ&sjid=eiQEAAAAIBAJ&p g=6954,2210290&hl=en>.

<sup>653</sup> "'Brothers' Object to Order."

<sup>654</sup> "2 Policemen Arrested, Deadly Force Not Warranted," *The Daily News*, (Oct. 12, 1978): 19, accessed May 8, 2015, <http://www.newspapers.com/newspage/17355898/>.

<sup>655</sup> "2 Policemen Arrested, Deadly Force Not Warranted."

police van. Warren died in the hospital thirteen days later.<sup>656</sup> Philadelphia District

Attorney Ed Rendell responded to the incident with great conviction against the officers:

I took great pains to tell the Philadelphia police department and the police officers of this city of what constitutes deadly force...The police do not know the law. You can't shoot a fleeing suspect for something other than a forcible felony, like murder or rape. It does not cover a suspected stolen car...The whole concept is distasteful for a prosecuting officer to bring charges against police, but it's the law. This has got to stop. This man could have been your nephew or my nephew or your son or daughter. Any nineteen-year-old is susceptible to panicking and running away from police.<sup>657</sup>

After Warren died, Officer Bowe Jr. claimed his gun accidentally fired and hit Warren. Assistant District Attorney Robert Campolongo later pursued a charge of third degree murder, believing the shooting was not premeditated but done in a "moment of rage."<sup>658</sup> In Bowe's August 1979 trial, a jury of eight women (two who were African American) and four men acquitted him of murder.<sup>659</sup> After the verdict was read, Cornell Warren's mother, Margaret Warren, left the courtroom exclaiming that Officer Bowe Jr. was a "murderer" and another relative shouted in the courtroom the verdict was similar to the "Ku Klux Klan days in Alabama." Bowe's acquittal occurred at a crucial time when the Pennsylvania Justice Department charged the city, Mayor Rizzo, and nineteen top officials in Philadelphia with "systematically condoning police brutality" particularly

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<sup>656</sup> "Philadelphia Policeman Acquitted in Shooting of Handcuffed Prisoner," *The Evening Independent*, (Aug. 17, 1979):2, accessed May 8, 2015, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=950&dat=19790817&id=dEsmAAAAIbAJ&sjid=5lgDAAAIBAJ&pg=5346,280502&hl=en>.

<sup>657</sup> "2 Policemen Arrested, Deadly Force Not Warranted."

<sup>658</sup> "Philadelphia Policeman Acquitted in Shooting of Handcuffed Prisoner," *The Evening Independent*, (Aug. 17, 1979):2, accessed May 8, 2015, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=950&dat=19790817&id=dEsmAAAAIbAJ&sjid=5lgDAAAIBAJ&pg=5346,280502&hl=en>.

<sup>659</sup> "Philadelphia Policeman Acquitted in Shooting of Handcuffed Prisoner."

against African Americans and Latinos.<sup>660</sup> Furthermore, Bowe's acquittal was shocking but not surprising since police brutality was an endemic issue in the police department.

In all three cases of deadly officer-involved shootings, the police spotted and pursued these young men near housing projects in predominantly working-class African American neighborhoods that appeared "blighted" because of the many abandoned homes and factories that lined city streets. Since "blighted" areas were often associated with black crime, any potential black suspect who fled police, resisted arrest, or questioned his treatment from officers faced excessive (and sometimes deadly) force, especially when their presence in a neighborhood seemed out of place, such as riding around in a luxury car or participating in recreational activities outside of the confines of a housing project development.

In addition to this form of police bias, another consequence of Rizzo's unspoken approval of excessive force was the police department's unwillingness to properly screen potential police recruits for possible violent outbursts toward suspected citizens.<sup>661</sup> Giardino, who joined the force in 1974, was a Vietnam Veteran who was medically discharged from the Air Force because he suffered a nervous breakdown. Towards the end of Giardino's military career, he was afraid of loud noises and could not handle stress. Military officials became aware of Giardino's psychological illness when he *repeatedly* dived under his cot, covered his ears, and cried every time he heard a plane fly overhead.<sup>662</sup> While it is unknown whether police officials knew of Giardino's Post-

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<sup>660</sup> "Philadelphia Policeman Acquitted in Shooting of Handcuffed Prisoner."

<sup>661</sup> "Police hiring practices produce time-bombs," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (20 Nov 1978): 6, Newspapers.com, accessed November 24, 2017, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9055262/crucial\\_for\\_discussing\\_police\\_and/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9055262/crucial_for_discussing_police_and/).

<sup>662</sup> "Police hiring practices produce time-bombs."



Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) when they hired him, it is known that Giardino had a tendency to lie about his behavior, because in addition to lying about shooting Carpenter in the chest he tried to conceal his medical history from court officials during his trial, stating that he was released from the military for a perforated eardrum.<sup>663</sup> Like Giardino, there were numerous officers who were military veterans, possibly suffering in secret from undiagnosed PTSD which in turn made them prone to using excessive force when they became stressed, afraid, or angry with suspects.

While many police-involved shootings led to murder trials for accused officers, few were convicted. Nevertheless, much social activism from civil rights attorneys took place to expose and demand an end to police brutality. From 1970-1979, black, white, and Latino citizens circulated petitions demanding the suspension of accused police officers, held demonstrations in courtrooms, and participated in mass marches to police stations and City Hall in protest of police shootings.<sup>664</sup> Some Philadelphians conducted extensive research on the trend of police brutality. On April 19, 1979, attorney Anthony E. Jackson, Director of the Police Project for PILCOP, released an 84-page statement that gave a full report on the findings of the Police Project's study on police brutality in Philadelphia from 1970-1978.<sup>665</sup> Jackson's opening argument was:

The Police Project's study on the use of deadly force by Philadelphia police reveals a pattern and practice of alleged shootings that are condoned by the police and city administration by the lack of disciplinary action against offending officers. Nearly 50% of the shootings by Philadelphia police are in violation of Pennsylvania law in that those

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<sup>663</sup> "Police hiring practices produce time-bombs."

<sup>664</sup> "Demonstrations over police brutality," Photograph, Philadelphia: *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, February 16, 1971, From Temple University Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, <https://digital.library.temple.edu/digital/collection/p15037coll3/id/14297>, (accessed April 1 2021).

<sup>665</sup> Jackson, "Statement of Anthony E. Jackson," 1-84.

victims were not engaged in any forcible felony or threatening serious bodily harm to officers or others.<sup>666</sup>

Jackson's research also provided a plethora of statistics on police-involved shootings. In his study, Jackson analyzed 469 shootings by police from 1970-1978. Out of 469 shootings, 60 were juveniles, 162 individuals died, and 297 people were wounded. Seventy-five people who were shot by police did not commit a violent felony (like rape and murder) but fled officers. In Jackson's 1978 case study, he discovered that of 23 people killed by police, eight were unarmed, seven had guns, five had other types of weapons, and for three individuals police could not determine whether the suspect was unarmed. Also, five out of eight unarmed suspects murdered were fleeing police when they were shot.<sup>667</sup> Among these five individuals were Michael Carpenter and Cornell Warren. Furthermore, Jackson claimed the police shootings of the eight suspects were even more unjustifiable because the individuals were not committing a violent crime when the police shot them.<sup>668</sup> Jackson's research also documented every police-involved shooting from 1970-1978, the names of officers and shooting victims, officers involved in multiple suspect shootings, statistics on police use of deadly force, police districts with the highest percentages of police shootings per year, and the criminal charges and lawsuits filed against officers. Overall, Jackson's report determined that although African Americans comprised 33% of Philadelphia's population, the trend in police shooting was racially motivated since 66% of the identifiable police-involved shooting victims were black.<sup>669</sup> Nevertheless, the data revealed that police officers patrolling low-income black

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<sup>666</sup> Jackson, "Statement of Anthony E. Jackson," 1.

<sup>667</sup> Jackson, "Statement of Anthony E. Jackson," 1.

<sup>668</sup> Jackson, "Statement of Anthony E. Jackson," 1.

<sup>669</sup> Jackson, "Statement of Anthony E. Jackson," 14-84.

neighborhoods identified as “crime hotspots” expected suspects in these areas to be “armed and dangerous” and therefore felt justified in using deadly force against black men even when their lives were *not* threatened.<sup>670</sup>

### **Maintaining “Law and Order” Means Fighting Black Crime**

In 1978, director Robert Mugge released his controversial documentary, *Amateur Night at City Hall: The Story of Frank L. Rizzo*, which explored the meaning of “law and order” in Philadelphia’s Rizzo era. From start to finish, the film explored how Rizzo’s tough on crime movement sparked police brutality when politicians feared white flight from a “blighted” and “crime-ridden” city.<sup>671</sup> With interviews from citizens, politicians, civil rights activists, and journalists, Mugge’s film painted Rizzo as a “demagogue” who was (for the most part) admired and supported by the Italian American community for breaking down white ethnic and socioeconomic barriers for Italians seeking public office. Most importantly, Rizzo was portrayed as a local spokesman for a “law and order” political base that desired “hard-nosed” policing to combat street crime—the supposed cause for job flight, white flight, and blight.

As mayor, Rizzo maintained his tough on crime agenda because he wanted to meet the expectations of the “law and order” citizens who supported him and retain his seat in public office. Supporters of this political base feared the proliferation of particularly black street crime in the city while also contemplating an escape to the suburbs. To please these citizens, Rizzo often encouraged police officers to use excessive force against the

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<sup>670</sup> Eric C. Schneider, *The Ecology of Homicide: Race, Place, and Space in Postwar Philadelphia*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 95-96.

<sup>671</sup> *Amateur Night at City Hall: The Story of Frank L. Rizzo*, Dir. Robert Mugge, MVD Entertainment Group, 1978, Kanopy, Web, Accessed November 24, 2017.

“animals” who committed street crime through his political rhetoric in press conferences and news interviews.<sup>672</sup> Rizzo’s public statements such as, “The guy that kills police should be strung up...after he receives that fair trial,” were covert signals to policemen that he condoned excessive force. His words sent the message to officers that no matter what they did to curb crime (like injure, maim, or kill a suspect), he would support them. Nevertheless, police officers ranking from the President of the Fraternal Order of Police to the beat cop were indirectly granted permission from Rizzo to use excessive force against a suspect if they believed it was necessary, felt threatened, or were insulted:

We have a uniform...a badge...a blackjack...a gun, and a club. If somebody takes a punch at you and tries to put you down, it’s just like being in a fight. You’re going to put them down best you can until they stop swinging. And if you want to call it violence, it’s violence, but we’re not out there to be punching bags, we’re out there to protect the public and that’s what we intend to do. – Thomas McCarey, President of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #5<sup>673</sup>

Additionally, Mayor Rizzo was focused on black crime because Philadelphia’s economic issues were exacerbated by industrial decline, job flight, and continual white flight. Rizzo maintained his stance on law and order against black crime because it was a familiar narrative to the white middle-class. In fact, during Rizzo’s two terms as mayor of Philadelphia, deadly police-involved shootings increased by approximately 20% per year.<sup>674</sup> He promoted tough on crime policing and increased spending on the police department to convince white residents that inner-city Philadelphia was safe and there was no need to move to the suburbs. Political fears about black crime triggering white flight existed long before Rizzo arrived in public office. Since the Great Migration,

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<sup>672</sup> *Amateur Night at City Hall*.

<sup>673</sup> *Amateur Night at City Hall*.

<sup>674</sup> Jerome H. Skolnick and James J. Fyfe, *Above the Law: Police and the Excessive Use of Force* (New York: Free Press, 1993), 140.

negative racial stereotypes about black migration, black residency, and black crime in Philadelphia triggered white fear and white flight from the city for over fifty years. However, it wasn't until the 1960s when City Council had to determine how to effectively control its budget spending when white flight decreased the city's tax base at the same time the police department began requesting more funds to "protect and serve" Philadelphia.

In the late 1960s, city officials were concerned about budgetary spending during periods of economic downturn. As police commissioner, Rizzo was aware of this when he promoted his 1968 police plan, Operation FIND, as one requiring no additional municipal funds. However, in the 1970s the police department gradually received more and more funding from the city budget through paid overtime. In 1961, the FOP first achieved paid hourly overtime for police officers ranking from lieutenant to beat cop.<sup>675</sup> Officers earned overtime when they remained on-duty beyond their eight-hour shift to continue investigations, conduct interrogations, appear in court, or increase manpower during public safety emergencies. By July 1970, the FOP (with support from the police department and Rizzo) signed a contract with the city achieving overtime pay for officers at 1.5 times the usual hourly rate.<sup>676</sup>

Despite the increased costs of overtime, the police department's Director of Administration, Philip H. Carroll explained in a 1971 interview how elevated levels of crime from June 15 to September 15 made extra manpower a necessity: "During warm

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<sup>675</sup> "Police Get Overtime Pay Pact, First in City's History," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Nov. 15, 1961): 45, Newspapers.com, accessed July 20, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/55748515/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>676</sup> "Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months."

weather, we have most of our problems in the city. Last summer, there was a riot in Holmesburg prison and the trouble at Tasker Homes and in Fairmount.”<sup>677</sup> In these three examples, Carroll described incidents from Summer 1970 where groups of black men and boys committed crimes of violence and murder to justify increased spending on the police. The riot at Holmesburg Prison involved about 400 predominantly black inmates who attacked over 100 mostly white guards and inmates in retaliation for physical abuse, poor living conditions, and racism.<sup>678</sup> The “trouble” at the housing project Tasker Homes involved 300 “helmeted” and “club-carrying” police officers breaking up a race riot between black juveniles from the project and white residents from the surrounding area who were throwing bottles and bricks at each other.<sup>679</sup> And the “trouble” at Fairmount Park was the shooting of two police officers by the Black Unity Council in which Sergeant Von Colln was murdered.<sup>680</sup> As a result of incidents like these, the police department had continuously ran over-budget for emergencies, and with narratives of recent black crime palpable, City Council relied on reserves to cover the costs.<sup>681</sup>

By March 1971, *Philadelphia Inquirer* reporters began to note the city’s uncontrollable budgetary spending on the police department when it received twice as much funding as any other city office: \$82 million.<sup>682</sup> In that month, Philadelphia reportedly offered members of its 7904-man police force approximately 2,000 hours of

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<sup>677</sup> “Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months.”

<sup>678</sup> Maxwell King, “2 Years After Holmesburg Riot: Prison Adds Drug Center, Expands Work-Release,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 23, 1972): 26, Newspapers.com, accessed August 1, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/56475943/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>679</sup> “Violence Hits Tasker Homes As Police Watch Fairmount,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Aug. 28, 1970): 1, Newspapers.com, accessed April 13, 2020, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/48633119/the-philadelphia-inquirer/>.

<sup>680</sup> Griffin, *Philadelphia’s Black Mafia*, 73.

<sup>681</sup> “Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months.”

<sup>682</sup> “Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months.”

overtime each day, costing the city \$15,000 a day and \$5.5 million a year. As the fourth largest city in the country, Philadelphia was spending more money on overtime with a smaller police force than the top three: New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles respectively.<sup>683</sup> Since 90% of overtime went to “street patrolmen who spend a lot of time in court” and 10% went to the Warrant Squad, crime scene staff (in the radio room and crime laboratory), and community relations staff like PAL officers, police were earning extra money from the existence of crime.<sup>684</sup> While actual crime was present in a society filled with economic uncertainty, instances of officer-citizen confrontation, false arrests, and police brutality may have also been induced to give police a greater opportunity to earn overtime.

## **Conclusion**

In an era of tough on crime policing, street crime (real and imagined) was commonplace and police were encouraged by the mayor, the police department, and the city to control it. Since social welfare programs appeared to be incapable of curbing crime, the city engaged in a form of racial capitalism by investing in the police department to curb black crime. While funds to other city offices and programs decreased, the police department and its labor force were financially strengthened.<sup>685</sup> For example, in February 1971 two homicide detectives were known as the “kings of overtime” because they nearly doubled their two-week salary by working between

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<sup>683</sup> “Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months.”

<sup>684</sup> “Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months.”

<sup>685</sup> “Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months.”

sixteen and nineteen hours beyond their usual shift.<sup>686</sup> For overtime to continue, hyper-policing, particularly in stigmatized, poor and non-white neighborhoods, had to exist.

In the April 1977 *Philadelphia Inquirer* article, “The Homicide Files, Part I” journalists Jonathan Neumann and William K. Marimow theorized that “money” was the motive behind overtime being a popular task within the 84-member Homicide Division.<sup>687</sup> Based on three years of research, Neumann and Marimow investigated how among 433 homicide cases handled by the police department, 80 of them were ruled by Common Pleas Court judges to have involved illegal police investigations. In many of these cases, suspects and witnesses were handcuffed, tortured with beatings and threats, and forced by detectives to make false confessions during as much as 24-hour long interrogations.<sup>688</sup> The article also mentioned that while people were brutalized and actual criminal offenders were never pursued once a case was “closed,” homicide detectives in 1976 earned an average of \$7,575 in overtime according to the city’s payroll records. In that same year, one detective, Michael Chitwood received a salary higher than Police Commissioner O’Neill due to overtime: \$36,293.<sup>689</sup> Crime narratives, including ones about uncontrollable black gangs, provided justification for hyper-policing and intense police interrogations. Citizens were in part conditioned to solely rely on police instead of community interventionists to effectively combat social unrest and crime, giving PPD’s

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<sup>686</sup> Jonathan Neumann and William K. Marimow, “The Homicide Files, Part I,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, (April 24, 1977), *Inquirer.com*, accessed July 2020, <https://www.inquirer.com/news/homicide-files-1977-series-police-beatings-confessions-20200710.html>. The article, “The Homicide Files” was in its entirety a four part series detailing police brutality and corruption within the Philadelphia Police Department. The series won *Philadelphia Inquirer* staff writers Jonathan Neumann and William K. Marimow a Pulitzer Prize for their work.

<sup>687</sup> “The Homicide Files, Part I.”

<sup>688</sup> “The Homicide Files, Part I.”

<sup>689</sup> “The Homicide Files, Part I.” Michael Chitwood joined the Philadelphia Police force in April 1964. He later became the Police Superintendent of Upper Darby Township for fourteen years and served as a police officer for a total of 55 years until his retirement on December 1, 2019.



Director of Administration Carroll the ease of making statements like this in 1971: “You can call for a police officer here and you get one fast or someone’s not doing their job. In other cities, New York for instance, you can wait an hour. By that time it’s usually too late.”<sup>690</sup> Overall, the article highlighted how power and greed played a role in a capitalist system where disadvantaged communities were exploited to garner wealth for others.

From the 1950s through the 1970s, Philadelphia’s city officials believed tough on crime policing was the best crisis prevention plan for achieving financial stability. Many politicians and police believed and even witnessed how community-centric social welfare programs were capable of solving black gang violence and the roots of “black crime” like poverty, racism, and marginalization. Over time, those ideas were largely ignored because they would challenge the socioeconomic hierarchy that privileged some while disadvantaging others. Instead, Philadelphia city officials chose a strategy that exists to this day. They chose to maintain the social caste system by investing in the police to do everything: to curb crime, stop white flight, halt the dwindling tax base, and hopefully reinvest as loyal taxpayers to uplift the city out of its never-ending budget deficit.

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<sup>690</sup> “Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months.”

## CONCLUSION

“They are, in effect, still trapped in a history which they do not understand; and until they can understand it, they cannot be released from it.” -James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, 1963<sup>691</sup>

Around 5 PM on May 24, 2019, I visited Old Pine Presbyterian Cemetery after a long week of researching to find the grave of slain graduate student, In-Ho Oh. It was the Friday before Memorial Day weekend and in the historic cemetery, adjacent to Old Pine Street Church in Society Hill, were miniature American flags and emblems lining the graves of military veterans from the colonial era to the twentieth century. At the southbound end of the cemetery, was Oh’s grave, not far from a red brick walkway that led to a square, brown-stoned veterans’ memorial. Oh’s grave was shaded by a pine tree and surrounded by magenta-colored geraniums lying in direct sunlight. And like the 1958 newspaper articles I read about Oh’s death, his headstone was entitled, “To Turn Sorrow into Christian Purpose.”<sup>692</sup> After having perused several newspapers, letters, and photographs about the short life of 26-year-old Oh in the archives, my experience of sitting on a bench beside his grave in such a patriotic environment made this dissertation go full circle.

Next to Oh’s headstone, was a stone marker describing in trite detail how Oh lost his life to “hoodlums” who only wanted “35 cents.” Predictably, the obituary silenced the “hoodlums” who murdered Oh and suggested that the crime the eleven black youth

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<sup>691</sup> James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, (New York: Dial Press, 2013), 8.

<sup>692</sup> Seymour Shubin, “Memorial to a Murder,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (June 11, 1961): 108, Newspapers.com, accessed May 28, 2019, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31329497/pittsburgh\\_postgazette/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31329497/pittsburgh_postgazette/).

committed was senseless because Oh was “bludgeoned” for pocket change.<sup>693</sup> The murder of Oh was an unprovoked tragedy, but the obituary ignored the larger picture of this crime. Beyond the teenagers’ motive of robbery and murder to acquire money for admission to a party in the desegregating, middle-class neighborhood of Powelton Village was a bigger story of social rejection and exclusion. It was a story of rage and rebellion birthed from socioeconomic ostracism and stigma based on race, class, and residency.<sup>694</sup> Philadelphia’s history of segregation, poverty, slum housing, job discrimination, and racially-biased policing partially created the social conditions for the murder to occur. Nevertheless, the life experiences of the black teenage boys from Mantua who killed Oh were largely ignored and forgotten.

Throughout Philadelphia’s history, the murders of innocent victims like Oh and citizens’ fear of crime triggered social and political action from community activists, police, and politicians to prevent crime. Although it has been more than sixty years since Oh’s death, American society still has not fully realized the correlation between inequality and poverty-induced crime. Today, no one seems to care about issues of poverty, crime, and violence unless someone of high esteem or youthful innocence is murdered. So many human tragedies in our communities could be prevented if our society were truly equal and fair for all.

As sociologist Alex S. Vitale argues in his 2017 book, *The End of Policing*, poverty, racial segregation, and the lack of socioeconomic opportunities for youth and adults are

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<sup>693</sup> “DA to Ask Adult Trials for 8 Teeners in Killing,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (April 29, 1958): 3, Newspapers.com, accessed May 28, 2019, [https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31330151/the\\_philadelphia\\_inquirer/](https://www.newspapers.com/clip/31330151/the_philadelphia_inquirer/).

<sup>694</sup> Frederic Thrasher, *The Gang: A Study of 1,313 Gangs in Chicago*, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1927), 286-292.

the roots of crime, including gang violence.<sup>695</sup> In 1958, Oh's parents offered the city of Philadelphia five hundred dollars to create a rehabilitation fund for the eleven boys who robbed and murdered their son. As Oh's father Ko-Phung Oh explained, "I understand that American laws are very strict, but we will make every effort to achieve our objectives and help these errant youth."<sup>696</sup> Moreover, Oh's family donated the funds because they suspected that the dysfunctional nature of racial ostracism and poverty influenced the teenagers to commit the crimes without considering the moral and legal consequences of their actions.

The issues of double victimization and racial capitalism disproportionately affect poor communities of color in regard to crime and policing. Poor, black communities often face double victimization through government neglect and economic exploitation, but are also blamed for crime, real and imagined. City governments like Philadelphia's have had the ability to reduce crime through poverty alleviation initiatives like decent housing, education, and jobs, for generations, but they refuse to wholeheartedly do so and instead invest in the police department and corrections to curb crime. This system of racial capitalism involving the overfunding of police and the underfunding of social welfare programs that could lift people out of poverty creates social conditions leads to higher rates of poverty-induced crime, black incarceration, black unemployment, and black recidivism.<sup>697</sup> Today, Philadelphia's poverty rate is 25.7%, with some neighborhoods in places like North Philadelphia experiencing up to 45% of its residents living below the

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<sup>695</sup> Alex S. Vitale, *The End of Policing*, (Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2017), 170-175.

<sup>696</sup> "Father and 4 Uncles of Oh Raise Funds for His Killers," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, (May 12, 1958).

<sup>697</sup> Heather Ann Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History," *The Journal of American History* 97.3 (December 2010):703-734.

poverty line.<sup>698</sup> Additionally, it is no coincidence that these are neighborhoods still suffering from concentrated poverty, high crime, and over-policing. While much of our issues with crime, gangs, and gun violence can be solved with stricter gun control laws and regulations, defunding (and possibly in the near future, abolishing) the police and reappropriating the city government's budget spending to finance widespread poverty alleviation programs could yield major benefits for Philadelphians.

Like New York and Chicago, Philadelphia's city budget allocates tremendous amounts of money to police. For Philadelphia's 2021 Fiscal Year, the city's budget was approximately \$4.9 billion with \$760 million slated to fund the police department.<sup>699</sup> Since 1976, Philadelphia's city budget has decreased its funding of the police from 19% to 15.2%, but the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) has often expropriated more money from the city through the settlement of criminal cases involving officers who engaged in corruption, sexual assault, and police brutality.<sup>700</sup> Additionally, numerous cases of police corruption and police brutality against nonwhite people continue to be a major cause of citizens' animosity and mistrust for the police, especially those from the black community.<sup>701</sup> For example, on May 13, 1985, a police helicopter bombed the 6221

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<sup>698</sup> Melissa Romero, "How Philly's poverty rate has changed since 1970, by district," *Curbed Philadelphia*, January 30, 2017, accessed October 3, 2020, <https://philly.curbed.com/2017/1/30/14439888/philadelphia-poverty-rate-by-neighborhood>.

<sup>699</sup> Carl Sullivan and Carla Baranauckas, "Here's how much money goes to police departments in largest cities across the U.S.," *USA Today* (June 26, 2020), accessed February 10, 2021, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2020/06/26/how-much-money-goes-to-police-departments-in-americas-largest-cities/112004904/>. The City of Philadelphia describes its fiscal year as operating from July 1st through June 30th.

<sup>700</sup> James T. Wooten, "Philadelphia Also Facing Crisis of Funds Shortage," *NY Times* (May 20, 1976), accessed February 10, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/05/20/archives/philadelphia-also-facing-crisis-of-funds-shortage-philadelphia-also.html>. In 1976, Philadelphia's city budget was approximately \$788 million with \$152.5 million allotted for the police department. That year, Philadelphia had approximately 8,600 police officers. As of 2020, Philadelphia has a police force of 7,366 with 6,577 being officers while the remainder are civilian employees.

<sup>701</sup> Pennsylvania Crime Commission, *Report on Police Corruption and the Quality of Law Enforcement in Philadelphia*, St Davids: Pennsylvania Crime Commission, (March 1974).

Osage Avenue rowhome of John Africa, the founder of the back-to-nature, black liberation group, MOVE, after he and his followers refused to vacate the city-condemned home when 500 police officers attempted to issue arrest warrants. The incident resulted in eleven deaths, the destruction of 65 homes, and 253 residents left homeless.<sup>702</sup> In an effort to take responsibility for the tragedy, Mayor W. Wilson Goode appointed the Philadelphia Special Investigation Commission (PSIC) to investigate the incident and Police Commissioner Gregore Sambor resigned from his position that November. The city would also promise to restore homes to the 253 residents who were displaced in a 23-year long ordeal that would inevitably be marked with shoddy construction, extensive litigation, and an eventual payout of \$5.4 million to 36 families who had to find new homes elsewhere.<sup>703</sup> Moreover, Goode and Sambor's original statement that MOVE was a "terrorist organization" that was not only a nuisance to Cobbs Creek homeowners, but also a threat to police was a memorable narrative of police violence that still haunts the city today.<sup>704</sup> A year after the MOVE bombing, the Philadelphia Police Study Task Force conducted a survey on citizens' perceptions of the police and found that only 53% of African Americans gave a favorable rating of the department.<sup>705</sup> The survey also revealed that many Philadelphians, black *and* white, held animosity toward the police because they

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<sup>702</sup> Frank Trippett, "It Looks Just Like a War Zone," *Time*, (June 24, 2001), accessed December 15, 2017, <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,141842,00.html>.

<sup>703</sup> John L. Puckett, "The Long Shadow of the MOVE Fire," *West Philadelphia Collaborative History*, accessed February 11, 2021, <https://collaborativehistory.gse.upenn.edu/stories/long-shadow-move-fire>.

<sup>704</sup> John Ismay, "35 Years After MOVE Bombing That Killed 11, Philadelphia Apologizes," *NY Times* (Nov 13, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/13/us/philadelphia-bombing-apology-move.html>. On November 12, 2020, Philadelphia's City Council adopted Resolution No. 20060900, in which the city formally apologized for the MOVE bombing and recognized May 13th as an annual day of "observation, reflection and recommitment" to reconciliation, justice, and harmony.

<sup>705</sup> Police Study Task Force, *Philadelphia and Its Police: Toward a New Partnership, A Report by the Police Study Task Force*, (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Task Force, 1986), 164.

witnessed officers engaging in excessive force, use of illegal drugs, and receipt of free meals, gifts, and sexual favors from criminals.<sup>706</sup>

More recently, police corruption specifically has been a serious and expensive issue in Philadelphia. From 2011 to 2019, there were approximately 170 cases of police misconduct in which the FOP sought to have cases dismissed, criminal charges reduced, and officers reinstated for crimes they allegedly committed on and off-duty.<sup>707</sup> As a result of this extensive litigation, the City of Philadelphia spent \$5 million for arbitration to review the criminal cases of accused officers, \$4 million to settle federal lawsuits involving fifteen policemen, and \$1.2 million in retroactive pay and other payments to officers who were fired and later reinstated.<sup>708</sup> Additionally, since 2015, Philadelphia spends an average of \$10 million each year to settle police misconduct claims.

Nevertheless, as *Philadelphia Inquirer* journalist Larissa Mogano summed up the financial burden in her October 2019 article on the financial and social costs of an uncontrolled police department, “Philly’s police misconduct cases drain taxpayer money,”: “These hefty bills take city money that could help renovate our schools or staff our libraries. Even worse, these payouts do not lead to a safer community for Philly residents, and they fracture communities’ faith in the more trustworthy and law-abiding officers.”<sup>709</sup>

By the end of 2019, the Institute for Survey Research at Temple University (ISR) conducted a survey of Philadelphians’ opinions of the police which suggested a

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<sup>706</sup> Police Study Task Force, *Philadelphia and Its Police*, 177.

<sup>707</sup> Larissa Mogano, “Philly’s police misconduct cases drain taxpayer money,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Oct 1, 2019), accessed February 10, 2021, <https://fusion.inquirer.com/opinion/commentary/police-misconduct-arbitration-philadelphia-settlements-back-pay-20191001.html>.

<sup>708</sup> “Philly’s police misconduct cases drain taxpayer money.”

<sup>709</sup> “Philly’s police misconduct cases drain taxpayer money.”

significant number of residents mistrusted the police based on their personal experiences with officers. The survey revealed that 43% of residents rated police officer conduct as “excellent or good” and only 26% of residents rated the police’s ability to prevent crime as “excellent or good.”<sup>710</sup> Among people of color, 22% of black residents and 21% of Hispanic residents rated police officer conduct as “poor” in comparison to 10% of white residents who expressed a similar sentiment in the survey.<sup>711</sup> Nevertheless, as in previous decades, the historically troubled reputation of the police department along with recent accounts of police misconduct have led many residents to feel uncomfortable and at times unsafe around police.

Racial capitalism driven by poverty-induced crime is also secretly embedded in the tax system. Police officers are guaranteed a well-paying job as long as crime exists, however the City of Philadelphia has also granted members of the FOP tax privileges that economically disadvantage the city, which relies heavily on the tax base fed by middle-class residents. For example, in 2010, the FOP petitioned and won the right for police officers to live outside of the city limits if they have served on the force for at least five years. In 2012, the revised residency requirement went into effect and as a result approximately 15% of the city’s 6,577-officer police force has moved to the suburbs, taking their tax dollars with them.<sup>712</sup>

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<sup>710</sup> The Institute for Survey Research at Temple University (ISR), “City of Philadelphia 2019-2020 Philadelphia Resident Survey Report,” Phila.gov, accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.phila.gov/media/20200113092058/2019ResidentSurvey-FINAL.pdf>.

<sup>711</sup> “City of Philadelphia 2019-2020 Philadelphia Resident Survey Report.”

<sup>712</sup> Claudia Vargas and Chris Palmer, “Philly eased police residency requirements. Then the exodus began,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Oct 6, 2017), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.inquirer.com/philly/news/politics/philly-police-officers-residency-policy-requiring-city-schools-20171006.html>. The Philadelphia Fire Department’s union earned a residency right similar to the police in 2016.



In 2017, Mayor Jim Kenney rejected the FOP's desire to completely eliminate the residency requirement on the grounds that the loss of property taxes from middle-class municipal workers like police officers would harm government funds to schools: "They should hang in the neighborhoods and help make the schools better. All of our residents need to pitch in and help with our schools."<sup>713</sup> At that time, the average police officer earned a salary of \$75,000 a year. Although Philadelphia had approximately 30,000 municipal workers, many of which were confined to the residency requirement, the loss of even 1,000 middle-class taxpayers would plunge the city further into debt.<sup>714</sup> In fact, since 1976, the city has often frozen the salaries of municipal workers along with increased wage, property, and business taxes as short-term, debt solutions that would inevitably burden tax-payers in Philadelphia.<sup>715</sup> The other financial privileges uniquely granted to the FOP are an abundance of paid overtime, and 2.5% salary raise at the time of an officer's contract renewal. Benefits such as these for police, particularly the salary increase which is 0.5% higher than other city workers, have historic precedence as the former president of the AFSCME District Council 47 union supporting municipal workers in non-profits and higher education, Thomas Paine Cronin, stated in a June 2020 interview: "They [police] were always given favored status. It's just part of the tradition in Philadelphia."<sup>716</sup>

Since June 2020, the municipal power of the police and the FOP has been called into question following mass protests against police brutality nationwide. The catalyst for

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<sup>713</sup> "Philly eased police residency requirements. Then the exodus began."

<sup>714</sup> "Philly eased police residency requirements. Then the exodus began."

<sup>715</sup> "Philadelphia Also Facing Crisis of Funds Shortage."

<sup>716</sup> David Gambacorta, Juliana Feliciano Reyes, William Bender, and Sean Collins Walsh, "Philly's police union spent decades amassing power. Reforms could cut its clout," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Oct 6, 2017), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.inquirer.com/news/pennsylvania/philadelphia-police-union-reform-george-floyd-fop-john-mcnesby-20200619.html>.

these protests were the police killings of several unarmed black people over the span of four months: Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd. The murder of George Floyd was particularly shocking because it was caught on camera and witnessed by several onlookers.<sup>717</sup> On May 25, 2020, Floyd, a 46-year-old black Minneapolis man was arrested for counterfeiting, handcuffed, and later fatally restrained by Officer Derek Chauvin, who pinned his knee to Floyd's neck for approximately nine minutes and twenty-nine seconds as he laid in the street. The other three officers at the scene, J. Alexander Kueng, Thomas Lane, and Tou Thao, assisted Chauvin in the deadly incident by helping to restrain Floyd, delaying the call for medical assistance, and preventing witnesses from intervening in the situation.<sup>718</sup>

Nationwide outrage over Floyd's death led to weeks of multiracial and multi-generational protests organized by groups like the Black Lives Matter movement in countless cities that included Los Angeles, Washington, DC, Portland, and Atlanta. In Philadelphia, thousands of protestors marched and chanted for justice down city streets while also holding rallies and calling for police reform that included slogans promoting the "defunding" and "abolishing" of the police.<sup>719</sup> In the midst of these peaceful protests were individuals who engaged in physically and verbally assaulting police, looting local businesses, and the destruction of public and private property that included defacing

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<sup>717</sup> Bill Chappell, "Chauvin And 3 Former Officers Face New Charges Over George Floyd's Death," *NPR* (June 3, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/03/868910542/chauvin-and-3-former-officers-face-new-charges-over-george-floyds-death>.

<sup>718</sup> Evan Hill, Ainara Tiefenthäler, Christiaan Triebert, Drew Jordan, Haley Willis, and Robin Stein, "8 Minutes and 46 Seconds: How George Floyd Was Killed in Police Custody," *NY Times* (May 31, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html>.

<sup>719</sup> Brittany Shammass, Kim Bellware, and Brady Dennis, "Murder charges filed against all four officers in George Floyd's death as protests against biased policing continue," *The Washington Post* (July 3, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/06/03/george-floyd-police-officers-charges/>.

structures with graffiti and the burning of buildings and police cars throughout the city.<sup>720</sup>

Similar to the 1960s protests and riots against police brutality, some police conflated rioters and looters with peaceful protestors and chose to use unnecessary and brute force against the individuals they encountered during these demonstrations. Before the National Guard arrived to “restore order” and protect property and city landmarks, some police manhandled and beat protestors on city streets while others dispersed crowds marching on the Vine Street Expressway and in the residential neighborhoods of West Philadelphia with teargas, rubber bullets, and Long Range Acoustic Devices (LRAD).<sup>721</sup>

Additionally, there were even incidents of white vigilantism against black protest of police brutality in Philadelphia. In one event, a “group” of nearly 100 white male residents from Fishtown sought to “protect” their neighborhood *and* police by walking the streets armed with baseball bats to deter “looters” and “rioters” from “destroying” their community.<sup>722</sup> In some instances, white police officers permitted the vigilantes to roam the neighborhood with “household weapons” while a few other officers took photos, did high-fives, and made friendly conversation with the armed men. Not only did these Fishtown vigilantes conflate protestors with rioters but their use of dog whistle terms like “looters” enabled them to justify their desire to protect their majority-white neighborhood from the “spillage” of black rioting and vandalism happening majority-

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<sup>720</sup> Max Marin, “‘Unprepared’ Philly police violated use-of-force and tear gas policies during summer protests, review finds,” BillyPenn.com (Dec 23, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://billypenn.com/2020/12/23/philadelphia-police-tear-gas-protests-vine-street-expressway-report/>.

<sup>721</sup> Max Marin, “Military psy-ops or ATM explosions? Nightly booms spur conspiracy theories in Philly,” BillyPenn.com (June 4, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://billypenn.com/2020/06/04/military-psy-ops-or-atm-explosions-nightly-booms-spur-conspiracy-theories-in-philly/>.

<sup>722</sup> Anna Orso, Allison Steele, William Bender, and Vinny Vella, “Philly police stood by as men with baseball bats ‘protected’ Fishtown. Some residents were assaulted and threatened,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (June 2, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.inquirer.com/news/fishtown-george-floyd-protests-philadelphia-bats-hammers-20200602.html>.

black communities that they saw televised on the news.<sup>723</sup> However, the only “imminent threat” to their neighborhood was a multiracial and multigenerational group of Black Lives Matter protestors who wanted to march through Fishtown to protest the white supremacy that has often been undergirded by police power. Interestingly, the George Floyd-inspired mass protests against police brutality in part convinced Philadelphia’s City Council to reassess the city’s relationship with police. On June 18, 2020, city council announced that it was reducing the police department’s 2021 budget by \$33 million to finance a police oversight commission, body cameras and implicit-bias training for police, and install therapists to assist police in mental health crisis emergency calls. The budget revision also appropriated approximately \$26.35 million toward healthcare, affordable housing, anti-poverty initiatives, job training, and the arts.<sup>724</sup>

Despite the gradual acts of reconciliation city government has made in recent months, the relationship between police and black citizens in Philadelphia continues to be tumultuous. On October 26, 2020, the police shooting of 27-year-old Walter Wallace Jr. in Cobbs Creek caused outrage that sparked new peaceful protests but also violent uprisings over the issue of police brutality.<sup>725</sup> On that day, Wallace, a sufferer of bipolar disorder, had threatened his family with a knife and later went out into the street carrying the weapon. A relative called 911 for medical assistance to calm Wallace down as he was experiencing a mental health episode, but police were sent to 61st and Locust Streets to deescalate the situation instead.

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<sup>723</sup> Anna Orso, “A day after Fishtown residents walked the streets with baseball bats, protesters return to the neighborhood,” *Philadelphia Inquirer* (June 2, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.inquirer.com/news/philadelphia/fishtown-philadelphia-protest-george-floyd-20200602.html>.

<sup>724</sup> “Philadelphia City Council approves \$4.8 billion budget in 14-3 vote,” *6ABC News* (June 25, 2020), accessed February 10, 2021, <https://6abc.com/philadelphia-budget-philly-city-council-2021/6269386/>.

<sup>725</sup> “Philadelphia rocked by fresh unrest after police shooting,” *BBC.com* (Oct. 28, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-54710244>.

When police arrived at the scene, Officers Sean Matarazzo and Thomas Munz ordered Wallace to put down the knife eleven times before they shot him ten times in the shoulder and chest.<sup>726</sup> The shooting caused much uproar because Wallace was killed by police in front of his mother and neighbors who repeatedly begged officers not to shoot him because he was mentally ill. Over the course of a week following the shooting, many Philadelphians peacefully protested in the streets about the death of Wallace. However, there were also uprisings and rioting that resulted in 225 residents arrested, 60 officers injured, 617 incidents of looting, 18 vehicles damaged, and 24 ATM explosions throughout the city.<sup>727</sup> Both the peaceful protest and the uprisings had an impact on the city, but the anti-police uprisings which caused property damage and financial loss sent a clear message to city leaders that citizens would relentlessly demand police accountability in officer-involved shootings.

Immediately following the police shooting Walter Wallace Jr., city officials and the police department attempted to regain citizens' trust by first apologizing to the Wallace family. Then the police department released police body cam footage of the shooting to the public to demonstrate that the police department was committed to transparency about the details of the case. The other actions city officials and the police took to gain Philadelphians' trust in handling the incident were discussing police-community relations with residents on the street and in town hall meetings along with pledging to equip more police officers with tasers so that they had a non-deadly weapon they could use to subdue

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<sup>726</sup> "Philadelphia rocked by fresh unrest after police shooting."

<sup>727</sup> Patricia Madej, "Three arrests related to unrest made since Friday," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Oct 31, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, <https://www.inquirer.com/news/philadelphia/live/philadelphia-police-shooting-walter-wallace-jr-protests-curfew-body-cam-national-guard-20201031.html>.

a suspect. However, the death of Wallace called more attention to the idea of defunding the police.

The fact that police were the first responders to Wallace instead of medical officials was a prime example of how the institution of policing is ill-equipped to handle certain emergency calls that are assigned to them. In fact, the entire situation involving Wallace was reminiscent of the February 1971 police shooting of Roger Allison, a mentally-ill black man, who was killed by police for threatening them with a whiskey bottle.<sup>728</sup> But Allison's death in 1971 was not the only precedent in which police were ill-equipped for an emergency call and mishandled the situation. On November 7, 1980, an incident of excessive force against an insane man occurred when police attempted to arrest 38-year-old James Willis for murdering a construction worker in Brewerytown.<sup>729</sup> Willis, a former patient at the Fairview State Hospital for the Criminally Insane, died in police custody after more than 100 firefighters and police used high pressure water hoses and nightsticks respectively to subdue him.<sup>730</sup> Although police spent two hours trying to convince Willis to put down the knife he used to stab 44-year-old Walter Starks to death, the fire department's use of water hoses to force Willis to surrender was a racialized police control tactic similar to that used by Southern police departments during peaceful protests for desegregation during the Civil Rights Movement. Moreover, the recent police

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<sup>728</sup> Liz Spikol, "I've had public mental health outbursts like Walter Wallace Jr. I'm alive because I'm white," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (Oct 30, 2020), accessed February 11, 2021, [I've had public mental health outbursts like Walter Wallace Jr. I'm alive because I'm white. | Opinion \(inquirer.com\)](https://www.inquirer.com/opinion/2020/10/30/i-ve-had-public-mental-health-outbursts-like-walter-wallace-jr-i-m-alive-because-i-m-white/).

<sup>729</sup> Michael Viola, *Click!: Life Through the Lens of a News Photographer*, (Philadelphia: Five Corners Press, 1998).

<sup>730</sup> "Crime: Bizarre Battle Leaves Two Dead in Philadelphia," *Jet*, (Nov. 27, 1980): 16, accessed May 8, 2015, <https://books.google.com/books?id=30EDAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA16&dq=james+willis+and+philadelphia&hl=en&sa=X&ei=miVOVZanHMqgNpHngagE&ved=0CB4Q6wEwAA#v=onepage&q=james%20willis%20and%20philadelphia&f=false>.

shooting of Wallace not only increased anti-police sentiment throughout the city, but also bolstered the movement to defund police and reappropriate funds to social welfare programs and resources supporting social work and rehabilitation. However, city officials and law enforcement are gradually learning how powerful and influential citizens' relentless protest against racial injustice and police brutality can be. On April 20, 2021, national news syndicates announced that former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was found guilty of murdering George Floyd in May 2020. Countless Philadelphians, like many others throughout the country, expressed relief that an officer was found accountable for police brutality. This event came at a time when mass protest finally forced law enforcement and the justice system to reckon with America's roots in white supremacy and anti-blackness and take action to prevent police abuse, brutality, and misconduct in the future.

Nearly two years since I sat beside Oh's gravesite pondering this dissertation, I have come to the realization that despite Oh's "unachieved future," his life had purpose and meaning. Oh may not have been able to control when and how he died in 1958, but his life as a loving, hard-working student with a passion for politics and international relations inspired societal change that benefited many others. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, most city officials were hesitant to fully invest in social welfare and poverty alleviation programs while numerous community activists like Herman Wrice, Falaka Fattah, and Harvey Wearing would risk their lives to stop police, gang, and gun violence in Philadelphia. Many anti-gang organizations like Herman Wrice's Young Greats Society, Arlen Specter's Safe Streets, Inc., and Philadelphia's Leaders of Tomorrow (PLOT) involved community activists, city officials, and police working together to keep

youth away from crime with education, recreation, and job training.<sup>731</sup> However, most of these organizations were short-lived and only a few from the era remain, namely Queen Mother Falaka and David Fattah's House of Umoja.<sup>732</sup> Today, organizations like Cradle2Grave, Mothers-in-Charge, Sultan Jihad Ahmad Community Foundation, and CeaseFire are combining education, rehabilitation, and community service to combat community violence.<sup>733</sup> Moreover, if we are ever to solve police brutality, gang activity, gun violence, and crime in Philadelphia and cities across the nation, it must start with people who acknowledge the negative effects of institutional racism and poverty and be willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to fight for change.

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<sup>731</sup> Tyree Johnson, "Men Needed to Share Skills with Boys," *Philadelphia Daily News*, (May 15, 1974).

<sup>732</sup> Amelia Winger, "West Philadelphia's House of Umoja Strengthens Hope and Community," *Global Philadelphia*, (April 17, 2020), GlobalPhiladelphia.org, accessed October 26, 2020, <http://globalphiladelphia.org/news/west-philadelphia%E2%80%99s-house-umoja-strengthens-hope-and-community>.

<sup>733</sup> Michaela Althouse, "7 Philly Violence Prevention Programs to Know and Support This MLK Day," *Philadelphia Magazine*, (Jan. 18, 2019), PhillyMag.com, accessed October 26, 2020, <https://www.phillymag.com/news/2019/01/18/philadelphia-gun-violence-prevention-programs/>.



## EPILOGUE

Today, over-policing and defunded social welfare programs have not only led to anti-police sentiment, generational poverty, and high crime among poor people of color in Philadelphia, but also in other major cities like New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. This monograph on Philadelphia is representative of a national story of how throughout American history new migrants to racially-segregated and class-stratified societies have often been scapegoated for the structural problems that existed in society long before they arrived. Even today, the pattern of othering and criminalizing newcomers as harbingers of crime is a common racial script projected on immigrants of color.<sup>734</sup> Under the presidency of Donald J. Trump (2017-2021), conservative politicians have used news reports and statistics about gang killings to gain public support for strict, xenophobic immigration policies barring non-whites, the poor, and the undocumented from entrance into America. President Trump himself even referred to immigrants who crossed the Mexican-border as “murderers” and “rapists,” at a June 2015 press conference, approximately seventeen months before he was elected.<sup>735</sup> In fact, during Trump’s presidency he made more than 400 immigration policy changes, which included denying Mexican and Central American refugees asylum from political and drug cartel violence, separating migrant children from their families and detaining them at Southwest border, and proposing to build a 450-mile border wall to bar migrants from entering the United

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<sup>734</sup> Natalia Molina, *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 7.

<sup>735</sup> Ben Fox, “Trump leaves mark on immigration policy, some of it lasting,” *AP News* (Dec. 30, 2020), accessed February 9, 2021, <https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-donald-trump-politics-immigration-united-states-a5bfcbea280a468b431a02e82c15a150>.

States.<sup>736</sup> One case that nativists used as justification for this xenophobic campaign was the murder of fifteen-year-old Lesandro "Junior" Guzman-Feliz. Guzman-Feliz was a Dominican American teenager and sophomore at Dr. Richard Izquierdo Health & Science Charter School who was attacked with machetes by five members of the Los Sures subset of the Trinitarios gang outside of a bodega in Bronx, New York on June 20, 2018.<sup>737</sup> The murder of Guzman-Feliz became national news and fuel for nativists to promote the false idea that new migrants were "bringing" gangs like the Salvadoran-American gang, Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13), drugs, and crime that threatened the lives of American citizens.<sup>738</sup> Nativists, politicians, and police later referenced the incident to justify tough on crime policing and the banning and deportation of Latin American immigrants, especially from Mexico and Central America.

As the intricate details of Guzman-Feliz's life were reported in the news media, many citizens were incensed that an innocent teen unaffiliated with a gang was targeted and stabbed to death by fourteen gang members. Additionally, when journalists released news reports to the public about Guzman-Feliz's membership in New York Police Department's (NYPD) Explorers, a police-sponsored program that trains youth interested in a future career in law enforcement, many tough on crime advocates expressed outrage and referenced the murder case to bolster their platform. Some nativists even took to social media to express their grievances over the entrance of alleged "swarms" of

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<sup>736</sup> "Trump leaves mark on immigration policy, some of it lasting."

<sup>737</sup> Jewel Wicker, "15-Year-Old Lesandro Guzman-Feliz Mourned by Hundreds in the Bronx" *Teen Vogue* (June 26, 2018), accessed February 10, 2021, <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/15-year-old-lesandro-guzman-feliz-mourned-by-hundreds-in-the-bronx>.

<sup>738</sup> AJ+, Twitter Post, March 1, 2018, 6:44 PM, AJ+ on Twitter: "Officials say President Trump is over-exaggerating the threat MS-13 poses. The @nytimes reports FBI agents are arresting members of Dominican gang Trinitario (and calling them Salvadoran) to inflate numbers. Is he using the gang to scapegoat immigrants? <https://t.co/UlubRwUwNR>" / Twitter.

undocumented Latinx immigrants into America who committed violent crimes in groups and gangs. In fact, eleven days after the murder of Guzman-Feliz, a man on Twitter who describes himself as a “patriot” and “life member” of the National Rifle Association (NRA) created a post arguing that tough on crime policing and immigration reform would keep American society safe from violent crime with the message: “ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] has been arresting and disarming thousands of illegal gang members from gangs like MS13, Barrios 18, Mexican Mafia and Trinitario’s. #BuildTheWall #ICE.”<sup>739</sup> Nevertheless, sentiments like these alienated Latinx immigrants, promoted the false trope that immigrants from Latin America were criminals and gang members, and offered support for the Trump Administration’s initiatives to build a border wall and pass strict immigration laws.

Since the 2018 gang murder of Guzman-Feliz, the trope of a “roving gang” has been used to not only criminally scapegoat Latinx immigrants, but more specifically Dominicans (foreign and American born) for rising violent crime along the East Coast. Interestingly, as Dominicans have become new migrants to places like New York and New Jersey in the late twentieth century, they have also been scapegoated as harbingers of crime. Between 1961 to 1978, there was mass immigration from the Dominican Republic to America following the assassination of dictator Rafael Trujillo, who established an authoritarian government complete with countless human rights violations against citizens, activists, and Haitian migrants who resisted and defied his 31-year

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<sup>739</sup> MikeyLikesIt, Twitter Post, July 1, 2018, 7:14 AM, <https://twitter.com/dougree/status/1013380202641154049>.

political regime.<sup>740</sup> The Dominican Republic was politically and economically unstable after Trujillo's death particularly when a civil war between anti-Trujillista "rebels" and Trujillista "loyalists" took place from April to September 1965.<sup>741</sup> The U.S. intervened in the conflict by providing military support to the rebels who eventually won the war and facilitating the process of the 1966 election which resulted in Joaquín Balaguer being elected as president. Although the country had an elected president, Dominicans continued to immigrate to America from 1966 to 1978 because Balaguer became a violent dictator supported by the U.S. government.<sup>742</sup> The immigrants who left the Dominican Republic came to America to start a new life where they were safe from political repression, could trade rural life for an urban lifestyle, and live in a country "marketed" as economically stable. Prior to 1978, Dominican immigrants to the U.S. were of upper and middle-class status, while after 1980 they were of mostly working-class background. At that time, approximately 20,000 to 30,000 Dominicans were legally immigrating to the mainland U.S. by plane each year while some impoverished immigrants travelled illegally by boat and settled in Puerto Rico.<sup>743</sup> This turbulent history of Dominican immigration to America, the majority working-class background of migrants, and their Afro-Latino racial heritage inevitably shaped the stereotypical socioeconomic identity Americans had of the Dominican migrants who arrived in their cities and neighborhoods.

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<sup>740</sup> Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof and *The New York Times*, "Answers About Dominicans in New York," CityRoom.Blogs.NYTimes.com (March 18, 2009), accessed February 9, 2021, [Answers About Dominicans in New York - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/18/nyregion/answers-about-dominicans-in-new-york.html).

<sup>741</sup> Major Jack K Ringler and Henry I. Shaw, Jr, "US Marine Corps Operations in the Dominican Republic April-June 1965," (Washington, D.C.: *Historical Division USMC*, 1970).

<sup>742</sup> "Answers About Dominicans in New York."

<sup>743</sup> "Answers About Dominicans in New York."

In New York, Dominicans were a growing population in the city when thousands of immigrants settled in neighborhoods like Manhattan's Washington Heights, Brooklyn's Cypress Hills, and Queens' Corona.<sup>744</sup> Like other ethnic communities, criminal activity existed but one Dominican group that received much infamy in the New York/New Jersey region was the gang, Trinitarios. Although the Trinitarios was founded in the late 1980s by American-born Dominican inmates from New York's Rikers Island Jail, members of the gang were often stereotyped as "illegal immigrants" and the source of violent crimes like robbery and murder throughout New York.<sup>745</sup> This trope coincided with the continued growth of the Dominican population in America.

After 2010, there was a major increase of Dominicans settling along the East Coast in cities like New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Miami, and Orlando while the populations of other Latino groups were declining or stationary. In New York, Washington Heights remained the "epicenter" of the Dominican community known as "Little Santo Domingo", but the Bronx was steadily growing to be another prominent neighborhood for Dominican New Yorkers.<sup>746</sup> In 2014, the Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies at City University of New York (CUNY) announced that for the first time in New York's history Dominicans were the largest Hispanic group, surpassing Puerto Ricans, with a population over 747,000.<sup>747</sup> Furthermore, when the murder of Guzman-

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<sup>744</sup> Leonard Greene, "Dominicans now outnumber Puerto Ricans in NYC," *NY Post* (Nov. 13, 2014), accessed February 9, 2021, <https://nypost.com/2014/11/13/dominicans-now-outnumber-puerto-ricans-in-nyc/>.

<sup>745</sup> Robert Gearty and Joe Kemp, "Cops Clobber Vicious Gang," *New York Daily News* (Dec. 8, 2011): 28, Newspapers.com, accessed February 10, 2021, [Clipping from Daily News - Newspapers.com](#).

<sup>746</sup> "Dominicans now outnumber Puerto Ricans in NYC."

<sup>747</sup> "Dominicans now outnumber Puerto Ricans in NYC."

Feliz occurred in 2018, Dominicans were not only labelled as new migrants, but also potential harbingers of crime as New York's racial and social dynamics were changing.

The racial identity of Dominicans being a mixture of European, African, and Indigenous ancestry plays a particular role in the ethnic group being criminally scapegoated by nativists and police through the use of a "violent gang trope." Blackness, along with foreignness in the sense of language, culture and national origin, have long been associated with criminality in an American society where white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant culture is the norm.<sup>748</sup> Furthermore, despite the fact that the Trinitarios comprised only 5% of New York's gang members with approximately 3,181 members in 2011, politicians and NYPD have often used the gang trope to scapegoat Dominicans for violent crime in the city by publicizing its crackdown on the Trinitarios' activity.<sup>749</sup> For example, during Summer 2020 New York City's 52nd Police Precinct often used new media outlets and social media to announce the disarmament and arrests of specifically Trinitario gang members for violent crimes with posts like: "Following a shots fired incident on Bainbridge Avenue, your public safety auto deployed with precision and arrested a Trinitario gang member in possession of this firearm [handgun pictured]. #3rdGunOfTheDay."<sup>750</sup> The goal of this form of police transparency was to convince a wide range of Bronx residents that police were dedicated to protecting citizens from the same gang that murdered Guzman-Feliz two years prior. In essence, it was vindication

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<sup>748</sup> Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

<sup>749</sup> Jan Ransom and Al Baker, "Inside the Trinitarios: How a Gang Feud Led to the Death of a Teenager," *NY Times* (July 18, 2018), accessed February 10, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/18/nyregion/trinitarios-gang-bronx-stabbing.html>.

<sup>750</sup> NYPD 52nd Precinct, Twitter Post, July 29, 2020, 11:45 AM, <https://twitter.com/NYPD52Pct/status/1288500851305259008>.

for what Senator Gustavo Rivera stated at Guzman-Feliz's 2018 memorial: "We not only failed Junior, but we failed these young people who believed their only option is to join a group that will force them into this violence."<sup>751</sup> Although the NYPD's public reports of gang arrests were intended to fulfill a promise to New Yorkers that a murder like Guzman-Feliz's would never happen again, those announcements also indirectly triggered citizens' fear that the gang still existed in their neighborhood and enticed them into believing that tough on crime policing was the best method to end gang violence.

For decades, community activists, journalists, and police have supported anti-gang and anti-delinquency programs for youth to preemptively stop violent crime. However, there is typically inadequate financial support from the government for operating effective social welfare and rehabilitation programs to prevent poverty-induced crime especially during recessions, pandemics, and other nationwide periods of economic downturns. In many ways, the trends we see in American society today regarding racial stereotypes and crime narratives have historical precedents. This dissertation on African American migration North and the racial stereotypes that developed in retaliation to racial desegregation and societal change in cities like Philadelphia is one of those historical precedents. Nevertheless, this dissertation encourages the reader to imagine the bigger picture of how even today racial stereotypes and tropes are often used to alienate newcomers, scapegoat them for social issues like crime, and promote political agendas that maintain racial and class hierarchies in demographically-changing communities.

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<sup>751</sup> "15-Year-Old Lesandro Guzman-Feliz Mourned by Hundreds in the Bronx."

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## APPENDIX

**Table 1: Philadelphia's Population by Race, 1900-1980**

Demographics Table of white and black populations in Philadelphia.

<b>Census Year</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>White Population (Number and Percent)</b>	<b>African American/Black Population (Number and Percent)</b>
1900	1,293,697	1,229,673 (95.1%)	62,613 (4.8%)
1910	1,549,008	1,463,371 (94.5%)	84,459 (5.5%)
1920	1,823,779	1,688,180 (92.6%)	134,229 (7.4%)
1930	1,950,961	1,728,806 (88.6%)	219,599 (11.3%)
1940	1,931,334	1,678,577 (86.9%)	250,880 (13.0%)
1950	2,071,605	1,692,637 (81.7%)	376,041 (18.2%)
1960	2,002,512	1,467,479 (73.3%)	529,240 (26.4%)
1970	1,948,609	1,278,717 (65.6%)	653,791 (33.6%)
1980	1,688,210	983,084 (58.2%)	638,878 (37.8%)



**Table 2: Chart of Active, Sporadic, and Dormant Gangs in Philadelphia as of May 13, 1968 (Printed in Phineas M. Anderson's *The Gang Unit*)**

(Source: Gang Control Unit, Philadelphia Police Department)

<b>Gang</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Foes</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
2-4 Counts	25th to 27th; Passyunk-Snyder	Hill; P.J.'s	25	Sporadic
P.J.'s	25th to 27th; Passyunk-Snyder (Claims same territory as 2-4 Counts)	2-4 Counts; 22nd & Greenwich	30	Active
5th Street	3rd to 7th Street; Federal to South	13th Street	45	Active
13th Street	9th to Broad Street; Christian-South	All gangs in South Phila.	60	Active
5th and Porter	4th to 6th Street; Moore to Porter	7th Street	25	Sporadic
7th Street	Mifflin to Wolf; 5th to 8th Street	5th and Porter	30	Active
15th and Clymer Street	Broad to 17th; Washington-South	13th Street	30	Active
19th and Dorrance Street	19th to 20th Street; Reed to Dickinson Street	None at this time	40	Sporadic
21st and Titan Street	19th to 22nd Street; Reed-Washington Avenue	13th Street	20	Active
22nd and Greenwich Street	22nd to 24th Street; Wharton-Watkins Street	Roads; P.J.'s	25	Active
22nd and South Street	17th to 23rd Street; Washington-South	13th Street	45	Active

**Table 2: Chart of Active, Sporadic, and Dormant Gangs in Philadelphia as of May 13, 1968 (continued)**

<b>Gang</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Foes</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
20th and Carpenter Street	22nd to 25th Street; Washington-Carpenter Street	None at this time	20	Sporadic
2-T-6	26th to 30th Street; Wharton to Moore	Taylor Street; P.J.'s	25	Sporadic
30th and Tasker Street	26th to 33rd Street; Morris to Reed Street	Any gang from outside their area	30	Sporadic
Roads	25th to 30th Street; Wharton to Grays Ferry Avenue	13th Street; Taylor Street	25	Active
Taylor Street	23rd to 25th Street; Tasker to Federal Street	Roads; 2-T-6	25	Sporadic
Wine	20th to 21st Street; Christian to Washington Avenue	22nd and South Street	20	Sporadic
20th Street	20th to 22nd Street; Gerritt to Watkins	Have several corners but will band together	70	Active
10th and Carpenter Street	10th to 9th Street; Washington to Christian Street	Any gang in South Phila.	10	Sporadic
12th and Poplar	8th to 12th Street; Green to Girard Avenue	Moroccans; 12th and Oxford	50	Active
T.G.O.'s	Broad to 13th Street; Fairmount to Parrish	12th and Poplar	20	Sporadic
16th and Wallace Street	Broad to 20th Street; Fairmount to Spring Garden Street	Moroccans	20	Active

**Table 2: Chart of Active, Sporadic, and Dormant Gangs in Philadelphia as of May 13, 1968 (continued)**

<b>Gang</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Foes</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
Moroccans	Broad to 20th Street; Fairmount to Girard Avenue	12th and Poplar; 16th and Seybert	75	Active
16th and Dauphin	Broad to 18th Street; Lehigh to Susquehanna Avenue	21st and Norris	30	Active
21st and Norris	19th to 22nd Street; Susquehanna to Berks Street	16th and Dauphin; Valley	40	Active
28th and Montgomery	24th to 27th Street; Columbia to Montgomery	Valley; DeMarco's; 28th and Oxford; 30th and Norris	50	Active
2-9-D's	28th to 32nd Street; Norris to York	30th and Norris	30	Active
30th and Norris	30th to 33rd Street; Susquehanna to Montgomery	Valley; 32nd and Turner; 28th and Montgomery	30	Active
32nd and Turner	31st to 33rd Street; Columbia to Oxford	30th and Norris	25	Active
L.T.'s	29th to 33rd Street; Huntingdon to Lehigh	Village	45	Dormant
Village	24th to 27th; Dauphin to Cumberland	L.T.'s	60	Sporadic
Valley	Broad to 26th Street; Columbia to Diamond Street	15th and Oxford; 30th and Norris	250	Active

**Table 2: Chart of Active, Sporadic, and Dormant Gangs in Philadelphia as of May 13, 1968 (continued)**

<b>Gang</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Foes</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
15th and Oxford	Broad to 18th Street; Columbia to Jefferson Street	16th and Montgomery; 21st and Montgomery; 19th and Montgomery	20	Active
DeMarco's	20th to 25th Street; Thompson to Columbia Avenue	21st and Montgomery; 28th and Oxford	45	Active
19th and Harlan	18th to 20th Street; Jefferson to Columbia Avenue	Valley; 21st and Montgomery	30	Active
16th and Seybert	Broad to 18th Street; Girard to Jefferson Street	Moroccans; 12th and Poplar	40	Active
2-4-R'S	24th to 25th Street; Oxford to Jefferson	28th and Oxford	25	Sporadic
28th and Oxford	22nd to 32nd Street; Girard to Oxford Street	DeMarco's; 24th and Redner	20	Active
M.M.F.	8th to Broad Street; Lehigh to Clearfield	Zulu Nation	30	Active
Camac and Butler	10th to Broad Street; Erie to Hunting Park	None at this time	20	Sporadic
Uptown Norris	6th to 10th Street; Somerset to Allegheny	None at this time	50	Sporadic
8th and Diamond	6th to Broad Street; Berks to York Street	8th and Oxford; Zulu Nation	100	Active

**Table 2: Chart of Active, Sporadic, and Dormant Gangs in Philadelphia as of May 13, 1968 (continued)**

<b>Gang</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Foes</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
8th and Oxford	5th to Broad Street; Jefferson to Berks	8th and Diamond; 12th and Poplar	60	Active
Zulu Nation	Front to 7th Street; Columbia to Lehigh	M.M.F.; 8th and Diamond	200	Active
Stars	2nd to 5th Street; Diamond to Huntingdon	None at this time	50	Dormant
Soul Diplomats	2nd to 5th Street; Diamond to Huntingdon	None at this time	25	Sporadic
Sommerville	Chew Avenue to 21st Street; Chelten to Ogontz Avenue	Dogtown; Haines Street	200	Active
Dogtown	Gorgas Lane to Walnut Lane; Chew to Germantown Avenue	Sommerville; Haines Street	75	Active
Pulaski Town	Queen Lane to Chelten Avenue; Pulaski to Wissahickon Avenue	Sommerville; Haines Street	30	Dormant
Haines Street	Germantown Avenue to Belfield Ave.; Walnut Lane to Chelten Avenue	Dogtown; Sommerville; Brickyard	60	Active
Brickyard	Penn to Logan Street; Germantown Avenue to Rubicam Street	Haines Street	40	Sporadic

**Table 2: Chart of Active, Sporadic, and Dormant Gangs in Philadelphia as of May 13, 1968 (continued)**

<b>Gangs</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Foes</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
Clang	68th Avenue to 65th Avenue; Ogontz to Broad Street	Sommerville	75	Active
15th and Venango	Broad to 17th Street; Erie to Tioga Street	M.M.F.; 21st and Westmoreland	35	Active
23rd and Atlantic	Hunting Park Avenue to Ontario; 21st to 23rd Street	21st and Westmoreland	30	Active
21st and Westmoreland	Broad to 22nd Street; Lehigh Avenue to Westmoreland	23rd and Atlantic; 15th and Venango	50	Active
39th and Aspen	39th to Union Street; Aspen to Brown	36th and Market; Empires; 41st and Brown; 43rd and Pennsgrove	35	Active
Theta Phi Omicrons	33rd to 34th Street; Haverford to Mantua Avenue	36th and Market	20	Active
36th and Market (This gang moved but still carries the old corner's name)	51st and Sansom	39th and Aspen 34th and Haverford	40	Active
Empires	35th to 36th Street; Haverford to Wallace	39th and Aspen	20	Active
41st and Brown	41st Street - Fairmount-Brown	39th and Aspen	20	Active
43rd and Pennsgrove	40th to 43rd; Westminster to Mantua Avenue	39th and Aspen; June and Parrish	15	Active

**Table 2: Chart of Active, Sporadic, and Dormant Gangs in Philadelphia as of May 13, 1968 (continued)**

<b>Gang</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Foes</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
Coast	57th to 60th Street; Spruce to Market Street	Moons; Cedar Avenue	30	Active
Cedar Avenue	55th to 57th Street; Baltimore to Cedar	Coast; Creeks; 49th and Woodland	25	Active
49th and Woodland	48th to 50th Street; Upland to Chester Avenue	Cedar Avenue	30	Sporadic
60th and Webster	59th to 60th Street; Christian to Pine	Creeks; 49th and Woodland	20	Active
Moons	58th to 63rd Street; Market to Jefferson	Coast	50	Active
June and Parrish	June to 48th Street; Parrish to Brown	43rd and Pennsgrove	20	Dormant
Lansdowners	54th to 58th Street; Lancaster to Lansdowne	Moons	20	Sporadic
Creeks	61st to 63rd Street; Cobbs Creek Parkway to Christian	Cedar Avenue; Coast	20	Dormant

**Table 3: Chart of Additional Gangs in Philadelphia as of April 1970 (Printed in Phineas M. Anderson's *The Gang Unit*)**

(Source: Youth Conservation Services, Philadelphia Welfare Department)

<b>Gang</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Foes</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
31st and Reed	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
20th and Dickinson Streets	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
2-S-6	26th and South Streets	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
2-E-6	26th and Earp Streets	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
2-M-1	21st and Morris Streets	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Hill Gang	31st and Mifflin Streets	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Toppers	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Main Streeters	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Black Bridge	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Centaurs	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Counties	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
CC Counts	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
31st and Montgomery Avenue	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
28th and Oxford Streets	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
31st and Cumberland Streets	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Cambria Streeters	20th and Cambria Streets	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown



**Table 3: Chart of Additional Gangs in Philadelphia as of April 1970 (continued)**

<b>Gang</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Foes</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
Cool World Valley	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
58-W's	58th and Willows	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Wallace Streeters	12th and Wallace Streets	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Twine Debs of Soul	Chelten and Ardleigh Streets	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Da Nang Delta	Chelten and Ardleigh Streets	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Black Volunteer Society	13th and Fitzwater Streets	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Last Siders	Roxborough	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
32nd and Haverford Avenue	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
58th and Whitby Avenue	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
58th and Chester Avenue	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Mill Creek Area	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
42nd and Mantua Avenue (Girls)	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
23rd and Diamond Streets	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
25th and Diamond Streets	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

**Table 3: Chart of Additional Gangs in Philadelphia as of April 1970 (continued)**

<b>Gang</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Foes</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Status</b>
Upsetters - 24th and Master (Girls)	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Fishtown-Lutheran Center Minis (Girls)	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Fishtown-Lutheran Center Minis (Boys)	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Venice Islanders	Northwest Philadelphia	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Mayfair Area (Boys)	Northwest Philadelphia	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Mayfair Area (Girls)	Northwest Philadelphia	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
3-T-0	South Philadelphia	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
7th and Morris Streets	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
2nd and Harps Streets	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Hawthorne Area (Girls)	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Wilson Park (Girls)	--	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

**Table 4: Philadelphia Spending to Fight Crime**

(Source: *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, “Billions for Safe Streets Yield Failure, Fear, Fury,” September 11, 1977.)

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Fiscal 1970</b>	<b>Fiscal 1976</b>
Police	\$80 million	\$152.5 million
Prisons	8.6 million	18.1 million
Defender Association	1.2 million	3.2 million
Sheriff	1.9 million	3.6 million
District Attorney	2.2 million	6.0 million
Clerk of Courts	1.4 million	2.5 million
Courts	15.5 million	39.8 million
Youth Study Center	1.6 million	3.0 million
Juvenile Commitment	3.0 million	5.7 million
Citizens Crime Prevention	--	1.6 million
Total	\$115.4 million	236 million

**Table 5: Pennsylvania Spending to Fight Crime**

(Source: *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, “Millions for Safe Streets, and Crime Still Climbs,” March 10, 1974.)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Law Enforcement</b>	<b>Corrections</b>	<b>Courts</b>	<b>Total</b>
1969	\$968,000	\$349,000	\$85,000	\$1,427,000
1970	\$4,598,000	\$2,778,000	\$1,383,000	\$10,590,000
1971	\$6,757,000	\$9,176,000	\$2,286,000	\$22,276,000
1972	\$6,908,000	\$12,112,000	\$2,811,000	\$26,469,000
1973	\$9,512,000	\$13,052,000	\$3,724,000	\$30,715,000

**Table 6: Gang Related Homicides in Philadelphia, 1965-1976**

(Source: *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, May 23, 1976.)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Homicides</b>
1962	1
1965	13
1966	14
1967	12
1968	30
1969	45
1970	30
1971	43
1972	39
1973	43
1974	32
1975	15
1976	3

**Table 7: Police Apprehensions Made Under Operation FIND (as of November 1971)**

<b>Crime</b>	<b>Number Apprehended</b>
Bank Robbery	12
Other Armed Robberies	59
Rape and Kidnap	1
Homicide	3
Assault with Intent to Kill	9
Burglary	11
Auto Theft	2
Vehicles Recovered without Occupants	42

Source: *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, November 1971.

**Table 8: Top Three National Police Department Salaries by City (1971)**

<b>City</b>	<b>Starting Annual Police Salary</b>
Los Angeles	\$10,105
Chicago	\$9,600
Philadelphia	\$9,578

Source: *Philadelphia Inquirer*, “Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months,” March 21, 1971.

**Table 9: National Police Department Strength and Overtime Expenditures by City (1971)**

<b>City</b>	<b>Police Force Strength</b>	<b>Estimated Annual Overtime Budget</b>
New York City	29,000	\$7 million
Los Angeles	8,991	\$6 million
Chicago	12,500	N/A; Compensatory time off
Philadelphia	7,409	\$5.5 million
Pittsburgh	1,600	\$500,000
Baltimore	4,283	\$460,000

Source: *Philadelphia Inquirer*, “Police Department Overtime Runs \$6.3 Million in 7 Months,” March 21, 1971.

**Figure 1: Story Map of Gangland Philadelphia, 1945-1979:** <https://arcg.is/1nbPDP0>