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Crime Capital:
Public Safety, Urban Development, and Post-Civil Rights Black Politics in Atlanta

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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
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Abstract

Crime Capital examines a central paradox in the post-Jim Crow African American experience: the advancement of black elected officials to positions of power, particularly in urban settings, and the simultaneous entrenchment of economic inequality in black communities. It argues that in response to rising crime rates and the shifting needs of increasingly mobile global capital, Atlanta's emergent black political class advanced punitive public safety and development policies that were undergirded by the black liberal reform tradition. This tradition was characterized by a commitment to personal responsibility, family values, capitalism, and order. In doing so, black political leaders reimagined the reformist principles that emerged out of the late nineteenth century to fit the material and ideological landscape of 1970s and 1980s America.

Crime Capital provides new insights into the evolution of black politics and U.S. politics broadly since the 1960s. First, it advances our understanding of the nuanced reasons why black political leaders constructed punitive crime control policies that criminalized marginalized people and acquiesced to urban development plans that displaced poor black urban dwellers. In situating these leaders within a tradition of black reformist politics in which property ownership and individual responsibility were held as means to black advancement, it shows that their responses to the crises of the 1970s developed within organic black political traditions. Second, this project intervenes into narratives of the rightward turn in national politics by shifting the focus away from Republicans in suburbs in the 1960s and toward Democrats in cities in the 1970s and 1980s. It suggests that the public safety and development policies that would become definitive of "New Democrat" politics in the 1990s were first tested and contested in cities in crisis.

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Acknowledgements

"People who need people are the luckiest people in the world."

-Barbra Streisand

I didn't really understand Barbra Streisand's "People" until I began writing this dissertation. I'm independent often to a fault, but writing this dissertation has shown me that scholars are people who need people. This process has humbled me; it has encouraged me to seek the help of others, to allow myself to be uplifted by friends, and to share my thoughts even at their most inchoate. It has made me a better historian, a better friend, and a better person.

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List of Abbreviations

AAPL	Afro-American Patrolmen's League
ACVB	Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau
AEDC	Atlanta Economic Development Corporation
AHA	Atlanta Housing Authority
AUL	Atlanta Urban League
AWAC	Atlanta Women Against Crime
AADA	Auburn Avenue Development Association
AAMA	Auburn Avenue Merchants Association
AAMPA	Auburn Avenue Merchants and Professionals Association
AARC	Auburn Avenue Revitalization Committee
CAP	Central Atlanta Progress
CAS	Central Atlanta Study
CAT	Crime Analysis Team
CBD	Central Business District
CJCC	Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission
DLC	Democratic Leadership Council
ICDC	Inner City Development Corporation
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
SAFE	Safer Atlanta for Everyone
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Council
STOP	Committee to Stop Children's Murders

Introduction

When former Atlanta mayor Maynard Jackson died of a heart attack at the age of sixty-five in June 2003, Atlantans packed the city's civic center to pay their final respects to the city's first black mayor. During the nearly three-hour televised funeral, Atlanta's political elite, along with former president Bill Clinton and iconic members of the civil rights movement such as Jesse Jackson, Coretta Scott King, and John Lewis, eulogized Jackson, whose election they insisted marked the dawn of a new "New South." Mayor Shirley Franklin claimed that Jackson had "transformed Atlanta into an international city"[1] Lewis described Jackson as one of the "founding fathers of the New Atlanta, New South, and New America."[2] Coretta Scott King called him "a potent force that helped to turn Dixie into the Sunbelt."[3] Clinton recounted his elation at hearing of Jackson's election because he "realized we could do it differently and better."[4] Clinton received a standing ovation when he joked, "[Jackson] saw how much good affirmative action did for well-connected white folks and he thought it ought to be tried for other people as well."[5]

Jackson's death marked the passing of another icon of the first generation of big city black mayors. Chicago's first black mayor, Harold Washington, had died in 1987. Cleveland's Carl Stokes, the first African American elected to govern a major city, had died in 1996, while Detroit's Coleman Young followed in 1997. Tom Bradley of Los Angeles

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[1] Funeral of Maynard Jackson, "Shirley Franklin (address)." C-SPAN, Atlanta, Georgia, June 28, 2003.

[2] Funeral of Maynard Jackson, "John Lewis (address)."

[3] Funeral of Maynard Jackson, "Coretta Scott King (address)."

[4] Funeral of Maynard Jackson, "Bill Clinton (address)."

[5] Ibid.

would die a year later, in 1998. These figures, along with other black mayors such as Richard Hatcher and Kenneth Gibson, personified a moment of great hope and anticipation following the triumphs of the civil rights movement. Jackson, the first black mayor of a major southern city, represented a changing nation that would perhaps finally allow African Americans full participation in economic and political life. Black urban dwellers elected them with the hope that city leadership would at last be responsive to their needs. These politicians represented a historic moment in the history of black America, particularly in a southern city like Atlanta. It marked the first time since Reconstruction that black southerners were able to elect members of their own communities to political office.

At the same time, however, cities throughout the United States were reeling with changing economies marked by deindustrialization, capital flight, shrinking federal aid, and rising unemployment rates. The social landscape was changing as well, as white flight and capital flight, population loss, increasing rates of poverty, and skyrocketing crime rates devastated urban centers. While this story of decline is often told with postindustrial cities in the North and Midwest as common settings, these shifts also occurred in Sunbelt capitals like Houston, Miami, and Atlanta.[6] By the late 1970s, federal funding to cities was shrinking and

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[6] For narratives on urban decline in the North and Midwest, see Kim Phillips-Fein, *Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics*. 2017; Robert Curvin, *Inside Newark Decline, Rebellion, and the Search for Transformation* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2014); Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Jefferson Cowie, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class*. New York: New Press, 2012; Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City* (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 2004); Henry Louis Taylor and Walter B. Hill. *Historical Roots of the Urban Crisis African Americans in the Industrial City, 1900-1950* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Michael Peter Smith, and Joe R. Feagin, *The Bubbling Cauldron Race, Ethnicity, and the Urban Crisis*, Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 1995; Richard A. Cloward and Frances Fox Piven, *The Politics of Turmoil; Essays on Poverty, Race, and the Urban Crisis* (New York: Vintage Books, 1975).

cities became increasingly reliant on municipal bonds and foreign downtown property investments to sustain city services. As Atlanta sought to become the "world's next great international city," it joined other urban centers in competition for increasingly mobile global capital. City leaders also sought to grow Atlanta's economy by developing its convention and tourism industries. But international investors and tourists were increasingly disturbed by Atlanta's reputation as a high crime city and the seeming social instability of the city.

The challenges that black leaders in Atlanta faced were myriad, and their responses to them do not fit easily into the categories and assumptions that scholars have brought to the study of post-civil rights black leadership. Scholars who have examined this first generation of black elected officials have often focused on battles over affirmative action and minority business enterprise, as well as economic development in declining urban centers.[7] But these black mayors and their black allies on city councils, commissions, and within city departments ushered in more than just minority hiring. Maynard Jackson and African Americans serving in Atlanta's urban regime transformed black politics, not only in their affirmative action policies but also with their approach to issues of crime and punishment,

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[7] See, for example, Alton J. Hornsby, *Black power in Dixie: A political history of African Americans in Atlanta* (Gainesville, Fl.: University Press of Florida, 2009); J. Phillip Thompson, *Double Trouble: Black Mayors, Black communities, and the Call for a Deep Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Thomas D. Boston, *Affirmative Action and Black Entrepreneurship* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Adolph L. Reed, *Stirrings in the Jug: Black Politics in the Post-Segregation Era*. Minneapolis (Minn.): University of Minnesota Press, 1999; Gary Pomerantz, *When Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn: The Saga of Two Families and the Making of Atlanta* ((New York: Scribner, 1996), Clarence Stone, *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946-1988* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1988).

public safety, and public order, which was an enormously fraught and politicized issue in the closing decades of twentieth century America.

In response to rising rates of crime and the concomitant threat to city's economic development, Atlanta's emergent black political class advocated punitive public safety procedures undergirded by notions of order, personal responsibility, family values, and the sanctity of capital. It might appear, initially, that the black political class was appropriating the rhetoric and principles of the burgeoning New Right. However, black political leaders were actually drawing upon a distinct black reformist tradition that had long existed in Black Atlanta.

In their response to the economic and social crises of the era, black political leaders returned to the reformist principles that emerged in the decades following Reconstruction, during the onset of the Jim Crow era. Both the post-Reconstruction South and the post-civil rights era South were characterized by backlash to the expansion of civil rights for African Americans and the growing retrenchment of the state. In both these moments, black political leadership responded to crisis by calling for black self-reliance, economic development, political pragmatism, and the strengthening of black institutions, such as the community and the black family.

I call this ideology the black liberal reform tradition, rather than black conservatism. The black liberal tradition shares many of the tenets that many identify as black conservatism including faith in free enterprise, property rights, personal responsibility, uplift, family values, political pragmatism, and a belief in the American Creed. African American liberals and African American conservatives share many of the same core beliefs because both are bounded in an overarching tradition of American liberalism that values individual liberty and

the freedom of the market. Where they differ is on the question of the continuing significance of racial discrimination in American public life. Conservatives minimize the importance of ongoing racial discrimination, whereas liberals believed that race and racism still affect black outcomes significantly. Subsequently, they disagree on the extent to which the state should be involved in rectifying racial discrimination and inequality. Black liberals believed the state should do whatever necessary to ensure that all Americans have an equal opportunity to gain individual freedom, while conservatives put the onus on black people themselves. Nonetheless, black conservatives and black liberals agree on the basic premises of the liberal tradition; that is, society functions best when people have the opportunity to seek individual self-fulfillment.[8]

Furthermore, I use the word "reform" to emphasize how black leadership sought to uplift black individuals and black communities and to reform American political and social

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[8] Nonetheless, this dissertation also illustrates how the categories of liberal and conservative do not work quite so neatly in examining African American politics. Political scientist Michael C. Dawson argues, "Black political thought challenges the boundaries and core tenets of the American creed." Indeed, black political thought reveals the tensions that continue to exist within the American liberal tradition, tensions that are born out in the black liberal reform tradition as well. Furthermore, I use the word "reform" to emphasize how black leadership sought to uplift black individuals and black communities and to differing extents sought to reform American political and social systems. For more on liberalism, conservatism, and black political thought see Leah Wright Rigueur, *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016); N. D. B. Connolly, *A World More Concrete: Real Estate and the Remaking of Jim Crow South Florida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); Jeffrey Helgeson, *Crucibles of Black Empowerment: Chicago's Neighborhood Politics from the New Deal to Harold Washington* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 2014); Christopher Bracey, *Saviors or Sellouts The Promise and Peril of Black Conservatism, from Booker T. Washington to Condoleezza Rice* (New York: Beacon Press 2009); Devin Fergus, *Liberalism, Black Power, and the Making of American Politics, 1965-1980* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2009); Michael C. Dawson, *Black Visions: The Roots of Contemporary African-American Political Ideologies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Angela D. Dillard, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner Now?: Multicultural Conservatism in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Gayle T. Tate and Lewis A. Randolph. *Dimensions of Black Conservatism in the United States: Made in America* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

systems.[9] Their political project, therefore, was twofold; their targets of political action were both internal and external to the black community. They were also reformist because they not seeking to substantially transform Black America or the United States society as whole. Rather, black reformists worked to improve both sectors, by helping Black America to live up to its potential and White America to live up to its promise. I refer throughout out the text to the individuals in Atlanta's black community engaged the reform project as the black reform leadership or black reformists. These figures worked in the leadership of community institutions, as well as community political and civic organizations such as the Atlanta Urban League and the city's chapter of the NAACP. By the 1970s, black reformists would use city and state government to effect reformist change.

The black liberal reform tradition emerged in the aftermath of Reconstruction out of three primary institutions in Black Atlanta—the Black Church, black businesses, and the black liberal arts colleges that comprised the Atlanta University Center. It was characterized by several tenets that evolved in response to broader political and cultural shifts in black and national politics. First, it was defined by a strong communitarian ethos, grounded in a commitment to community self-help. Government on the federal, state, and the local level could not be counted on to protect black rights and thus the black community had to depend on itself. As Jim Crow segregation relegated African Americans to particular sections on the city's west side and a few blocks just east of downtown, black Atlantans created tight-knit, self-sustaining communities that relied on their own ingenuity. Black reformers also believed that these communities should be populated by traditional, bourgeois family structures. Reformers initially had a moral commitment to traditional family structures but by

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the 1970s, the push for strong black families was less moralistic and more concerned with pragmatism and efficiency, reflecting the logics of "breadwinner liberalism."[10] They advocated traditional families less for biblical reasons than because two-parented-headed households were more financially stable and offered better support to children.

Black reformers also upheld the saving power of black capital, a sentiment that in the African American community can be traced back to the leadership of Booker T. Washington, particularly property and business proprietorship.[11] Black ownership, they believed, offered economic independence which protected African Americans from the whims of white racism. Thus, in advancing civil rights in the 1950s and 1960s and when responding to the crime issue in the 1970s, black political reformers privileged the development and protection of black owned capital above all else.

They also believed in the idea of uplift, the notion that the enlightened middle class was responsible for leading the black masses toward collective race advancement.[12] This

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[10] Historian Robert Self defines breadwinner liberalism as the "mainstay of liberal thinking and the cornerstone of the Keynesian consensus," which "sought to assist the breadwinner's efforts in the market." Breadwinner liberalism privileged the employment of men, and particularly by the Great Society, black men in the labor market. Self argues, "Liberals stressed the need to rehabilitate the male breadwinner—through social programs, remunerative market work, and military service—and return him to his proper place at the head of the family." Thus, black reformist leaders contended that black male-headed households would be more stable given the realities of the labor market. See Robert Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy Since the 1960s* (New York: Macmillan, 2010), 18-25.

[11] On black entrepreneurship see Quincy T. Mills, *Cutting Along the Color Line: Black Barbers and Barber Shops in America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013; Tiffany M. Gill, *Beauty Shop Politics African American Women's Activism in the Beauty Industry*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010); Adam Green, *Selling the Race: Culture, Community, and Black Chicago, 1940-1955* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Walker, Juliet E. K. *The History of Black Business in America: Capitalism, Race, Entrepreneurship*. New York: New York University Press, 1998.

[12] On uplift see Tiffany M. Gill, *Beauty Shop Politics African American Women's Activism in the Beauty Industry*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010); Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill,

evolved from the explicitly elitist, paternalist logic of the talented tenth in the early twentieth century toward a still elitist faith in expertise and rationality during the New Deal era, to a more egalitarian, though still paternalistic ethos by the late 1960s. Though they often adopted a populist rhetoric, they were generally distrustful of the participatory democracy advocated by activists in the 1960s and preferred to provide guidance and leadership to the black masses.

Consequently, the black reformers privileged political pragmatism over idealism. They preferred negotiated advancements of civil and political rights with progressive whites who were committed to preserving Atlanta's reputation as a racially moderate, business-friendly city. They were particularly wary of direct confrontation, particularly the style of direct action made famous by Atlanta's own native son, Martin Luther King, Jr. When it came to challenging segregation, black political leaders adopted a gradualist approach, pursuing what Tomiko Brown-Nagin has called pragmatic civil rights. This was a strategy that, "privileged politics over litigation, placed higher value on economic security and rejected the idea that integration (or even desegregation) and equality were one and the same."[13] Figures from the Black Church such as Martin Luther King, Sr. and William Holmes Borders, along with civic leaders such as John H. Calhoun and John Wesley Dobbs,

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NC: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2006); Allison Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together: Community Formation in Black Atlanta, 1875-1906*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004; Michele Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny After Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Martin Anthony Summers, *Manliness and Its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Kevin K. Gaines, *Uplifting the Race Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Higginbotham, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920 Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993)

[13] Tomiko Brown-Nagin, *Courage to Dissent: Atlanta and the Long History of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 2.

negotiated the gradual expansion of civil rights in back door deals with Atlanta's white political and business elites who wanted to the avoid public relations fiasco of Little Rock, New Orleans, and Birmingham.

Lastly, and most significantly for this study, the black reformist elite believed in orderliness in all spheres of black public and private life. In the late nineteenth century, order in black homes and communities was a matter of life or death. Notions of black disorderliness and lack of self-control were offered as excuses for violence against black people and institutions. While incidents like the Atlanta Race Riot of 1906 showed that even the most respectable and orderly institutions were vulnerable to racial violence, middle class black reformers took it upon themselves to create and maintain order in black communities to protect both black bodies and, in many more cases, black capital, from harm whether from racist white mobs or from lawless, black hoodlums.

The black reform tradition was challenged by the participatory and democratic politics of the civil rights movement and black power moment. Younger activists, several of whom had grown up among Atlanta's black middle class, criticized the elitist and gradual approach of their predecessors and instead who advocated direct campaigns and the protection of the human rights of African Americans. The more radical segment of the student movement who comprised the Atlanta chapter of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee sought to upset established hierarchies of power in black Atlanta by organizing poor residents to demand economic justice in the short-lived Vine City project.[14] Yet, the reform tradition survived these threats to its hegemony. By the mid-1960s, towering black figures such as John Wesley Dobbs and A.T. Walden, longtime leader of the NAACP,

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[14] See Winston A. Grady-Willis, *Challenging U.S. Apartheid: Atlanta and Black Struggles for Human Rights, 1960-1977* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 79-113.

had died and were replaced by younger figures such as Leroy Johnson, Vernon Jordan, and Lonnie King, who continued to privilege equal opportunity and non-discrimination over redistribution. Unlike in cities such as Newark and Detroit, where many black elected officials had backgrounds in labor organizing or community development programs, Atlanta's earliest elected officials were educated at the same schools, attended the same churches, and were members of the same fraternal organizations as previous generations of civic leaders.

While there were continuities between older black civic leaders and the first generations of the black political class, the black political class that would emerge in the 1970s and 1980s were shaped by their historical context. The Voting Rights Act enfranchised hundreds of thousands of new voters and black figures entered elected office, in many cases for the first time since Reconstruction. While earlier black civic leaders could only seek to pressure politicians to address the concerns of black citizens, black elected officials had access to positions where they could set governing agendas and shape law and policy related to the wellbeing of black people.

The civil rights movement also transformed the terrain of what was conceived as politically possible and fostered a sense of radical political possibility at the dawn of the post-civil rights era. Black activists in organizations such as the National Welfare Rights Organization and Jesse Jackson's Operation PUSH sought to advance the civil rights movement beyond the narrow focus on equal access and non-discrimination. Notions of economic justice, structural change, and radical social transformation, for example, underlay the goals and directions of the 1972 National Black Political Convention in Gary. The black political agenda at the dawn of the post-civil rights movement was far to the left of the

political mainstream. Atlanta's black political class, then, governed in a political landscape irrevocably changed by the rights revolution. Thus, when Maynard Jackson entered elected office as vice mayor of Atlanta in 1969, he embraced a progressive tone in which he called for a Marshall Plan for cities that would provide billions of dollars to improve urban housing, public schools, hospitals, and employment.

Nonetheless, when Jackson became mayor of Atlanta four years later, the political and economic climate in Atlanta and nationally had shifted. Richard Nixon declared the urban crisis officially over in 1973, and with his "New Federalism" gave states, rather than cities, greater control over the distribution of the ever-shrinking federal grants. Jackson also contended with an antagonistic, though influential business coalition that initially perceived the mayor's commitment to affirmative action as anti-business and anti-white. As business leaders worried that Atlanta was moving toward the same fate as Gary and Detroit, the Jackson administration adopted a pro-growth economic policy that used supply-side incentives to attract investors the city of Atlanta.[15]

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[15] Scholars of Atlanta have made much of the conflicts between the Jackson administration and the business community, particularly Jackson's first term. They have aptly demonstrated how Jackson's commitment to affirmative action and minority business contracting at first alienated the white business community before they eventually acquiesced and supported the concept in the 1980s. Yet these conflicts obscure the Jackson administration and the business community's shared commitment to pro-growth economic development. Jackson's insistence upon diversifying the pool of municipal contractors reflects his black liberal reformist belief that African Americans should have equal opportunity to access the market. The white business community, though stubborn at first, was eventually able to support affirmative action because they shared Jackson's commitment to capitalism. See for example Alton J. Hornsby, *Black power in Dixie: A Political History of African Americans in Atlanta* (Gainesville, Fl.: University Press of Florida, 2009); Gary Pomerantz, *When Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn: The Saga of Two Families and the Making of Atlanta* ((New York: Scribner, 1996), Clarence Stone, *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946-1988* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1988).

Furthermore, Jackson adopted as the city's new motto, "Atlanta, the world's next great international city," and worked to transform Atlanta into an international business and cultural center. Economic development, he and other black political leaders believed, was essential for the advancement of black Atlantans. Poor and working-class black Atlantans' prospects for employment and social services were contingent upon the ability of city leaders to invite private investment into the city. These investments in real estate, infrastructure, and enterprise would provide a much-needed property tax base in the city, which would provide revenue for the expansion of social services, including public schools, housing, infrastructure, and job training. They also hoped new industry would provide jobs, and would help the unemployment rate. Thus, in the 1970s, the city's boosters sought not only to expand Atlanta as a financial center, they also worked to expand the city's service economy by crafting Atlanta into a convention capital that would rival New York and Chicago. The Jackson administration expanded the international airport and convention centers, and business leaders such as developer John Portman constructed thousands of new hotel rooms and meeting spaces around the city. They worked to push Atlanta beyond its status as a regional capital to the level of a great international city.

Yet Atlanta's ability to attract both investment and tourists was contingent upon its security. In the 1970s, the city gained a reputation for crime, particularly violent crime. Crime rates in every major category increased rapidly in the early 1970s, and a panic emerged among the city's leaders.[16] Although wealthy white business owners and tourists were not likely to encounter violent crime, sensational stories of violent attacks stoked the fear of crime. Atlanta's crime crisis reached a peak when dozens of working-class black

[16] A similar panic concerning mugging emerged at the same moment in London, for example. See Stuart Hall, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (New York: Palgrave, 1978).

children were kidnapped and murdered between the summers of 1979 and 1981. Black political leaders had to respond in a way that addressed the concerns of both the white business community and working-class black residents.

The response of Atlanta's black political class to the crisis of crime reveals the endurance and the regeneration of the black liberal reformist tradition in the post-civil rights era. Black leaders in both City Hall and the Department of Public Safety advocated for reforms within the black community and assailed what they contended was a lack of order that fostered both criminality and the concomitant fear of crime. Black reformist leaders sought to impose order upon black people in potential sites of investments, where the mere presence of black bodies evoked fear and devalued surrounding property. They executed new methods of policing that would come to be recognized as order maintenance policing. They also worked to inscribe order in black public and private spaces. Black leaders also pointed to the decline of traditional black institutions, such as the church, the neighborhood, black-owned businesses, and most significantly, the family, which served as sources of order in black community life.

Focus on the black family and community institutions intensified during the crisis of Atlanta's Missing and Murdered Youth. Between 1979 and 1981, approximately twenty-nine black children and young adults were kidnapped and murdered. The children were predominantly from low-income areas; many of them had been out for errands for some pocket change or hanging out with friends without supervision. The city's black political leadership was slow to respond to the crisis and frustration and resentment grew among working class Atlantans, who argued that Jackson and the black political class did not care

about poor black children. However, as more children disappeared Jackson and Lee Brown in the Department of Public Safety were forced to respond.

In addition to creating a task force comprised of Atlanta police and detectives from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the FBI, the Department of Public instituted a host of community crime prevention programs. These programs were intended to revive community policing mechanisms that had supposedly once existed in black neighborhoods. The black reformist leaders also targeted the deteriorating black family as a cause of the crisis. Middle class black reformers suggested that the children had been kidnapped and murdered because their families, like many families in black America, were dysfunctional. The mothers of the victims, who formed an organization called STOP, countered that their children were not murdered because of their parenting, but rather they were victims of a world that cared little about poor children of color. Thus, while the mothers and their supporters sought to call attention to structural forces that made their children vulnerable to such crimes, black reformist instead emphasized the collapse of traditional black institutions, most notably the family and the neighborhood. Even after the crisis seemingly ended with the arrest and conviction of twenty-three-old black Atlantan Wayne Williams, black reformist leadership continued to argue that crime and many other social issues in the black community were the results of corrupted values and institutions in the black community.

The reformers within the black political class contended that the revival of traditional black social and economic institutions would solve many of the social and economic issues that bred crime and disorder in black communities. Primary among these institutions was black enterprise culture. Black community members had been advocating for the revitalization of the city's historic black business district, "Sweet Auburn" Avenue for

decades. When the black political class came to power, revitalization advocates hoped that the city would finally provide the financial support needed to jump start the project. Yet, political officials and community leaders held competing conceptions of the methods and meanings of redevelopment. While community leaders imagined a neighborhood flourishing with black businesses that would serve the community, the black political and business elite envisioned an area made secure and open for competitive, free enterprise. These disagreements ultimately stymied the revitalization process.

The debates over the future of Sweet Auburn reveal a significant tension at the heart of the black liberal reform tradition, which existed between competing emphases on the community and on the individual. On the one hand, the black reform tradition was communitarian at its core. It was premised on the notion that African Americans' shared history and racial identity bound the race together for better or worse. Therefore, the actions of black persons, black reformers believed, held broader significance for the broader race. Political scientist Michael C. Dawson deemed this notion of racial boundedness, "linked fate."[17] Yet, the liberal tradition held at its center a commitment to the freedom and rights of the individual. Thus, the notion of individual rights and responsibility existed within black liberal reformism in tension with the focus on the survival of the community. This problem was fought out most clearly in the dispute over Sweet Auburn, but also informs debates over crime, poverty, and other social issues in the black community. The competing factions did agree on one thing. Sweet Auburn needed to be made safe for development. Thus, while the redevelopment process in Sweet Auburn struggled to launch, the policing project intensified.

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[17] See Michael C. Dawson, *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African-American Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1995).

By the end of the 1980s, the black reform tradition had not only endured, but was also crucial in informing the shifting politics of the Democratic Party on a national scale. As the Democratic Party was beginning to reimagine and rebrand itself in the 1980s, its New Democrat leaders drew upon the insights, rhetoric, and policies of black urban political officials. Many of these members of the black political class, including Maynard Jackson, Andrew Young, and Vernon Jordan, served as trusted advisors to the New Democrats on issues concerning race, crime, and poverty.

This dissertation advances scholarly conversations within post-civil rights African American political history, carceral studies, and postwar United States political history. The civil rights movement and black power have dominated much of African American historiography, particularly political history. These moments, though transformative, have overdetermined the trajectory of black politics in the post-civil rights era in the historiography. In many of these narratives, black electoral politics emerges directly from the victories of the civil rights movement, particularly the Voting Rights Act of 1965. With the election of black mayors and city council members beginning in the late 1960s, black politics had purportedly matured from "protest to politics."[18] In these narratives, when black elected officials adopted tough on crime policies and pro-growth development plans that exacerbated social and economic crises in working class black neighborhoods, they deviated from the political culture that emerged from the civil rights movement. Whether these politicians sold out or were forced to make difficult

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[18] This refers of course to Bayard Rustin's 1965 essay, "From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement first published in *Commentary* magazine. See Bayard Rustin Ti*me on Two Crosses: The Collected Writings of Bayard Rustin* (New York: Cleis Press, 2015).

choices within significant constraints, the 1970s and 1980s represent a moment of decline and the failure of the promises of the civil rights movement.[19]

However, as this dissertation shows, the civil rights and black power moment of the 1960s represented an exceptional moment, a relatively brief period of interruption within the longer liberal black reform tradition. The urban black Democratic politicians of the 1970s and 1980s were less a departure from a progressive black politics than a return to an older established political tradition. Black liberal reformism proved incredibly durable and malleable, and reformers like Maynard Jackson were able to adapt the populist rhetoric and tone of the 1960s to the reformist principles.

The history of the black reform tradition also troubles the use of neoliberalism as a historical framework to explain black politics in the 1970s.[20] In recent years, several scholars

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[19] See for example Julian Maxwell Hayter, *The Dream Is Lost: Voting Rights and the Politics of Race in Richmond, Virginia* (Lexington, Kentucky : University Press of Kentucky, 2017); David Stradling and Richard Stradling, *Where the River Burned: Carl Stokes and the Struggle to Save Cleveland* (Ithaca, NY : Cornell University Press, 2015); Frederick Harris, *The Price of the Ticket: Barack Obama and the Rise and Decline of Black Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Gary Rivlin and Marc PoKempner, *Fire on the Prairie Harold Washington, Chicago Politics, and the Roots of the Obama Presidency* (Philadelphia, Pa: Temple Univ. Press, 2013); Guian McKee, *The Problem of Jobs: Liberalism, Race, and Deindustrialization in Philadelphia* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2010); Cedric Johnson *Revolutionaries to Race Leaders: Black Power and the Making of African American Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); J. Phillip Thompson, *Trouble: Black Mayors, Black Communities, and the Call for a Deep Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit?: Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003); Wilbur C. Rich, *Coleman Young and Detroit Politics: From Social Activist to Power Broker* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999); Komozi Woodard, *The Nation Within a Nation: Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) and Black Power Politics* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999); David R. Colburn and Jeffrey S. Adler, *African-American Mayors: Race, Politics, and the American City* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001); Adolph Reed, *Stirrings in the Jug: Black Politics in the Post-Segregation Era* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Robert C. Smith, *We Have No Leaders: African Americans in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996); Manning Marable, *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America* (Boston: South End Press, 1983).

[20] Neoliberalism is a notoriously slippery term that describes a variety of different spaces and developments. The most prominent definition comes from David Harvey's *A Brief History of Neoliberalism.* He argues, "Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that purposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial

have sought to track the emergence of a black neoliberal ethos that transformed African American politics beginning in the 1970s.[21] These scholars, many of them in political science, argue that political culture shifted from the "mass politics, notions of solidarity and cooperation, and collective mutual responsibility" that supposedly characterized black politics in the nineteenth century and through the first several decades of the twentieth century.[22] By the 1990s, a completely different political ethos had emerged, they argue, that was defined by "individualist-grounded, competition-driven, market values."[23] Other facets of the neoliberalization of black politics included a commitment to expertise, entrepreneurialism, free market capitalism, privatization, and self-help. However, as this study shows, many of the values that scholars have characterized as black neoliberalism, or neoliberalism broadly, have a long history in black political culture. Entrepreneurialism, self-help, and personal responsibility, for example, emerged in the nineteenth century and informed black political engagement throughout the twentieth century. Indeed, if neoliberalism represents simply the contraction of the welfare state and the conferring of responsibility for economic and social wellbeing in the hands of the

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freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade." For further discussion of neoliberalism, see Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2015); Lisa Duggan, *The twilight of equality?: Neoliberalism, cultural politics, and the attack on democracy* (New York: Beacon Press, 2012); Ray Kiely, *The New Political Economy of Development: Globalization, Imperialism, Hegemony* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2007).

[21] Leah Wright-Rigueur, "Neoliberal Social Justice: From Ed Brooke to Barack Obama," *Items: Insights from the Social Sciences,* items.ssrc.org; Michael C. Dawson, and Megan Ming Francis. "Black Politics and the Neoliberal Racial Order." *Public Culture* 28, no. 1 78 (2016); Reed Jr, Adolph. "The Post-1965 Trajectory of Race, Class, and Urban Politics in the United States Reconsidered." *Labor Studies Journal* 41, no. 3 (2016): 260-291; Lester Spence, *Knocking the Hustle: Against the neoliberal turn in black politics* (New York: Punctum Books, 2015; Lester Spence, "The Neoliberal Turn in Black Politics," *Souls* 14, no. 3-4 (2012): 139-159.

[22] Dawson, Michael C., and Megan Ming Francis. "Black Politics and the Neoliberal Racial Order." *Public Culture* 28, no. 1 78 (2016): 42.

[23] Dawson and Francis, 42.

individual, then the state that African Americans have encountered has always been a neoliberal state.

This dissertation also has implications for the study of the carceral state. Scholars in this area have examined African Americans not only as victims of discriminatory criminal justice policies, but as contributors to the punitive culture that has fostered mass incarceration.[24] Black Americans, these scholars argued, responded to the threat of rising crime rates and the destructive force of violence in their communities by calling for punitive measures, including intensified policing, mandatory maximums and minimums, and the criminalization of marijuana. While there have been fruitful disputes about the extent of black culpability, these narratives are often driven by a moral question: how could they? Scholars have sought to explain how the black political class could support such measures, how they could be complicit in "locking up their own." When contextualized within in the black reform tradition which valued personal responsibility, order, and the protection of capital, the punitive response of the African American political leadership to the crisis of crime is less surprising, though no less objectionable.

An analysis of the significance of orderliness and the sanctity of black capital within the black reform tradition also reveals how African Americans were critical in the development of

[24] James Forman, *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2017); Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From# BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Haymarket Books, 2016; Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2016); Michael Javen Fortner, *Black Silent Majority: the Rockefeller Drug Laws and the Politics of Punishment* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2015); Lester Spence, *Knocking the Hustle: Against the Neoliberal Turn in Black Politics* (New York: Punctum Books, 2015); Donna Murch, "Crack in Los Angeles: Crisis, Militarization, and Black Response to the Late Twentieth-Century War on Drugs, *Journal of American History*, Volume 102, Issue 1, 1 June 2015; Donna Murch, "Who's to Blame for Mass Incarceration," *Boston Review,* October 16, 2015, http://bostonreview.net/books-ideas/donna-murch-michael-javen-fortner-black-silent-majority; Khalil Gibran Muhammad, "Review: Black Silent Majority," *New York Times,* September 21, 2015.

order maintenance policing, a practice that employs "increased police-citizen contact as a way to create and maintain order in our urban streets and to decrease serious crime."[25] This form of policing has increasingly come under attack, with critics contending that the procedure increased police presence in lives of poor and working class people, thus expanding the reach of the carceral state and fostering the rise of mass incarceration.[26] This dissertation challenges the assumptions about the development of order maintenance policing by revealing how black elected officials in Atlanta proposed legislation that attacked symbols of disorder, particularly in commercial spaces beginning in the 1970s. Black Americans are largely missing from the literature that historicizes the emergence of such a form of policing. Scholars often point to James Q. Wilson and George Kelling's 1982 "Broken Windows" article or the rise of Rudy Giuliani in New York City as the origins of order maintenance.[27] Nonetheless, this dissertation illustrates that African Americans were making the connection between disorder and harm years before Wilson and Kelling popularized the "broken windows" idea.

Lastly, the insights of this dissertation have broader implications for the study of late twentieth century national politics, more specifically the Democratic Party. While historians have thoroughly examined the rise of conservatism within the Republican Party, they have yet to

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[25] Bernard E. Harcourt, *Illusion of Order: The False Promise of Broken Windows Policing* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009), 2.

[26] Jordan T. Camp and Christina Heatherton, eds, *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter* (New York: Verso Books, 2016); Bernard E. Harcourt, *Illusion of Order: The False Promise of Broken Windows Policing* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009); Coleman, Roy. "Images from a neoliberal city: the state, surveillance and social control." *Critical Criminology* 12, no. 1 (2004): 21-42.

[27] See Harcourt, *Illusion of Order;* Alex S. Vitale, *City of Disorder: How the Quality of Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics* (New York, NYU Press, 2008); James Q. Wilson, and George L. Kelling, "Broken Windows." *Atlantic Monthly* 249, no. 3 (1982): 29-38.

historicize the rightward turn among Democrats.[28] After Reagan's sweeping re-election in 1984, Democratic Party leaders such as Al From, Sam Nunn, and Al Gore sought to push the party away from the multicultural progressive vision represented by Jesse Jackson's campaigns toward the center. With the election of Bill Clinton, it was clear that the "Third Way" had succeeded within the Democratic Party. To observers, Clinton's commitment to free trade, welfare reform, and punitive crime control signaled a new Democratic Party, intent on beating the Republicans at their own game.[29] Yet, the experiences of black urban mayors such as Jackson and Young demonstrate that a new Democratic way of governing emerged before the Democratic Leadership Council even came into existence. This dissertation suggests that the governance of black mayors on issues of crime and economic development sheds light on how this important transformation of the Democratic Party occurred first on a municipal level in cities in fiscal and social crisis. I argue that it was within these black urban regimes that what would come to be known as New Democrat politics were first tested and contested.

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[28] See Joshua D. Farrington, *Black Republicans and the Transformation of the GOP* (Philadelpha: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016; Rigueur, Leah Wright Rigueuer, *The Loneliness of the Black Republican: Pragmatic Politics and the Pursuit of Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014; Timothy Thurber, *Republicans and Race: The GOP's Frayed Relationship with African Americans, 1945-1974* (University Press of Kansas: 2013); Kim Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York : Norton, 2009); Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer, eds., *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s* (Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press, 2008); Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, 2007); Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, 2005); Matthew Lassiter*, The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, 2005); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, 2001); Bruce Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sun Belt: Federal Policy, Economic Development and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994).

[29] Curtis Gene Atkins, "Forging a New Democratic Party: The Politics of the Third Way From Clinton to Obama," PhD Dissertation, York University, 2015); Al From and Bill Clinton. *The New Democrats and the Return to Power* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2014); Kenneth S. Baer, *Reinventing Democrats: The politics of liberalism from Reagan to Clinton* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000)

Author Toni Morrison surmised that Bill Clinton was the nation's "first black president," due to his impoverished, single-parent upbringing and the conservative reaction to his sexual transgressions. But Clinton's governing as well as the ideology and rhetoric that informed his governing were deeply informed by the black reform tradition. Clinton reframed the progressive vision of the Democratic Party, transforming the party from one of big government, entitlements, and identity politics to being a party of equal opportunity, strong communities and families, and personal responsibility.[30] He felt familiar and compelling to many black Democratic voters, not simply because he was raised by a single mother or because he played the saxophone. But rather in his rhetoric and in his tone, he echoed ideologies of the black reformist tradition, one that recognized the continuing problem of racial discrimination in American life, yet rejected more broad-based, systematic efforts to combat it.

The dissertation begins with a brief overview of the liberal reformist tradition in Atlanta's black politics and culture as it developed from the late nineteenth century to the mid-1960s. The political tradition emerged from three major social institutions in Black Atlanta: the black colleges and universities within the Atlanta University Center, the black churches throughout the city, and within the business communities on Auburn Avenue and Hunter Street. These politics were also fostered in fraternal organizations, women's clubs, and other social institutions in the black community. The liberal reform tradition evolved and responded to broader political and cultural forces from its emergence during the onset of Jim Crow in the 1880s through to the 1980s. Nonetheless, the logics of its central tenets remained. These included a faith in black enterprise and economic independence, traditional families and strong communities, personal

[30] See Curtis Gene Atkins, "Forging a New Democratic Party: The Politics of the Third Way From Clinton to Obama," PhD Dissertation, York University, 2015.

responsibility, a belief in respectability, notions of uplift, political pragmatism, and a commitment to orderliness in all spheres of public and private life.

This chapter examines how the liberal reform tradition was developed by Progressive reformers, black New Dealers, and those within the biracial governing coalition. It also investigates the challenges posed by civil rights activists, black nationalists, and welfare and housing rights activists in the 1960s. I argue that the black liberal reform ideology proved remarkably durable and malleable. The reformers who entered local and state politics in the late 1960s, including most notably Maynard Jackson, were able to adopt the democratic ethos of the civil rights movement to the logics of the reformist tradition.

The remainder of the dissertation investigates how the black reform tradition was reinvigorated and strengthened through the politics of crime control in the 1970s. Chapter two focuses on black leaders' commitment to expertise and procedure during the first crime wave between 1972 and 1974. Debates about the causes and solutions to the problem of crime, particularly so-called "black-on-black" crime, circulated throughout Black Atlanta's public sphere. Progressives in the black community members argued that the roots of crime were structural and could only be addressed by comprehensive programs that addressed housing, employment, and education. However, other more conservative community members contended that crime stemmed from pathological inadequacies among a certain sect of the black population. I argue that the Jackson administration sought to assuage those who called for structural reform and those who demanded tough, law and order approaches by focusing on structural reform within the criminal justice system, particularly the police department. A rationalized criminal procedure, the mayor believed, would effectively target those engaged in criminal activities while sparing law-abiding citizens. These reforms reveal the faith in expertise and procedure that

undergirded black liberal reformers' engagement of political issues that they perceived as social in nature.

Chapter Three examines the significance of the commitment of order among black political leaders as the city experienced another crime panic between 1979 and 1981. This crisis emerged just as city leaders were seeking to further develop the convention and tourist economy. I contend that the black governing class responded to the rising fear of crime and the need to make downtown safe for development by using city council ordinances and new zoning laws that criminalized the disorderly behavior of those most vulnerable to the city's changing economy. In this, black leaders were on the forefront of articulating and codifying order maintenance, or "broken windows" policing.

Chapter Four considers how the black governing class advocated for the restoration of traditional family values in the midst of Atlanta's Missing and Murdered Youth crisis (1979 and 1981), during which at least thirty black children and young adults were kidnapped and killed. I argue that Atlanta's political class used the crisis as an opportunity to try to impose order on disorderly black youth and their permissive families. While community members sought to call attention to the marginality and vulnerability of children from poor and working-class families, black political reformers instead focused on the breakdown of social and cultural institutions, most notably the black family, which had once kept children safe and black communities stable.

In the final chapter, I examine how the black governing class looked to black capitalism as the solution to the crime issue and other social crises in working class and poor black communities. In particular, I investigate debates about the revitalization of Sweet Auburn Avenue, Atlanta's historic black business district, in the 1980s. While Auburn Avenue's business owners sought to restore an older tradition of black entrepreneurship, the black governing class

sought to make Auburn Avenue available for maximal profit through free enterprise. I argue that these conflicts reveal the tensions between the community and the individual at the heart of the liberal black reform tradition.

The epilogue considers how these shifts in black politics foreshadowed transformations that would emerge in the Democratic Party on the national level. Here black politics functions as a proverbial canary in a coal mine, as the black American experience often does in American history. Black mayors like Maynard Jackson responded to a shrinking public sector by emphasizing private investment, community self-help, personal responsibility, and enterprise—essentially a revival of the black community politics of the Jim Crow era for a new era of social and economic instability. Thus, when Democrat Bill Clinton declared in his 1996 State of the Union address, “The era of big government is over, but we cannot go back to the time when our citizens were left to fend for themselves,” he spoke to a present and a past that black folks had long known.

Chapter 1
Black Atlanta and the Development of the Black Liberal Reform Tradition, 1880-1972

In January 1980, Maynard Jackson delivered the keynote address at the Bay Area United Fund's First Annual Dinner. In this speech before the members of the fundraising organization, Jackson praised the principle of self-help, which he claimed was "as American as apple pie, as right on as motherhood."[31] He also contended that self-help was "one of the fundamental tenets for which Martin Luther King, Jr. lived and died." Jackson argued that the newly founded United Fund played a special role in encouraging African Americans to save their money to invest in the black community. "Black United Fund represents our knowledge that freedom is not free…I think it was James Brown who recorded 'I don't want nobody to give me nothing, just open the door and I'll get it myself."[32] After appealing to the American tradition, Dr. King, and the Godfather of Soul, Jackson harkened to tradition of Booker T. Washington. "We need to put down our buckets where we are," he explained, "We can even form a black bucket brigade to contribute our dollars, nickels, and dimes to solve problems."[33]

Jackson was invoking Booker T. Washington's 1895 address at the Atlanta Cotton Exposition. Washington extorted an audience of white and black progressives to cast down their buckets where they stood, meaning the American South. He urged black Southerners to seek out "friendly relationships" with Southern white men, while encouraging white southerners to employ "negroes whose habits you know, whose fidelity and love you have tested in days when

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[31] Maynard Jackson, Keynote Address Bay Area United Fund's First Annual Dinner, January 19, 1980, Box 1, Folder 35, Series D, Maynard Jackson Papers, Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center, Atlanta, Georgia.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

to have proved treacherous meant the ruin of your firesides."[34] Notably, Washington suggested that segregation was tolerable, while southern whites and blacks worked to build up the South. "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers," Washington asserted, "yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."[35] W. E. B. Du Bois famously derided this speech as the "Atlanta Compromise," and in the decades following, Washington was known in many black circles as an accommodationist, at best, and an Uncle Tom at worst.[36]

Yet, Maynard Jackson's speech illustrates how despite the familiar criticisms, the Washingtonian ethic persisted among many black leaders well into the post-civil rights era. Jackson came from a long line of elite black reformers working to improve life for African Americans in politics, education, business, and social services. The black reform elite that emerged in Atlanta in the late nineteenth century embraced Washingtonian principles of self-improvement, black enterprise, and pragmatic negotiation with progressive whites. These figures were generally part of the city's black middle class, which grew in size from the late nineteenth century. As the community grew, it developed a distinct political ideology that guided how the city's black reformers engaged with their own community and with white city representatives. Through institutions such as the black liberal arts colleges on the city's west side, black churches, clubs, black enterprises, social service program, and eventually through electoral politics, black reformers developed a black liberal reform tradition. Informed by the American liberal tradition and African Americans' experience with slavery and discrimination, this

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[34] Booker T. Washington, "Atlanta Exposition Address," in *The Booker T. Washington Reader* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014).

[35] Ibid.

[36] See Michael Scott Bieze and Marybeth Gasman, *Booker T. Washington Reconsidered* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 4; Jacqueline M. Moore, *Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, and the Struggle for Racial Uplift* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Inc., 2003), xviii.

tradition was premised on notions of self-help, personal responsibility, respectability, elite-led uplift, black capitalism and entrepreneurialism, and a commitment to orderliness. While these principles shifted over time in response to changing political and cultural forces, their logics and assumptions about how African Americans should engage politically remained consistent.

At the onset of the Civil War, it perhaps seemed unlikely that Atlanta would develop one of the most sizeable and influential black middle class populations in the country by the turn of the century. Atlanta differed from other major southern cities in that it had a tiny free black community. While cities like Savannah, Charleston, and New Orleans had long established communities of free blacks, in 1860, there were about thirty free blacks in Atlanta among a population of 3,000 African Americans.[37] Only a handful owned property. Thus, when the black population expanded as migrants flooded into the city in the aftermath of the war, the majority of black people in Atlanta were formerly enslaved. Consequently, the class stratification between free and enslaved blacks that characterized the black community in Charleston, for example, did not exist yet in Atlanta. The majority of black Atlantans worked for low wages as personal servants, laundresses, porters, and railroad workers. They lived in wooden shacks in neighborhoods such as Shermantown, Mechanicsville, and Summerhill, which were located in the worst sections of the city, topographically.[38] Yet, a few African Americans managed to save enough money to open their own enterprises. By 1880, there were six prominent black property owners, including mortician David T. Howard, grocer James Tate, and dentist Roderick Dhu Badger, who formed Black Atlanta's first tiny elite.

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[37] Allison Dorsey, *To Build Our Lives Together:* Community Formation In Black Atlanta, 1875-1906 (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 17-18.

[38] According to Allison Dorsey, Summerhill and Shermantown in particular were in low-lying areas of the city and were prone to flooding and sewage overflow. Consequently, diseases such as cholera and typhoid fever proliferated in the area. Dorsey, 30-42.

This initial black capital became the lifeblood for the expansion of Atlanta's middle class community. The small group of black business owners invested much of their earnings in property which they pooled to establish the South View Cemetery Association, Georgia Real Estate and Loan, and the Atlanta Loan and Trust. These early institutions provided loans and insurance for African Americans who were denied access to credit and helped to establish more black enterprises in the city. As the number of black businesses and black property owners expanded, black enterprise became a guiding ideology in the city's black political culture. Capital ownership provided these men a measure of security, just as the gains of the Reconstruction era were increasing curtailed in last two decades of the twentieth century. As Allison Dorsey argues, "Black entrepreneurs developed marketable skills, pursued business opportunities and pooled their wealth in joint stock concerns to secure their freedom and build their economic future. The belief or hope that such efforts would, as in the vision of Booker T. Washington, open the doors to an integrated society was regarded only as a possible long-distance bonus."[39]

Indeed, this commitment to black capitalism emerged just as black access to the political sphere was curbed around the South. More than thirty African Americans were elected to office in the George Assembly in 1868 and two black men served on Atlanta's city council in the late 1860s as well. However, this access to political power was short-lived, as the introduction of the white primary in 1872 and the poll tax in 1877 diminished the numbers of black voters in Georgia. Though African Americans would not be fully disenfranchised in Georgia until 1908, middle class black Atlantans strengthened their focus on building black economic power in the

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[39] Ibid., 30.

1880s and 1890s.[40] Like Booker T. Washington, they believed economic independence was foundational for black political advancement and cultural reform.

Black educational institutions also fostered the development of a black middle class in late nineteenth century Atlanta. By 1885, there were five black institutions in the city—Atlanta University, Clark University (later Clark College), Atlanta Baptist College (later Morehouse College), Morris Brown College, Spelman College, and Gammon Theological Seminary. Founded by missionaries from the American Missionary Association as well as the Freedman's Aid Society and the Methodist Episcopal Church, these institutions focused on the liberal arts, in contrast to the technical focus at other black intuitions of higher education in the South. Atlanta University sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois emphasized the distinctions between Booker T. Washington's commitment to technical and agricultural training and the concentration on the liberal arts at the Atlanta University Center in a chapter of his 1903 *The Souls of Black Folk.* The purpose of the black liberal arts education, Du Bois argued, was to "maintain the standards of population education, it must seek the social regeneration of the Negro, and it must help in the solution of the problems of race contact and cooperation."[41] But above all, he contended, the function of black education was to "develop men."[42] In this, Du Bois was in agreement with Washington, and the black business class he represented. Both believed that black men and women needed to be culturally and morally regenerated. Black society and culture, they contended, had been corrupted by the institution of slavery. Whether through mechanical and agricultural training or through the liberal arts, African Americans, then, needed to pursue moral

[40] Ibid., 128.

[41] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Of the Training of Black Men," in in William Edward Burghardt Du Bois and David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader* (New York: H. Holt, 1995). 80.

[42] Ibid., 80.

growth through education. Those who emerged from institutions of higher learning formed the vanguard "talented tenth" that would purportedly lead the black masses into civilized life.[43]

The city's black churches also became an important space where the black middle class strived toward moral regeneration. By the turn of the century, there were more than twenty black churches in Atlanta, the most prominent among them First Congregational Church, Friendship Baptist Church, and Bethel A.M.E. Church. First Congregational, in particular, led the charge in imparting upon black Atlantans a Christian tradition stripped of the vestiges of slavery. Yale-educated minister Henry Hugh Proctor led the congregation in "proper Christian practices" which included, "appropriate celebration of the Eucharist, stately hymns sung in calm moderate tones, and perhaps most important, a silent, attentive congregation obedient absorbing the sacred word delivered in quiet, measured, and standard English by a literate minister."[44] Whooping and hollering and ring shouts would have to be left behind. While these traditions remained in other churches, particularly more independent Baptist congregations, elite black churches like First Congregational and, later on, Wheat Street Baptist Church were committed to the project of moral regeneration. They were joined in this effort by benevolent associations and mutual aid societies. While the visible purpose of these institutions was to provide much-needed services to poor and working-class residents in the city, their primary purpose was to the uplift the black community.

[43] See Du Bois, "Of the Training of Black Men," and "The Talented Tenth: Memorial Address," in William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, and David Levering Lewis, *W.E.B. Du Bois: A Reader*.

[44] Dorsey, 70-71.

The idea of uplift, historians have argued, had existed within free black communities since the antebellum period but took on a distinct meaning in the first post-civil rights era.[45] Kevin Gaines describes uplift as the response of educated blacks to the retrenchment of civil rights and the escalation of racial violence in the late nineteenth century. He argues, "Against the post-Reconstruction assault on black citizenship and humanity, black ministers, intellectuals, journalists, and reformers sought to refute the view that African Americans were biologically inferior and unassimilable by incorporating the 'race' into ostensibly universal but deeply racialized ideological categories of Western progress and civilization."[46] In schools, churches, and associations, middle class black Atlantans sought to civilize the thousands of black migrants into the city. The uplift project was a collective one, as black reformers understood their own status as full American citizens directly linked to the behavior of working class blacks. Uplift, then, emerged as a project that at once sought to erase class-based distinctions among African Americans while at the same time it strengthened intra-racial stratifications.[47]

Among the most active agents of uplift in the black community were women's clubs. Indeed, the motto of the National Association of Negro Women was "lifting as we climb."[48] The Neighborhood Union was one of the most prominent women's clubs in early twentieth century

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[45] See Erica Armstrong Dunbar, *A Fragile Freedom: African American Women and Emancipation in the Antebellum City* (New Haven : Yale University Press, 2008); Martha S. Jones, *All Bound Up Together:* The Woman Question in African American Public Culture, 1830-1900 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Leslie M. Harris*, In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626-1863* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Patrick Rael, *Black Identity & Black Protest in the Antebellum North* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

[46] Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), xiv.

[47] Gaines, xv.

[48] Deborah Gray White, *Too Heavy a Load: Black Women in Defense of Themselves, 1894-1994* (New York: Norton, 1999), 54.

Atlanta. Founded by Lugenia Burns Hope, wife of Atlanta University and then Morehouse College president John Hope, the Union sought to serve as moral guardians and "municipal housekeepers" in the black neighborhoods. Hope was trained in the settlement house tradition of Chicago, where she worked with Jane Addams, and brought that particular progressive vision to Atlanta. Like the progressive reformers in Chicago, Hope believed in the "germ theory" of immorality, which made the city, with its proliferation of vice and crime, an important battleground in the uplift project.[49] Hope and other middle class reformers were particularly concerned about young women, who if not afforded the proper moral guidance were likely to fall into a life of vice and sin.[50] Thus, they offered housing, health clinics, kindergartens, and a program of moral instruction for the city's young women and sought to restore the small-town neighborliness of rural black areas.

The notion of respectability was central in the uplift project. Lugenia Burns Hope and other reformers sought to uplift working class black Atlantans to an ideal of a respectable life. Jay Winston Driskell defined the concept as such:

> "Leading a respectable life entailed emotional and physical self-restraint (especially in public), modest dress, proper speech, the pursuit of self-improvement through education, industriousness, refraining from drinking and gambling, keeping a clean body and a thrifty home—and perhaps most important—refraining from licentious sexual behavior and, for women, adopting an ethic of sexual purity."[51]

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[49] David Fort Godshalk, *Veiled Visions The 1906 Atlanta Race Riot and the Reshaping of American Race Relations* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 236

[50] Indeed, single young women were particularly vulnerable as the city grew. In the 1910s, there were at least seventeen "Jack-the-Ripper" style murders of young black women. See Godshalk, 232.

[51] Jay Winston Driskell, *Schooling Jim Crow: The Fight for Atlanta's Booker T. Washington High School and the Roots of Black Protest Politics* (Charlottesville, VA: Univ. of Virginia Press, 2014), 8.

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, who coined the phrase "politics of respectability" to describe black church and clubwomen's political strategy, deemed it a "bridge discourse" that would enable black elites to better communicate and advocate on behalf of the wider black community with white elites. Through the politics of respectability, black elites asserted to whites their shared identity as moral guardians of their respective races. Furthermore, during an era when black Americans were subject to racial violence, respectability served as a defense mechanism "against white assaults motivated by racist stereotypes that suggested black men and women were lazy or criminal."[52]

Yet, respectability was not an ideology limited to the small black elite. Respectability was an aspirational state that all could reach, if they followed an upright lifestyle. Thus, a commitment to respectability cut across the porous class lines and formed a basis of racial solidarity in Atlanta's black community. Yet the black elite, who served in the leadership of organizations like the Neighborhood Union and at the helm of churches like First Congregational and Big Bethel served as gatekeepers to the fold of the respectable. Like uplift, then, respectability functioned to both collapse class barriers while at the same it fortified those barriers by creating strict categories of the respectable and the unrespectable.

Respectability and uplift were undergirded by a commitment to particular notions of order. The respectable life—characterized by upright comportment, thrift, restraint, and temperance—was an orderly life. Respectable people created orderly black communities that countered white stereotypes of unruly black community life. Consequently, the uplift project necessitated a policing project, carried out by black reformers. The Neighborhood Union, for example, established an Investigation Committee, "which was responsible for monitoring each

[52] Driskell, 9.

household and reporting on ‘everything that seem[ed] to be a menace to [the neighborhood].’”[53] Individuals suspected of committed immoral acts, like public drunkenness and sexual indiscretion, were brought before a disciplinary board and, in extreme cases, were excommunicated from a particular neighborhood.[54] The women of the Union also used gossip as a potent weapon to ostracize disreputable women and shame them into behaving respectably or risk banishment. Word of one’s transgressions could travel quickly through Black Atlanta, with networks formed churches, clubs, and other respectable organizations forming an extensive surveillance network. Reformers would also enter the homes of working class residents to search the homes for liquor and other forms of vice and to ensure that households were functioning to their standards of respectability. Through the Investigation Committee and similar initiatives established in black churches, Atlanta’s black reformers established an orderly home as a necessary element in respectable living.

This commitment to respectability and order also undergirded black reformers’ response to the lively nightlife growing in downtown Atlanta, most notably on Decatur Street. The jook joints, dives, and blind tigers on Decatur became a prominent target of the Neighborhood Union and other reformist organizations. They contended that the institutions fostered immoral behavior among working class blacks, who wasted time and money on alcohol, gambling, and other vices at the nightclubs. This behavior was not only costly for individuals, who used money they could have been saving on drink and dice, but also dangerous for the race as a collective. These activities perpetuated stereotypes about dysfunction, promiscuity, and aggression that they believed underlie violence and discrimination as the black community as a whole. Thus, the

[53] Driskell, 131

[54] Godshalk, 240

women of the Union and other concerned citizens spent many a weekend night, standing outside of bars and chastising patrons and encouraging them to take up more worthwhile hobbies. Unsurprisingly, then, black reformers were important backers of prohibition laws proposed by the Atlanta City Council in the 1880s. In doing so, they joined with white ministers and temperance activists in passing a successful prohibition law in Fulton County in 1885.[55]

The issue of prohibition reveals important differences between conservative and liberal black reformers that emerged more clearly in the first decade of the twentieth century. While reformers from the Black Church and from many women's organizations supported prohibition on moral grounds, liberal black reformers, particularly from business and political organizations opposed prohibition ordinances on the grounds of equal opportunity and equal access. Figures like Ben Davis Sr., founder of the *Atlanta Independent,* argued that the sale of alcohol provided important business opportunities for black entrepreneurs. While the majority of dive owners and alcohol distributors were white, a growing number of African Americans were entering the trade. However, the liberal reformers, were also committed to an ideal of order and self-discipline and, like those from the Church, condemned the intemperate behavior of black dive patrons, particularly women. Ben Davis argued that saloons were cesspools that bred criminals" and decried the sight of "dozen or more drunken colored women in the streets…made drunk with liquor sold to them baby white saloon keepers and borne to them by Negro bums and whiskey heads who do errands for a drink."[56] He further suggested that rather than closing the dives, the city should consider instead passing a curfew ordinance that restricted women and children from

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[55] Ultimately, the 1885 prohibition law would be reversed in 1887, largely with the support of black working class Atlantans, who framed the prohibition battle in the language of civil rights. See Dorsey, 139.

[56] Driskell 83.

city streets after 9 P.M.[57] Black reformers thus shared a commitment to respectability, with conservatives framing the concept in moral terms and liberals framing it in the language of self-control and productivity.

Debates about prohibition and black alcohol consumption came to a head during the Georgia gubernatorial campaign of 1906. In their appeals to white voters, the two candidates, Hoke Smith and Clark Howell, evoked the specter of the black brute rapist to outdo each other in their commitment to white supremacy. Meanwhile, city newspapers were reporting with lurid detail incidents of assaults of white women by intoxicated and frenzied black men. They demanded that black reformers gain control of the lawless, dangerous sect of their community.[58] Some black leaders sought to deflect the tension by calling for law and order, among both working class whites and black. They especially condemned working class blacks who frequented the saloons and jook joints. Henry Hugh Proctor published columns in the city's white newspapers in which he emphasized the distinction between the "better" class of black people and the degenerate class who posed a threat to women, black and white. He described the criminals as "vicious, 'rounders,' loafers and grossly ignorant who do not read our papers, have not attended churches and schools, but instead frequent the barrooms, poolrooms, gambling dens, dives, and restaurants attached to these bars."[59] Proctor and others among the black reformist class called for the respectable among both races to join together to uplift the black degenerate. Liberal black reformers, though quick to question the reports of assault, also agreed that "black lawlessness is 'not a theory' but 'a fearful condition threatening the very perpetuity of our

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[57] Ibid., 83.

[58] Godshalk, 74-76

[59] Godshalk, 76

institutions and the peace and happiness of every fireside."[60] Black criminality and disorderliness not only threatened respectable blacks on an individual level, but also endangered respectable black folks as a group. Because whites understood black Atlantans as a monolithic group, the poor behavior of one person could reflect poorly on the entire race. Black Atlantans across all classes could be punished in both material and symbolic ways for the actions of a few bad apples. Thus, middle class black Atlantans had a great deal at stake in how working class blacks conducted themselves.

As the campaign between Smith and Howell intensified, white newspapers called on white men to protect white women by any means necessary. In late September, a newspaper reported four separate allegations of assault upon white women by black men. On the evening of September 22, a mob of white men gathered in downtown Atlanta and began attacking African Americans found on the streets. They targeted in particular prominent black-owned businesses along Peachtree Road, most notably Alonzo Herndon's prominent barbershop. They left the dives on Decatur Street, the supposed source of the problem, unscathed. Though the state militia was called in during the early hours of September 23, a mob assembled again and raided the middle class black neighborhood of Brownsville. By the time the riot subsided, more than twenty black Atlantans had been murdered.[61] With successful black businesses and neighborhoods as their primary targets, it was clear to black reformers that the white mob's animus was aimed at the respectable among Black Atlanta rather than the disreputable. Respectability could not protect them from white violence.

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[60] Driskell, 83

[61] Godshalk, 1, 103.

The riot, nonetheless, buttressed the uplift project and strengthened black reformers' belief in respectability, orderliness, community self-reliance, and economic advancement. Remarkably, black elites blamed the riots on the unruly black working class, whose behavior, they argued, made the entire group vulnerable to attack and ultimately triggered the scaling back of black political rights. Two years after the riot, Georgia restricted black suffrage, effectively disenfranchising Atlanta's black voters. Though black Atlantans engaged in politics on a limited scale, most prominently through bond issues, in large measure, middle class blacks turned inward and focused on improving the black community socially and economically.[62] They focused on community self-help and sought to develop black families and neighborhoods through enterprise, schools, churches, social clubs, and other institutions.

Black businesses were an important site for community development. In the aftermath of the riot, segregation in the city intensified and black residences and businesses were restricted to designated areas downtown in the Fourth Ward and on the west side near the black colleges. In the neighborhoods surrounding West Hunter Street and Auburn Avenue, black Atlantans created autonomous business districts and nourished a largely self-sustaining separate economy. Adjacent to the famous Peachtree Road, Auburn Avenue became one of the most prominent black business districts in the country. The avenue, located in the Fourth Ward, was already a prominent social and cultural center in Black Atlanta, as First Congregational, Ebenezer Baptist, Wheat Street Baptist, and Bethel A.M.E. as well as the Butler Street YMCA were in the area.

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[62] While African Americans were largely unable from voting in city, state, and federal elections, there were able to vote in special elections on a municipal level. One way in which black Atlantans exercised political power in light of disfranchisement was through bond issue referendums. Demanding the construction of black elementary schools and a black high school, black Atlantans united as a voting bloc to defeat several bond issues proposed by the city council for much-needed infrastructure repairs. In 1919, black Atlantans negotiated with Mayor James Key the expansion of black elementary and the construction of a black high school in exchange their support for the bond issue. Booker T. Washington High School opened on the west side in September 1924. See Driskell, Chapter 5

By 1930, it housed more than 100 businesses, including Atlanta Life Insurance Company, Citizens Trust Bank, and Mutual Federal Savings and Loan, as well clothing stores, funeral homes, beauty salons, barber shops, restaurants, and nightclubs like the Top Hat and the Royal Peacock. The Henry Rucker office building and the Odd Fellows office building held the offices of black lawyers, doctors, accountants, and others offering services to an exclusively black clientele. The bustling street rang with the shouts of hucksters, street preachers, and would-be race men, most famously John Wesley Dobbs. Often called the "unofficial mayor" of Auburn Avenue, Dobbs coined the name "Sweet Auburn." He claimed that the area was "sweet" because it connected directly to Peachtree, rather than being hidden by railroad tracks as black business districts were in other cities.[63] The name exemplified the pride many felt in life behind the veil in Atlanta. Gary Pomerantz surmised, "It became the place for black dreamers. You knew you had arrived on Auburn Avenue once you had your pulpit or your own cornerstone."[64]

Auburn Avenue businessmen became the epitome of black respectability. As David Fort Godschalk has argued, by the second decade of the twentieth century, black reformers "linked the race's future with a rising, self-made middle class whose members were morally upright, hardworking, and committed to patronizing black businesses as a means to promote black prosperity, create black jobs, and build separate black institutions."[65] Though not everyone who patronized Auburn Avenue businesses or lived in the area was middle class, they aspired to respectability through dress and comportment. Auburn Avenue-based barber Dan Stephens later recalled, "In those years, Auburn really was a black man's pride and joy, I'll put it like that. You

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[63] Pomerantz,*Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn: The Saga of Two Families and the Making of Atlanta* (New york: Penguin, 2009), 191.

[64] Gary Pomerantz, 123.

[65] Godshalk, 222-223.

didn't find people coming to Auburn in their shirttails like they do now…They had a lot of pride and they'd come to Auburn Avenue, they would be dressed up."[66] Long-time Auburn resident, Alice Adams explained, "We'd dress up, because we couldn't dress up during the day. We'd dress up and put on our good clothes…IT was like the white folks' Peachtree."[67]

The *Atlanta Independent*'s Ben Davis, Sr. contrasted the "Auburn Avenue negro," who was "industrious and thrifty" with the "Decatur Street negro," who was "shiftless and fun-loving."[68] Decatur Street, located just one block south of Auburn Avenue, existed as Auburn Avenue's foil. As more African Americans migrated into the city in the 1920s and 1930s, Decatur Street became a vibrant center of black working class culture. The nightclubs, bars, and jook joints bustled at night on Decatur Street, just as Auburn Avenue thrived during the day. Whereas in the late nineteenth century, the bars and nightclubs on Decatur Street were frequented by both white and black patrons—much to the chagrin of white and black reformers—in the aftermath of the riot, the clientele was almost exclusively black. A red-light district also developed on Decatur Street, further marking the area as sleazy and disreputable. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, middle class reformers targeted the prostitutes and bootleggers in the establishments on Decatur Street in their campaigns against vice. Nonetheless, a vibrant underground economy flourished on Auburn Avenue as well, where even middle-class folks

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[66] Cliff Kuhn, Harlon Joye, and Bernard West. *Living Atlanta: An Oral History of the City, 1914-1948* (Atlanta, Ga: Atlanta History Center, 2005), 39

[67] As quoted in Kuhn, *Living Atlanta,* 39.

[68] Preliminary Outline for Sweet Auburn-Culture Study, Box 20, Folder 7, Arnall T. Connell Papers, Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, Georgia.

participated in the city's numbers game, called the "bug," despite admonishments from respectable reformers.[69]

The Great Depression proved a pivotal moment of transition for Atlanta's black reformers. They welcomed the relief of New Deal programs, which provided employment and leadership opportunities for a new generation of middle class blacks. In contrast to the older generation of reformers who often came from churches and women's organizations and focused on private, voluntary efforts, the young reformers were professionals in social work, who worked for federally and state-funded social service programs. They valued expertise and used their training in fields such as social work, sociology, and urban planning positions in New Deal-funded agencies in the city. However, they understood their work as an advancement of the tradition of uplift in Atlanta and, as Karen Ferguson describes, "used their government work as a unique opportunity to achieve their long-held goals for racial advancement."[70]

Black New Deal reformers played the greatest role in housing reform. Many were avid supporters of slum clearance, believing, like the reformers of the Progressive Era, that the squalid housing fostered a "poverty complex" and encouraged crime and disorder in the neighborhoods.[71] They advocated for the slums to be demolished and replaced with clean, orderly low-income housing. The Atlanta Housing Authority did clear many of the slum areas near the center of the city. The city was slow to replace the cleared areas with affordable housing

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[69] Karen Ferguson, *Black Politics in New Deal Atlanta* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 35.

[70] Ferguson, 96

[71] Ferguson, 192

for African Americans, and consequently many of the more than 5000 people displaced were forced to move to the outskirts of the city's west side.[72]

Nevertheless, the Atlanta Housing Authority erected University Homes, the first public housing complex for African Americans on the site of Beaver Slide, a slum near the Atlanta University Center. Black reformers used University Homes as an opportunity to fulfill the vision of earlier activists like Lugenia Burns Hope by creating the type of community that they believed would nourish respectable, orderly black families. With complete control of the neighborhood and its residents, reformers could engage in the project of uplift with much greater influence than their predecessors. New residents were carefully screened and selected based on their adherence to the norms of black respectability.[73] Housing manager, Alonzo Moron, served as a paternal guardian for the complex. He monitored the residents to make sure they kept orderly homes and lived upright and moral lives. Residents who deviated from the expectations of respectable behavior were ejected from the complex. Public housing was also a political project. Reformers used University Homes as a "laboratory for citizenship," and sought to prepare the residents for political and economic incorporation.[74] They would soon extend their citizenship-training from University Homes to the broader Black Atlanta community, as they increasingly began to demand full incorporation into the Atlanta political landscape.

In the late 1930s and throughout the 1940s, black reformers undertook a project to expand the political gains provided by the New Deal. In 1936, the Atlanta branch of the NAACP began to organize citizenship schools in the black community with the intent of overcoming what

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[72] Ferguson, 166

[73] None of the University Homes residents, however, were former Beaver Slide inhabitants. Ferguson, 210-211.

[74] Ferguson, 187.

they perceived as "the ignorance and parochialism of the majority of black Atlantans."[75] The schools were only moderately successful, as few attended since black Atlantans remained largely barred from participating in electoral politics. Nonetheless, following the abolition of the white primary in *Smith v. Allwright (*1944) and in Georgia with *King v. Chapman* (1946), black leaders began an intensive voter registration campaign that was met with success. The All Citizens Registration Committee carried a block-by-block registration campaign and by 1946, there were more than 21,000 black voters registered in Fulton County (up from about 7,000 the previous year).[76]

The campaign for black police officers was the first real test of the black community's new voting power. Police brutality had long been a problem in the city's black community since the post-Civil War era. In 1870s and 1880s, working class black Atlantans openly clashed with police officers, including one incident in 1888 when a group of blacks from the Summerhill neighborhood freed a black man in police custody.[77] In the 1930s, however, middle class black Atlantans advocated for black police, who they believed would be less abusive than their white counterparts. In a 1937 pamphlet, the Atlanta NAACP argued that black officers would be able to "interpret Negro problems and Negro people" better than white officers. They would also be more familiar with the social landscape of the black community. Middle class black Atlantans were particularly troubled by how white police officers indiscriminately policed African Americans, regardless of class status. One report contended, "Some white officers have no

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[75] Ferguson

[76] Tomiko Brown-Nagin, *Courage to Dissent: Atlanta and the Long History of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 52.

[77] Kimberly Marissa James, *Challenges to Control?: Atlanta's Maynard Jackson and the Politics of Police Reform*. PhD Diss, University of Michigan, 2002, 38.

regard for the social standing of colored men or women. They use the same language to them as they do in the presence of gamblers or harlots."[78] Black police would, theoretically, treat respectable black citizens, particularly women, with the dignity afforded to their class status.

Black Atlantans also argued that black police officers would be effective in combating crime in black neighborhoods. During the Depression, crime rates had escalated in the city's black neighborhoods. Nonetheless, police officers had a "laissez-faire attitudes" toward crime with black victims and black culprits.[79] When police came to the scene, if at all, they did little to address the issues. In the case of murder, the crime would rarely be investigated to the extent required to bring justice to the victim. Thus, black Atlantans claimed, criminals were allowed to commit crimes against black people with abandon and with no repercussions from the state. The campaign for black police, then, was about reducing crime and restoring order in the black community.

In 1946, the Atlanta NAACP launched a campaign for black police, leading pickets outside the Georgia State capitol building and city hall. In November 1947, Martin Luther King Sr., the *Atlanta Daily World*'s C.A. Scott, and other leading black reformers testified before the Atlanta City Council for desegregation of the city's police force. A city with more than 100,000 African Americans, they contended, should have at least one black police officer. Ultimately, the city council ceded to the mounting pressure and voted 10-7 in favor of a resolution requiring the Atlanta police department to hire eight black officers. The officers were hired on a trial basis, and were not allowed to arrest white citizens. They were also forced to work out of the basement

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[78] James Forman, *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2017), 83.

[79] Forman, 83.

of the Butler Street Y.M.C.A. and were not allowed to wear their uniforms while not on duty.[80] Nonetheless, the black community celebrated their victory as a testament to their growing political power.

In 1949, Republican John Wesley Dobbs and Democrat A.T. Walden established the Atlanta Negro Voters' League in an effort to consolidate the black vote into a powerful voting bloc that could influence city elections. The League sought to unite the black vote behind endorsed candidates and thus provide leadership to the black voting masses. League leadership would meet with candidates in the weeks leading up to the election, before making a decision on the candidate that the entire black community would support en masse. They would often hold the announcement of their endorsement until the night before the election, to prevent white counter groups from rallying against their chosen candidate. Their influence proved potent in the fall of 1949 when they provided mayor William Hartsfield with the margin of victory in his re-election campaign.[81] With liberal middle class whites and the business community, black Atlantans formed what would come to be called the "Hartsfield Coalition."[82] The group was progressive in comparison to the state of Georgia and most concerned about maintaining the city's image as a racially moderate southern business center. Hartsfield's re-election established Atlanta's black community, particularly its middle-class leaders, as a viable force in Atlanta politics. Yet, they were junior partners in this coalition, with little power to create new policy or to challenge the imperatives of the white civic and commercial powers.

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[80] Frederick Allen, *Atlanta Rising: The Invention of an International City* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996), 35-35; Forman, 86.

[81] Brown-Nagin, 56.

[82] Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, 2005), 41.

Yet, by the 1950s, African American reformers were able to gradually negotiate civil rights reforms in exchange for maintaining order in the city's black community and protecting the city's reputation for racial harmony. Civic leaders such as the NAACP's A.T. Walden, John Wesley Dobbs, John H. Calhoun along with politically engaged ministers Martin Luther King, Sr. and William Holmes Borders adopted an approach that Tomiko Brown-Nagin has described as "pragmatic civil rights."[83] This strategy "privileged politics over litigation, placed higher value on economic security and rejected the idea that integration (or even desegregation) and equality were one and the same."[84] Black reformers thus sought to expand black enclaves in the city rather than integrate white neighborhoods, to improve black schools and increase black teachers' pay instead of desegregate public schools, and to demand improved public facilities designated for blacks. They advocated for these reforms in the city's black newspaper, the *Atlanta Daily World,* and from their pulpits. Nonetheless, their actual negotiations for the expansion of black access to public spaces and utilities took place in closed-door meetings with Hartsfield and other civic and commercial leaders.

By the mid-1950s, however, Atlanta's black reformers were forced to confront segregation more directly, as Atlanta's own Martin Luther King, Jr. led bus boycott in Montgomery that gained national attention. When the boycott successfully led to the desegregation of the public busses, black Atlantans began to call for a similar action. In late 1956, Rev. William Holmes Borders initiated the Love, Law, and Liberation or "Tripe L" Movement, whose purpose was to lead a public crusade against segregation on public transportation. Borders and other black leaders had been negotiating the desegregation of the

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[83] Brown-Nagin, 2.

[84] Ibid., 2.

buses privately with Mayor Hartsfield, and together they orchestrated a demonstration that would enable the black leaders' to publically protest bus segregation without disrupting public order. On January 9, 1957, Borders and several other black ministers boarded a bus and sat in the section reserved for whites. The bus was purposely empty and traveled on a special route to avoid actually picking up passengers. Borders and the ministers rode the bus without incident. The following day, Borders and the ministers were arrested at Wheat Street Baptist Church, peacefully as he and Hartsfield had coordinated. The group was released from jail within an hour and Borders announced that the black community would now have to wait to see if the court would uphold the Montgomery court decision in Atlanta. Until then, he contended, black Atlantans would have to obey the law and ride Jim Crow.[85] When the court ruled in favor of desegregation a full two years later, Borders advised black Atlantans to "[observe] ordinary rules of courtesy and good behavior," if white people resisted desegregation.[86] Black city leaders seemingly privileged order over actual integration.

Black reformers continued to prioritize order as direct action protests proliferated in Atlanta and cities across the country. In early 1960, Julian Bond and Lonnie King, then students at Morehouse College, began meeting to organize a sit-in movement modeled after the students' movement in Greensboro, North Carolina. They and other students from the colleges of the Atlanta University Center formed the Committee on Appeal to Human Rights, or the Committee. With the support of the NAACP and other local civil rights organizations, the group took out a full-page ad in the city's major newspapers, decrying segregation, discrimination, and economic inequality in the South's supposed beacon of racial harmony. The elder reformers, particularly

[85] Brown-Nagin, 126-128.

[86] As quoted on Brown-Nagin 128

those in the faculty and administration of the black colleges were wary of the students' growing militancy. Consequently, the college presidents organized the Student-Adult Liaison Committee, to offer guidance to the students. They were joined by Reverends King, Borders, and Atlanta Life's vice president, Jesse Hill, as well as rising political figures Q.V. Williamson and Leroy Johnson, among other black leaders.[87]

While the elder reformers were willing to support the students' written statement, they were more hesitant in their support of the Committee's direct action campaign. The students began sit-ins at lunch counters through the city, including the Atlanta's most prominent department store, Rich's. Rich's owner, Richard Rich, was known as a racial moderate and thought of himself as a friend to the black community.[88] He, thus, expressed his surprise and disappointment at the students' protest with the city's biracial governing coalition. By the beginning of summer, the students had garnered national attention but little progress had been made. When they returned to school and their protests in the fall, Martin Luther King, Jr., who had also returned to his hometown, joined them in their campaign. In October 1960, King and several dozen students were arrested during a sit-in at Rich's Magnolia Room restaurant. King's arrest gained international attention and became a significant moment in the 1960 presidential election.[89] After King was released from jail, Mayor Hartsfield and the biracial governing coalition called for a sixty day end to the demonstrations. The students reluctantly agreed and ceased their protests for the rest of the fall semester.[90]

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[87] Brown-Nagin, 145- 155.

[88] Brown-Nagin, 155-156

[89] Ibid., 162. Note about 1960 election

[90] Ibid., 162-163.

In January 1961, the city's leadership had yet to come up with a plan to desegregate public accommodations, as businesses refused to cede to the Committee's demands. Thus, the students began their protests once again, with the encouragement of much of Atlanta's black community. This time the older reformers participated though not in sit-ins or other forms of direct action. Figures such as Martin Luther King, Sr. and Rev. Borders organized prayer services and led mass rallies at their churches in support of the students' movement. Meanwhile, the elder black leaders had been meeting with Mayor Hartsfield and Atlanta Chamber of Commerce president Ivan Allen, Jr. to create a plan to end the protests and negotiate gradual desegregation. They presented the deal to the students at a meeting in February 1961. According to the plan, Atlanta's department stores would desegregate the lunch counters in the fall of 1961, occurring alongside the desegregation of the public high schools. They would also offer black shoppers options for trying on clothes and would improve the black restrooms, which addressed two of the protestors' demands. In exchange, the Committee would cease sit-ins, boycotts, pickets, and all other forms of protest. The student representatives at the meeting, Julian Bond and Lonnie King, stunned by the apparent betrayal of the black leaders, refused to accept the deal. At this point, the elders had had enough of the students' refusal to play by the rules they had established decades before. Martin Luther King, Sr. yelled at Lonnie King, "Boy, I am tired of you! I am tired of you! This is the best agreement we can get out of this!" Seemingly defeated, Bond and King agreed to the deal, much to the dismay of their fellow students and many in the black community who had come to support their campaign. [91]At a rally shortly after the desegregation plan was announced, angry black Atlantans confronted the black leadership at a

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[91] Ibid., 170-172; Grady-Willis, Winston A. *Challenging U.S. Apartheid: Atlanta and Black Struggles for Human Rights, 1960-1977* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 26-28.

mass meeting at Wheat Street Baptist. The crowd only quieted when Martin Luther King, Jr. gave an impromptu sermon about the need for unity in the black community.[92]

The calm over desegregation was short-lived. While the major department stores complied with the 1961 brokered deal, many privately owned restaurants and hotels refused to desegregate. COAHR, joined now by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), began another direct action campaign in the fall of 1963, targeting restaurants such as Krystal's, Leb's, and the Pickrick. This time, they were more confrontational. They targeted establishments owned by ardent segregationists, like Lester Maddox who greeted protestors at his Pickrick with an axe handle. Rather than simply sitting in and picketing, the students began blocking traffic and entrances. They also refused to cooperate with arresting officers. The protestors were also greeted with counter-protestors from the Ku Klux Klan and other segregationists groups. Demonstrations at the Pickrick and Leb's turned violent. This new approach garnered the criticism of white moderates, who condemned the students' lawbreaking and their apparent provocation of violence. Many in the black community also criminalized the students' strategy and accused the protestors of "playing into the hand" of segregationists like Maddox by refusing to obey the law.[93] Even the progressive *Atlanta Inquirer,* founded by COAHR members in the wake of the 1960 sit-ins, surmised, "STUDENTS, WE DON'T GET IT…WE SUGGEST THAT YOU REVIEW YOUR STRATEGY."[94] Despite the reproaches, the students kept up the demonstrations, until segregation was largely struck down with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Nonetheless, the student movement exacerbated tensions between SNCC and the liberal reform

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[92] Grady-Willis, 28-31.

[93] Brown-Nagin, 223.

[94] Quoted on Brown-Nagin, 224.

leaders. While the younger activists wanted to democratize Atlanta's campaign for civil rights, the liberal reform leaders wanted to maintain the place as guardians of the city's black community. Yet, the people of Atlanta began to increasingly challenge the reform elites' control of black politics in the city.

The Atlanta chapter of SNCC only became more radical after the passage of civil rights legislation. However, rather than organizing public direct action campaigns, they turned their activism toward antipoverty work. Under the leadership of Bill Ware in 1966, they began a campaign in the Vine City neighborhood, later called the Atlanta Project. Vine City was one of the most impoverished neighborhoods in the city. Residents lived in dilapidated housing without working street lights, adequate sanitation and sewage services, heating, and other city services. The conditions were so poor that Martin Luther King Jr. and other members of the Southern Christian Leadership Council organized a public campaign in the neighborhood to call attention to inadequate housing and systemic poverty in his hometown. King declared, "This is appalling. I had no idea people were living in Atlanta, Georgia in such conditions."[95] SNCC members sought to organize the low-income residents of the neighborhood under the mantle of participatory democracy. They encouraged residents to organize rent strikes in response to poor housing conditions and absentee slumlords and also advised them to use forms of direct action that had been successful in the students' earlier campaign to protest for better services and improved conditions in poor neighborhoods.[96]

The chapter's staunch black nationalist stance, however, garnered more attention than their antipoverty organizing. The Atlanta members were among the first SNCC members to call

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[95] Quoted on Grady-Willis, 86.

[96] Brown-Nagin, 268.

for the removal of whites from the organization. This sentiment gained the support of the group's new chairman, Stokely Carmichael, who replaced John Lewis in 1966. Carmichael worked closely with the group on local issues such as the Atlanta Project as well as on reorienting the group nationally. Following SNCC's turn toward nationalism, Atlanta members John Lewis and Julian Bond formally left the organization and the group increasingly faced resistance from the middle class reformers. The Atlanta chapter of the NAACP along with the members of the increasingly moderate Atlanta Summit Leadership Council released a statement condemning the new SNCC and their advocacy of radical direct action and black nationalism. They contended, "The way to protest is set forth in the framework of the constitution and all should work to see that it is preserved and honored."[97] The radical SNCC chapter threatened public order in the black community to an extent even greater than the student movement of the early 1960s, much to the vexation of the city's black reformist leaders.

SNCC's threat to public disorder became clear during the Summerhill uprising in the summer of 1966. Like in other cities where rebellion erupted during the long, hot summers of the 1960s, an incident of police brutality sparked Atlanta's own uprising. Police officers shot a young man named Harold Prather, whom they believed had stolen a car. When the man was found collapsed on his mother's front lawn in Summerhill, neighborhood residents began to congregate and demand answers. The fires were stoked by SNCC's Bill Ware, who rode around the neighborhood in a soundtruck, calling for Summerhill residents to take action against the injustice. By the time the crowd reached about 300 later that afternoon, Atlanta mayor Ivan Allen had arrived on the scene with numerous police officers. The mayor, known around the country for leading Atlanta through desegregation without any major violent incidents, stood atop a

[97] Brown-Nagin, 277.

patrol car and tried to soothe the crowd's anger. Allen was shouted down by protestors who called the mayor a "white devil" and shouted "black power!" After folks in the crowd began throwing rocks and bottles, Allen ordered police officers to "clear it up."[98] Police officers tear gassed the crowd and began arresting people suspected of throwing the objects. The melee continued into the evening, as protestors continued to smash car windows and throw Molotov cocktails into a few local buildings.[99]

Atlanta's black reformers tried immediately to bring order back to the neighborhood. William Holmes Borders met with protestors on the streets and tried to convince them that "we want to get what you want, but you'll tell us what it is."[100] The Southern Christian Leadership Council's Ralph David Abernathy proposed having a town hall at the Atlanta Stadium, where residents could air their grievances in an orderly manner. His comrade Hosea Williams also tried to convince protestors briefly gathered at a nearby church to "go home and cool off," and approach the matter through non-violence.[101] A SNCC member present in the audience retorted, "We're not going to home to cool off. We're going home to heat up."[102] Throughout the evening, SNCC activists continued to shout "black power," as they rode through the neighborhood in their sound truck. The struggle subsided the next morning, but not after dozens of people were arrested and several buildings were burned down. Though the Summerhill uprising was not at the same scale of the riots in Newark and Detroit, it demonstrated that Atlanta was not immune to the crises of cities nationwide in the late 1960s.

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[98] Grady-Willis, 118.

[99] Ibid., 117-119.

[100] Ibid., 119.

[101] Ibid., 120.

[102] Ibid., 120.

The day after the Summerhill uprisings, black reformers began organizing to stem the tide of black power in working class neighborhoods. A group of middle class Summerhill residents organized the Good Neighborhood Association which sought to calm down resident and to discourage police "discourtesy."[103] The members of the group promised to "uphold law and order," in the neighborhood and support the police in repressing black radicalism. The Association sought to restore traditional modes of addressing issues by presenting a list of concerns to the mayor and the Board of Alderman. The Atlanta Summit Leadership Council also met soon after the uprising to discuss growing black radicalism in the city, particularly the presence of Stokely Carmichael, who was gaining national attention as a black power advocate. One member deemed Carmichael "a parasite on the community," while William Holmes Borders argued, "We've got to stop him…or he's going to stop us."[104]

The next summer saw another uprising in the west side neighborhood of Dixie Hills. By this time, SNCC's Atlanta Project had ended after about a year of activity and the entire Atlanta Project staff had been fired for insubordination. Yet, SNCC members and their ally Stokely Carmichael maintained an active presence in the city's working-class neighborhoods and were on sight during the rebellion in Dixie Hills. The uprising began when police officers shot and injured a black man supposedly trying to disable an alarm. As news of the shooting spread, black reformist leaders tried again to encourage an orderly response. At a mass meeting at a local church, state senator Leroy Johnson urged the audience to seek nonviolence and claimed, "If we have to march, then march we must, but within the confines of the law."[105] While Johnson was

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[103] Grady-Willis, 126.

[104] Ibid., 126.

[105] Ibid., 129.

greeted by jeers, Stokely Carmichael, who addressed the crowd shortly after, earned uproarious applause when he demanded that residents “take to the streets and force the police department to work until they fall in the tracks.”[106] Carmichael further asserted, “It’s not a question of law and order. We are not concerned with peace. We are concerned with the liberation of black people. We have to build a revolution.”[107] Police officers later tried to disperse the crowd of over 1000 people who had gathered in and outside the church. Protestors fought back, assaulting cops with stones and bottles, as well as handbags and fists. Atlanta police chief Herbert Jenkins sent three hundred heavily armed police officers to the neighborhood to quell the rebellion. Ultimately, more than a dozen people were arrested including Carmichael. One man, who was watching the crisis from his front porch, was shot and killed by police.

In the weeks following the uprising in Dixie Hills, black moderate reformers again called for the restoration of order and found support in Dixie Hill residents. Over one thousand Dixie Hill community members signed a petition demanding that Stokely Carmichael and other SNCC members leave the neighborhood.[108] Carmichael and other black power proponents, supporters of the petition claimed, were outside agitators who did not represent the interests of the residents of Dixie Hills. In signing the petition, the residents of Dixie Hills, like those in Summerhill, demonstrated the strength of the reformist tradition in Atlanta among a broad range of black Atlantans. While small pockets of radicalism would continue to exist in the city’s black neighborhoods, the black reform tradition, which advocated the preservation of order and the

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[106] Grady-Willis, 130

[107] Ibid., 130

[108] Brown-Nagin, 298.

protection of property, persisted in Atlanta and strengthened in the chaotic moments of the late 1960s.

As cities around the country began to erupt into black rebellion, Atlanta's growing number of black elected officials began to demand a larger role in the city's biracial governing coalition. By 1968, the number of black elected officials in the Georgia Assembly reached nine, the majority of them representing districts in Atlanta. State senator Leroy Johnson, who in 1962 became the first African American elected to the Georgia Assembly since Reconstruction, was the unofficial leader of the group. In the aftermath of the Dixie Hills, Johnson authored a statement on behalf of the black officials that condemned the "violence, looting, and burning." Yet, he acknowledged, "The grievances of American Negroes are legitimate grievances. Negroes in Atlanta and throughout the country are asking for a chance at a better way of life."[109] He contended that the elected representatives "believe that these grievances can be best resolved by and through lawful means and within the framework of our democratic system."[110] Johnson also warned that if the city's white power structure refused to listen to the insights of liberal black politicians, black radicalism could take hold in impoverished areas. State senator Leroy argued that areas like Summerhill, Dixie Hills, and Vine City were "breeding grounds of discontentment" and fostered "a state of hopelessness and a situation ripe for those who would preach hatred."[111] Black elected officials, he suggested, were uniquely positioned to quell the anger in black communities through legitimate avenues. They were the ones that would ensure that Atlanta did not burn like Newark and Detroit.

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[109] "Negro Lawmakers here Deplore Riots," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Jul 29, 1967, 5.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid.

From their positions in the Georgia Assembly and, in the case of Q.V. Williamson, Atlanta's board of alderman, black elected officials made political demands on behalf of the broader black community that were based in the reformist tradition. Even, Julian Bond, the youngest and most radical of the group, supported the pragmatic reformist line.[112] They sought negotiated improvements grounded in a commitment to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for black Atlantans. They advocated for open housing, better funding for predominantly black schools, greater employment opportunities for black in the municipal government, and improved services in poor neighborhoods.[113] In 1967, they successfully ended double sessions in black schools after Leroy Johnson threatened "the largest protest movement since 1961."[114] Elected officials believed they were representing the will of the black community, but, like their reformist predecessors, sought to guide black Atlantans away from making demands that would fundamentally challenge the city's power structures and black reformers' class position. Nonetheless, they were not immune to resistance from their black constituents, who often accused the black elected officials of "selling out their people."[115]

Emboldened by the democratic and participatory vision of the civil rights movement and black power rhetoric, poor black urban dwellers in Atlanta and around the country began to demand a greater voice in the city government. The Johnson administration responded to these calls by including measures for citizen participation in the federally-funded War on Poverty

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[112] Ibid.

[113] Art Pine, "Williamson Urges Full Rights Package." *The Atlanta Constitution*, Aug 23, 1967, 11.

[114] Alex Coffin, "Big Protest Looms, Sen. Johnson Says," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Sep 21, 1967, 40.

[115] Alex Coffin, "Negro Disharmony Erupts Over Summit's Leadership," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Feb 19, 1968, 11; Matthews, Richard B. "Negro Leaders Clash on State Candidates." *The Atlanta Constitution*, Aug 02, 1970. 1,

programs. The most prominent program in Atlanta was the Model Cities initiative. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development officials, the purpose of the program was to "demonstrate how the living environment and the general welfare of people living in slum and blighted neighborhoods can be substantially improved…through a comprehensive attack on social, economic and physical problems in selected slum areas…by federal, state and local public and private efforts."[116] Six neighborhoods were designated Model Cities—black neighborhoods Summerhill, Mechanicsville, Peoplestown, and Pittsburgh, and white neighborhoods Grant Park and Adair Park.

Each of the six Model Cities elected one representative to the Model Cities executive board and in addition had eleven committees, which met individually and collectively each week. These committees would address particular issues in the neighborhoods and make proposals for submission to the larger Model Cities plan. Committee members and neighborhood residents also organized monthly at a mass convention. The initial mass meetings devolved into disarray as disagreements and disputes about neighborhood representation overshadowed community planning.[117] The citizen participation apparatus was clunky and reflected larger problems of execution that would emerge in the Model Cities program. While neighborhood committee members could advocate for certain programs during the planning phase, which lasted between approximately May 1968 and May 1969, they had little power to direct resources in particular directions when the implementation began in the summer of 1969.

Ultimately, the program executive director, Johnny Johnson, was in charge of coordinating and planning the projects funded by the program. Johnson, a Morehouse graduate

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[116] Raleigh Bryans, "Model City Site is Historical," *Atlanta Constitution,* November 19, 1967, 6A.

[117] Alex Coffin, "Only 281 Attend Model Cities Convention," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Jul 22, 1968, 10.

and trained city planner, was appointed the director of the Model Cities Program and oversaw an initial budget of over $7 million in federal funding. The program's first year included over 150 projects and dozens of contracts, which Johnson was responsible for planning and coordinating. Johnson's staff included fellow college graduates who, as he described, "were looking for a challenge."[118] Neighborhood residents were not included among the staff. Johnson framed the program as a renewal program that not only improved neighborhood conditions, but also developed the residents themselves. He argued, "The program is more socially oriented than it is physically oriented. It's an effort to undertake both of these approaches at the same time. You can build beautiful buildings but unless you restructure the lives of the disadvantaged, you simply put them into a beautiful box with the same old habits and problems." Harkening back to the germ theory of poverty and deviance, Johnson continued, explaining, "The imprisonment makes it difficult for them to break out into what is traditionally thought of as a normal living pattern." Though the term uplift was no longer in vogue by the late 1960s, it is clear that Johnson understood the Model Cities as an uplift program, much like his predecessors during the Progressive and New Deal eras.

Tensions between neighborhood residents and Model Cities executives quickly emerged over the issue of housing. Program officials promised residents that the program would replace overcrowded and dilapidated housing with new, spacious low-income housing. They also assured that people displaced by land clearance would be provided with temporary low-income housing. In the fall of 1969, officials with the Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) revealed a renewal plan, which necessitated housing acquisition, rehabilitation, and disposition as well as the relocation of more than 200 families. Displaced residents would be temporarily housed in

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[118] Margaret Shannon, "Model Cities: A Program to Rescue Perishing Areas," *Atlanta Constitution,* June 29, 1969, SM6

tiny mobile units located outside of the Model Cities area to the far west of the city. That October, a group of residents, represented by progressive state representative John Hood threatened to file an injunction to halt the plans. The group protested the lack of citizen involvement in the plan. They also raised concerns about the type of temporary housing proposed by the plan, as well as about details concerning the sale of property and the selection of the development sites. The program was put on pause while the committees renegotiated the plan. At an October mass meeting, residents demanded permanent relocated housing "of which people can be proud of."[119] A week later, resident leaders on the Model Cities housing committee met with AHA officials, who claimed to have been taking direction from Johnny Johnson and the Model Cities staff. The residents, meanwhile, claimed to not have been consulted.[120] The two sides agreed to a revised development plan that would consider "new approaches" for land acquisition and relocation. The AHA also agreed to provide larger temporary mobile homes for displaced residents. Yet, by the fall of 1970, the more than 150 temporary homes sat empty in open field behind the federal penitentiary.[121]

In November 1970, as ground for permanent new low-income had yet to be broken, Model Cities residents became more confrontational in their demand for improved housing conditions. A group of over fifty Peoplestown residents organized a sleep-in at the Model Cities office to protest "rates, filth, and inadequate housing."[122] The group, headed by welfare rights organizer Ethel Mae Mathews, made several demands of Johnson, including, "We demand that

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[119] Harold Wardlaw, "Better Relocation Housing is Asked," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Oct 20, 1969, 1.

[120] "AHA and Model Cities Air Problems Today," *The Atlanta Constitution* , Nov 03, 1969. 1

[121] Sam Hopkins, "150 Model Cities Homes Unused," *The Atlanta Constitution* , Oct 01, 1970, 2.

[122] Gene Stephens, "50 Stage Sleep-In at Model Cities Office," *Atlanta Constitution,* November 10, 1970, 8A.

you make the Model Cities program a program to help people instead of what it is now, a program to clear land." Mathews accused Johnson and the Model Cities staff of being aloof. She claimed, "Johnson doesn't relate to us little people."[123] The protest ended when Atlanta mayor Sam Massell promised to build 500 low-income housing units by the next year.[124] Yet, construction on new housing did not begin until August 1971. While at the onset of the project, Ivan Allen estimated that the Model Cities area needed more than 6,000 new housing units. By the time the Model Cities program closed its doors in 1974, fewer than 400 units were under construction. Ultimately, the Model Cities demolished more low-income housing than it erected in the area.[125]

The protests of poor black Atlantans to slum clearance received more attention in the late 1960s than during the New Deal era. As the black voting bloc grew to nearly half of the Atlanta voting population, elected officials, both black and white, were forced to take these protests more seriously. Yet, as the Model Cities example shows, more insistent protests did not necessarily translate into greater political power for the city's poor black residents. Conditions in the neighborhoods arguably deteriorated in the 1970s, as vacant lots stood in the place of housing.[126] Some residents contended that Summerhill looked worse than in did before the 1966 uprising.[127] The only people to have benefited from Model Cities, it seemed, were the reformers on the staff and the contractors who received sizeable federally funded checks.

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[123] Gene Stephens, "50 Stage Sleep-In at Model Cities Office," *Atlanta Constitution,* November 10, 1970, 8A.

[124] Gene Stephens, "City Vow Ends Slum Protest," *The Atlanta Constitution* , Nov 11, 1970, 2.

[125] Hank Ezell, "Allen Sees Model Cities Progress," *The Atlanta Constitution* , Aug 18, 1974, 2.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Sam Hopkins, "Model Cities Idea a Colossal Flop?" *Atlanta Constitution,* September 27, 1970, 12A

By the late 1960s, Atlanta, like other cities, was a city in flux. Most significant was the demographic shift. As white Atlantans migrated in droves to the suburbs to the north of the city, the city population gradually grew blacker until African Americans became a majority in the 1970 census.[128] With the changing racial balance, observers began to predict a change in the racial composition of the city's political leadership. In 1969, the number of blacks on the board of alderman grew from one to five, when Ira Jackson, Marvin Arrington, H.D. Dodson, and Joel Stokes joined Q. V. Williamson. Many argued that a black mayor was soon to follow. *Constitution* columnist Alex Coffin suggested, "So the white power structure—which some contend doesn't exist—could get together and decide on a capable Negro, acceptable to the Negroes because he isn't an Uncle Tom, yet acceptable to the white community, also. Who might that be?" He listed Q. V. Williamson and Vernon Jordan as possible choices. The most obvious option, however, was state senator Leroy Johnson.

Talk of Johnson running for mayor of Atlanta began in 1967, after Carl Stokes and Richard Hatcher were elected to the post in Cleveland and Gary respectively. Johnson did little to discourage the rumors. In December 1967, he hosted an exclusive Christmas party, where he supposedly discussed the possibility of a run in 1969 with black and white potential donors.[129] Johnson continued to toy with the idea through 1968, before ultimately deciding to hold off for

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[128] The increasing black population had concerned the city's white civic and commercial elite for decades. Mayors Williams Hartsfield and Ivan Allen tried annex several white suburbs including Buckhead, Druid Hills, and Sandy Spring in attempt to secure the city's white majority. Annexation plans repeatedly fails, as residents in the predominantly white suburbs strongly resisted incorporation into the city of Atlanta. In 1968, a group of planners sought to merge Atlanta with Fulton County. This plan also failed. The efforts to incorporate white suburbs in the city continued under Sam Massell. Black Atlantans strongly opposed annexation efforts, seeing it as an attempt to dilute black voting power. See Ronald Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 85-91.

[129] Alex Coffin, "Leroy Johnson Fete A Mayoral Kickoff?" *The Atlanta Constitution*, Dec 18, 1967, 13.

the next election. While attention was focused on Johnson's decision, a twenty-nine-year-old attorney named Maynard Jackson announced his candidacy for the position of vice mayor.

By birth, Maynard Jackson seemed destined to be among the black political elite in Atlanta. He was born in 1938 in Dallas, Texas to Maynard Holbrook Jackson, Sr. and Irene Dobbs, one of the daughters of John Wesley Dobbs. His father was a Baptist minister while his mother held a PhD from the University of Toulouse in France. The family moved to Atlanta in 1945, where the senior Jackson took up a post at the historic Friendship Baptist Church. There, the younger Jackson grew close to his grandfather and would often walk Auburn Avenue and attend meetings with him. After Maynard Jackson, Sr. died in 1953, Dobbs became a surrogate father to his grandson. Jackson, Jr. inherited his grandfather's gift of gab, his father's speaking abilities, and his mother's intellect. By high school, he had developed the large stature—by nineteenth grade he was six feet tall and 250 pounds—and outsized personality, for which he would later become famous.[130] Jackson graduated two years early from David T. Howard High School and enrolled at Morehouse College at fifteen.

At Morehouse, he was a star student, but when he enrolled at Boston University Law School at age nineteen, his youth and immaturity set him back. He failed out of law school and worked briefly as a claims examiner at Cleveland unemployment bureau and as an encyclopedia salesman.[131] He returned to law school two years later, this time at the North Carolina Central University. This time, Jackson excelled, graduating cum laude and heading both the Student Bar Association and the award-winning moot trial team.[132] After graduation, Jackson married and

[130] Gary Pomerantz, *When Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn: The Saga of Two Families and the Making of Atlanta* (New York: Scribner, 1996), 239.

[131] Pomerantz, 366-367.

[132] Sam Hopkins, "'I can Win,' Says Talmadge's Rival." *The Atlanta Constitution*, Jun 07, 1968, 2.

moved back to Atlanta to work for the National Labor Relations Board. The choice of employment surprised his friends and family who believed Jackson was headed for a career as a litigator at a top law firm. They were even more surprised in 1967 when he joined Emory Community Legal Services Center and worked as a public defender for people facing housing discrimination.[133]

Jackson's decision to challenge Herman Talmadge for his seat in the U.S. senate surprised many observers, particularly in black political circles. Jackson entered the race literally hours before the deadline, and had to borrow money from a friend to pay the fee. Unlike Leroy Johnson, he had not consulted the city's black political establishment, much to their dismay. Jackson claimed he "didn't time have to go around" and consult with every major black leader, though this did not stop some leaders from supposedly expressing their consternation. Nonetheless, Jackson eventually earned the support of Atlanta's black community and received endorsements from Leroy Johnson, Julian Bond, and other political officials.

Jackson set out to a run populist campaign, using his experience as a public defender to appeal to poor and working people in both urban and rural areas of Georgia. Influenced by the rhetoric of the Great Society, he advocated for "inventive" anti-poverty initiatives and job creation programs. He claimed he would address the "crisis of the cities not with a pea shooter but with a howitzer, right between eyes."[134] Linking the problems of the urban dweller with those of rural inhabitants, he promised an economic bill of rights "for those of us pushed off the land by machines, pushed off our jobs by automation, pushed into the slums by poor education,

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[133] Ibid.

[134] Dick Hebert, "Jackson: Not Playing Games," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Sep 10, 1968, 1.

bad health, and political helplessness."[135] He also called for a small farms administration to address the economic crisis in rural areas. Herman Talmadge, Jackson claimed, had "failed to act upon the needs of the poor, the small farmer, the unskilled laborer whose increase in minimum wage benefits he has voted against."[136] He also decried Talmadge's anti-labor stance and claimed the senator was in the pockets of "special interests, [his] cronies, special groups."[137] Unlike Talmadge, Jackson argued, he would not be beholden to certain groups, not even African Americans. He was "not running as a Negro" but rather, "running as a Georgian and as a citizen of the United States."[138] One of his campaign ads asked, "Would you vote for Maynard Jackson if he were white?" It continued, stating, "A man with young, fresh ideas on how to make this country a better place for all of us. Maynard Jackson also happens to be Negro. Doesn't make much difference does it?" Like many other black politicians running for office during the period, Jackson acknowledged his race but sought to assert a sense of race neutrality.

Jackson also claimed to represent the future of progressive Georgia politics. He would bring Georgia forward from its segregationist past, personified by Herman Talmadge. He claimed, "Now more than ever before there is a critical need for enlightened and concerned and aggressive leadership to lead Georgia into the 1970s to achieve its destiny as the new of the New South." This new New South, Jackson rhapsodized in one speech, was "not the South that kills children or burns churches or countenances such acts by word or legislative deeds…not the South of lard and beans, pellagra, starved babies, worn-out land, and boll weevil exploitation."

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[135] Black Power—Interracial, 1968, MJ Papers, Series D, Box 1, Folder 9,

[136] B. J. Phillips, "A New Fish in the Pond," *The Atlanta Constitution* , Jun 19, 1968, 4.

[137] Emer Tyson, "Jackson Attacks Talmadge's Record, Calls for Debate," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Jun 26, 1968, 9.

[138] Sam Hopkins, "'I can Win,' Says Talmadge's Rival," *The Atlanta Constitution* , Jun 07, 1968, 29.

The South Jackson believed in was “the South of the courage of Lee and Booker T. Washington, of the justice, vision and dignity of Henry W. Grady and Martin Luther King, Jr., of the sensitivity and art of Margaret Mitchell, Mattiwilda Dobbs, and Leontyne Price.”[139] Citing Robert E. Lee alongside Booker T. Washington, Jackson struck a delicate balance in appealing to both white and black Georgians.

Ultimately, a vision of a progressive “New South” was not enough to get Jackson the Democratic nomination for the senate seat. Talmadge won the primary and later the election by a landslide victory, as most had expected. What many had not expected was Jackson’s victory in the Atlanta metropolitan area, particularly in the predominantly white areas of Sandy Springs, Buckhead, and Ansley Park.[140]The election demonstrated Jackson’s potential in city politics and many expected he would run for office on the municipal level the following year, 1969. Thus, when Jackson announced in March that he would run for Atlanta’s vice mayor, few were surprised.

Like his senatorial campaign, Jackson ran as a progressive. He once again called attention to urban poverty and called for the creation of $10 billion a year Marshall Plan for cities. He also advocated for the creation of an Urban Development Corporation, which would “combine public and private sources of money” and “supply large amounts of money at low interest to community-designed housing projects in low-income areas and aid in the construction of schools, clinics, and other structures deemed necessary by a given community.”[141] Because the program would emphasize “responsible private enterprise,” Jackson contended it would offer aid

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[139] Emer Tyson, "Jackson Attacks Talmadge's Record, Calls for Debate," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Jun 26, 1968, 9.

[140] Bruce Galphin, "The Unvoters," *The Atlanta Constitution* , Sep 16, 1968, 4.

[141] Alex Coffin, "Billions for Cities Urged by Jackson," *The Atlanta Constitution* , May 01, 1969, 17.

without the “bureaucratic red tape” that stymied programs like the Model Cities initiative. Jackson warned that unless billions of federal and private funds were invested in cities, they would come to symbolize “the worst attributes of the great American republic—violence, pollution, decay, alienation, and inhumaneness.” As vice mayor, he promised to make an Atlanta a “center of culture, health, opportunity, entertainment and rational human growth.”[142]

Jackson’s campaign was not without its challenges. This issue of race quickly became a thorn in the side for the Jackson campaign. The black community itself was split on the candidates. Many felt it was time for Atlanta to have a black mayor and threw their support behind Horace Tate, an African American educator. Tate campaigned on a promise to ensure that city committees and commission had representation proportionate the city’s black population. Many conservatives and moderate reformers supported Sam Massell, a Jewish realtor who had served as Ivan Allen’s vice mayor. Massell was known as a racial progressive and claimed he would be the best to lead the city as it moved toward a “50/50 race mixture.”[143] Through the campaign, Jackson was pressed on whom he supported in the mayor’s race. When he refused to take a stand, many “militants” in the black community disparaged him for refusing to endorse the black candidate. Jackson found himself heckled at campaign events throughout the city. Tate meanwhile accused the city’s black political leadership of shutting him of meetings and charged that they secretly made a deal to support Massell in exchange for the white business community’s endorsement of Jackson.[144] Such a deal seemed possible, particularly after Jackson earned the endorsement of the *Atlanta Constitution* and Massell was endorsed by Leroy Johnson,

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[142] Ibid.

[143] Alex Coffin, "Tate Asks U.S. Watch at Polls," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Sep 18, 1969, 1.

[144] Alex Coffin, "Mayor's Race Rolling Along," *The Atlanta Constitution* , Sep 19, 1969, 1.

Jesse Hill, and the *Atlanta Inquirer.* Johnson claimed to support Massell rather than Tate because polls and other data showed that Tate could not be elected. Jesse Hill further argued that Atlanta's black community should focus on getting Jackson elected and voting in at least five more black aldermen.[145]

Ultimately, Massell and Jackson were elected as the first Jewish mayor and the first African American vice mayor of Atlanta, respectively. Jackson also received 20 percent of the white vote. As vice mayor, Jackson presided over a board of alderman that now included five African Americans, including Ira Jackson and Marvin Arrington. As 1970 began, it was clear that black political representation was on the rise in Atlanta, and would only grow as the city's black population became more dominant.

Jackson's campaign for vice mayor reflected the state of the black reform tradition at the dawn of the 1970s. Jackson embraced the bold, progressive rhetoric of War on Poverty liberalism. He contended, "I consider myself to be an advocate for oppressed, needy and neglected people regardless of race and economic status in life."[146] He emphasized his position as a public defender and how he sought to empower the poor and subjugated of Atlanta. In this, he was distinguished from his reformist predecessors, who sought to uplift the poor and working class rather than empower them to seek change themselves. Empowering the poor to address their issues would not only lead to disorder but would threaten the special role and privileges middle class reformers had developed as representatives of the race to the white power structure. The participatory and democratic thrust of the civil rights and black power moments challenged the station of the middle class reformers, but did not destroy it completely. It did inspire the

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[145] Alex Coffin, "Negro Leaders Endorse Massell; Cook Questions Experience Claim," *The Atlanta Constitution* , Oct 03, 1969, 2.

[146] Robert De Leon, "Voice for Needy?—He's Working on it," *The Atlanta Constitution* , Nov 09, 1969, 2

reformers to embrace the rhetoric of black empowerment and to seek out the expansion of black power through traditional avenues; that is, politics and business

In the 1970s, questions about race, reform, and order came to a head over the issue of crime. The problem of crime came to dominate city governance in Atlanta. It was also through the issue of crime that the endurance of the black reform tradition, with its commitment to personal responsibility, communitarian family values, black capitalism, and order, was made manifest.

Chapter 2
From the City Too Busy to the Murder Capital of the U.S.A: The Politics of Law and Order During the Crime Panic of 1972-1975

On a Thursday evening in April 1972, civic leader and *Atlanta Daily World* editor C. A. Scott heard the doorbell ring in his home on Hunter Street. Alone, Scott yelled out, "Who's there?" to no response. He ignored the bell and continued what he had been doing. The bell rang three more insistent times, and when Scott inquired again who was at the door, a young man's voice responded that he was Robert. Scott opened the door to greet a young man who said that he had come to inquire about a paper carrier position that Scott had recently advertised in the *Daily World.* Scott had sought young black men in particular. A job with the newspaper, Scott figured, would keep black youngsters busy and out of trouble during the summer and a little pocket change might prevent them from shoplifting, burglary, or worse, armed robbery. Unemployment, he believed, was one of the most significant forces leading black youth to commit crimes. The two sat down, talked for a bit, and set up an appointment for the young man to come into the office to discuss further details about the position. As Scott got up to open the door to his guest, Robert suddenly pulled out a pistol and said, according to Scott, "I have to have a fix!" He ordered Scott to lie down on the floor, face down, and proceeded take about $90 in cash from his pockets and wallet. The robber quickly ran out while Scott lay on to the floor in shock. The newspaperman was not the only victim of a crime on Hunter Street that night. The same man, who called himself "Robert," had robbed two other people. He also matched the description of a man who reportedly raped and robbed a woman on nearby Fountain Drive the day before.[147]

The spring 1972 "crime spree" of the drug addict of Hunter Street was one of many high profile criminal incidents that gained increasing attention in the early 1970s. As Atlanta

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[147] "Drug Addict on Crime Spree; Hits Westside Homes here," *Atlanta Daily World*, April 16, 1972. 1

continued its climb to becoming a "great international city," the rising crime rate dogged its efforts. Of course, Atlanta was not the only city to experience an increase crime in the early 1970s. Reported rates of crime increased in cities around the country, with cities such as New York, Washington D.C., Detroit, Houston, and Los Angeles showing spiking crime rates between 1970 and 1973.[148] The rates of crime were especially concerning for black Americans in cities, who comprised a disproportionate percentage of crime victims and offenders of street crime. Particularly distressing was the rise of street crime and so-called "black-on-black crime."[149] While low-income blacks were particularly vulnerable to assault against person and property, crime affected African Americans from every socioeconomic strata. Discussions of the crime problem abounded throughout the city's black public sphere in the early 1970s with political figures, civil rights leaders, businessmen and women and other prominent African Americans publically debating the extent of the issue as well as its causes and potential solutions.

As Maynard Jackson's prominence in city government continued to rise, crime became a defining issue in his political ascension. While scholars have focused largely on Jackson's

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[148] William R. Kelley, *Criminal Justice at the Crossroads: Transforming Crime and Punishment* (Columbia University Press, 2015), 22-26.

[149] The term "black on black crime" was rarely used until about 1970. One of the first figures to employ the phrase consistently was Jesse Jackson in his "Country Preacher: On the Case" column in the *Chicago Defender.* Jackson and other early adopters of the phrase used the phase to call attention to the failure to hold black perpetrators of crimes against other black people accountable for their crimes, particular in comparison to the way in which black perpetrators whose victims were white were treated in the criminal justice system. They focused on the lack of justice for black victims. Jackson, for instance, criticized "a double standard which resulted in the wholesale arrests and veritable siege of the black community after the shooting of a white policeman, but failed to produce equal concern upon the attempted assassination of the Rev. Curtis Bell, the burning of his church or the killings of more than 70 black youths." He called on the elected officials of Chicago to urge the criminal justice system to "investigate, arrest and prosecute the guilty while they exercise equal vigor to protect the innocent." The phrase later came to be used to describe a particular category of black criminality and the target of the critique lay on the black perpetrator rather than the justice system. See Pierre Guilmant,"Jesse, McNeil it 'Silence'." *Chicago Daily Defender (Daily Edition)*, August 19, 1970, 4; see also David Wilson, *Inventing black-on-black violence: Discourse, Space, and Representation* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press), 2005.

aggressive minority business enterprise programs, Jackson also introduced several anti-crime initiatives during his tenures as vice mayor and mayor that have been overshadowed in the historical literature about the Jackson administration.[150] Competing anti-crime discourses in the city's black public sphere shaped Jackson's thinking on the issue of crime. Many contended that crime was fostered by structural factors such as unemployment, poor housing, under-education, persistent discrimination, and historical economic inequities and that crime could only be solved by state intervention into employment and economic justice. Others contended that crime was the result of the poor decisions and moral failings of particular community members and consequently had to be addressed through punitive measures. In his first mayoral term, Jackson sought to strike a balance between progressives' calls for structural changes and conservatives' demands for punishment by focusing on structural reforms within the criminal justice system and community-based reforms within the Black Atlanta.

Maynard Jackson's politics of law and order were informed by the black liberal reformists' faith in the efficacy of bureaucracy and their commitment to community self-help. Jackson's public safety reforms were, to use Naomi Murakawa's apt description of liberal criminal justice reform, procedural in nature.[151] The reforms, its proponents believed, would

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[150] See Stone, Alton J. Hornsby, *Black power in Dixie: A Political History of African Americans in Atlanta* (Gainesville, Fl.: University Press of Florida, 2009); J. Phillip Thompson, *Double Trouble: Black Mayors, Black communities, and the Call for a Deep Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Adolph L. Reed, *Stirrings in the Jug: Black Politics in the Post-Segregation Era* (Minneapolis, Minn: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Gary Pomerantz, *When Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn: The Saga of Two Families and the Making of Atlanta* (New York: Scribner, 1996), Clarence Stone, *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946-1988* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1988).

[151] Murakawa describes procedural reforms, which involved "administrative tinkering" with laws, codes of conduct, and protocols, as part and parcel of the liberal law and order. She defines liberal law and order, which emerged during the Truman administration and expanded during Johnson's War on Poverty as "a set of procedural, psychological standards for evaluating racial fairness in crime and punishment." See Naomi Murakawa, *The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 67; and "How Liberals Legitimate Broken Windows: An Interview With Naomi

address the patterns of discrimination and inefficiency within the system that fostered distrust among black Atlantans and thus fostered lawlessness in the city's black community. In his first term, Jackson, aided by other leaders such as Ira Jackson on the Atlanta City Council and Reginald Eaves in the newly established Department of Public Safety, focused particularly on modernizing the city's perennially racist police department. He sought to professionalize the police through administrative reforms and to strengthen the department's relationship with the city's black community through outreach programs. Yet, Jackson and other liberal leaders also insisted that the city's fight against crime required the participation of its citizens, particularly those in crime-ridden black communities. Thus, black liberal leaders sought to incorporate black Atlantans in the city's crime control efforts through community crime prevention programs. The Jackson administration's two-pronged approach of targeting structural flaws within the criminal justice system and inner flaws in the black community placed Jackson in the tradition of the city's black liberal reformers who aimed their reforms both internally and externally.

Between 1972 and 1974, Atlantans both black and white believed that the rates of crime had reached a new height and that no citizen was safe from the criminal elements that were once restricted to impoverished areas. Criminals appeared to be taking over the streets of Atlanta, putting the lives and properties of law-abiding abiding citizens at risk. The rates of crime in the six major categories—aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, larceny, rape, and homicide—increased almost monthly, as the city's major newspapers anxiously reported. The most noticeable increase occurred between 1972 and 1973. Statistics from the Metropolitan Atlanta Crime Commission revealed the number of property crimes, the type that reached the largest

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Murakawa," in Jordan T. Camp and Christina Heatherton, ed., *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter* (New York: Verso Press, 2016), 228-231.

number of Atlantans, increased from the 1972—residential burglaries were up 11 percent, grand larcenies rose 8 percent, and auto theft went up 14.8 percent. The rate for non-residential burglaries decreased, an undistinguished bright spot in a mostly grim report. Violent crimes such rape, robbery and aggravated assault increased by 47.5 percent, 27 percent, and 15.8 percent respectively. The rise in homicides was particularly troubling. The homicide rate had risen to 263, thus reaching 54 killings per 100,000 population and breaking the 1972 record of 255. *The Atlanta Constitution* reported the new murder statistics with dismay, “An unprecedented tidal wave of murder swept Atlanta in 1973, swelling a record-breaking crime report for the year.”[152] The murders were “increasingly senseless,” and all the more alarming. By the end of 1973, Atlantans reluctantly lay claim to the nickname of “Murder Capital of the U.S,” a moniker obviously troubling to the political and business leaders who sought to make Atlanta an international convention center and tourist destination, and the inhabitants of Atlanta whose wariness of urban crime rose to a frenzy.[153]

The Atlanta press stoked the hysteria with almost daily reports of armed robberies, rapes, murders and assaults occurring all across the city and, occasionally, in the surrounding suburbs as well. The mainstream *Atlanta Constitution* and *Atlanta Journal* regularly reported on various “bizarre assaults” and “crime sprees,” throughout 1972 and 1973. Specifics about the types of assaults and the locations of the crimes such as these created a sense of an unprecedented epidemic of violent crime, particularly murder, in Atlanta. In a year-end editorial, *Constitution* editors Jim Stewart and Jim Merriner reviewed the crisis. They reported that there were more

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[152] Jim Stewart and Jim Merriner. "A Tidal Wave of Murder Swept Atlanta during 1973," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Dec 30, 1973, 2.

[153] “Metro Atlanta Crime Statistics: 1973-1974,” Metropolitan Atlanta Crime Commission, March 1975, 36.

than 50 killings per 100,000 residents, making 1973 the deadliest year in recent memory. Moreover, they claimed, 1973 was marked by an increase in seemingly random, bizarre, and unsolved crimes, suggesting that murderers still roamed the streets, looking for their next victims.

Atlantans, however, were more at risk for crimes against property, and Stewart and Merriner detailed those statistics as well. Robberies, burglaries, larcenies and auto thefts were up and were no longer bound to the downtown business district and other crime-ridden areas of the central city, and no longer occurred primarily on dark streets in the middle of the night. Bandits, they reported, were boldly holding people up at gun or knife-point in the middle of the day and in rather public spaces around the city. Furthermore, thieves were beginning to infiltrate suburbs, as Dekalb, Cobb, and Clayton counties all witnessed increases in residential burglaries. In 1973, "Suburbanites and city dwellers," they asserted, "became paranoid over the possibility of being robbed."[154] They described this paranoia as a "new crime consciousness," that made Atlantans afraid to leave the house and, sometimes, take up arms to defend themselves. In one tale that exemplified the dangers of both crime and crime consciousness, a man named Willie Blackmon was so paranoid about being robbed in his home, he only answered his front door after dark with rifle in hand. On the fateful day he did open the door to an armed robber, Blackmon and the culprit shot each other to death.[155] In this crime wave, the press suggested, even the most prepared citizens could be victimized.

The talk of crime took on an even more urgent tone in the city's black press. The *Atlanta Daily World* had reported upon crimes committed in Atlanta's black community for decades and

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[154] Jim Stewart and Jim Merriner, "A Tidal Wave of Murder Swept Atlanta during 1973."

[155] Ibid.

had begun to describe a growing “crime menace” in Black Atlanta in the mid-1960s. However in the early 1970s, the paper’s stories concerning crime, criminals, and public safety increased in number and intensity. Like the *Journal* and the *Constitution,* the *Daily World* regularly reported upon violent crime sprees, vicious assaults, and senseless murders. Editor-in-chief, C. A. Scott, railed against crime in numerous editorials, particularly after his home invasion.[156] “Something must be done,” he protested in one editorial, “Women complain that they can’t walk the streets in peace…Policemen are being killed. Atlanta now shivers under the highest crime rate of any city of its size in the nation.“[157] While the other newspapers would discuss the crime problem from a distance, the *Daily World’*s coverage of crime was more detailed and personalized to the citizens of the black community. Because the majority of the victims of crime in Atlanta were members of the black community, the editors framed the crime wave as an assault on the black community. Victims of crime included the paper’s editor, prominent businessmen and women, and other notable figures in the black community. “Crime,” Scott would often conclude in his editorials, “is everybody’s business.”[158]

The city’s other prominent black periodical, the *Atlanta Inquirer,* also reported on “the new wave of violence against blacks.”[159] Historically more progressive than the *Daily World,* the weekly *Inquirer*, nonetheless reported upon the crime wave in similar panicked language. “Vicious crimes have been—and are being—committed in this country,” one editorial asserted, “and heads of households must undoubtedly wonder to what lengths they will have to go to

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[156] "Drug Addict on Crime Spree; Hits Westside Homes here." *Atlanta Daily World*, April 16, 1972, 1.

[157] "Capital Punishment Needed," *Atlanta Daily World*, February 16, 1973. 4

[158] “More Crime," *Atlanta Daily World,* July 02, 1972. 4

[159] Ernest Pharr, “New Wave of Violence Against Blacks; Figures Startling,” *The Atlanta Inquirer,* July 29, 1972, 1.

protect precious life and property."[160] Stories and editorials detailed brutal murders, rapes, and assaults committed in black communities across the metropolitan Atlanta region. One sensational column published in July 1972 described several crimes, including a woman who was shot to death by her own husband as she read the Bible and a young woman who was kidnapped, raped and murdered by three young men in the Dixie Hills community. The youths also kidnapped a 15-year old girl, Delores Fullins, in their spree. The teenager was able to escape and describe the assaults to the authorities and the *Inquirer.* The report included a photo spread that showed young Fullins guiding a tour of the sites of the kidnapping and assault.[161] Hipper to the times than Scott and the staff at the *Daily World,* the editors used the language of black nationalism in their attacks on crime. They spoke of victims and potential victims as "soul brothers" and "soul sisters." In an editorial entitled, "Black is Dead," the *Inquirer* editors asserted, "Unless the entire black community rises up and begins to assert itself about improving the human condition instead of destroying it, Black won't be Beautiful. Black will be Dead!"

While black both black progressives and conservatives adopted similar panicked tones, they understood the nature of the crime issue and its potential solutions in rather different ways. Black progressives generally contended that structural forces such as poverty unemployment and underemployment, inflation, under-education of black children, and continued structural racism and discrimination undergirded the proliferation of black crime. Alderman Ira Jackson initially pointed blame at the lack of job prospects and steady employment, which fostered frustration and hopelessness among working class and poor blacks. This desperation encouraged black men to steal from their neighbors, enter the drug trade, and take out their frustrations of their friends and

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[160] "Brutal, Vicious," *Atlanta Inquirer,* May 6 1972, 2.

[161] Ibid.

family members. Jackson claimed that any man "without a decent job and income," was "bound to come home frustrated."[162] Officials at the Atlanta Urban League also believed that unemployment and more generally, poverty, undergirded the crime problem. Blacks were both victims and perpetrators of crime, Lyndon Wade, executive director of the Atlanta Urban League claimed due to "neglect that close opportunities and force blacks to survive under substandard conditions in employment, housing, healthcare, education, etc., which are considered crime contributing factors."[163] In a 1973 crime prevention seminar organized by the Atlanta Urban League, officials explained to attendees, "Factors pointed out as those contributing to the rage expressed by perpetrators of homicides were: human behavior, feeling of helplessness, powerlessness, low self-esteem, unemployment, underemployment, institutionalized racism."[164]

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference also recognized the link between crime and unemployment. Atlanta branch director Hosea Williams, argued, "A man will rob before he'll starve."[165] The SCLC pledged to "fight crime by going all out for more and better jobs for blacks."[166] The Atlanta chapter thus organized a campaign in the winter of 1973 to encourage local car dealership owners to hire more black employees. The campaign would then expand to include bakeries and banks, with SCLC representatives working with the businesses in their hiring practices. These opportunities for honest work, SCLC officials, believed would encourage blacks to chose legitimacy over crime. During the crime wave, black liberals consistently

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[162] Ernest Pharr, "Black Crime—Why?" *Atlanta Inquirer,* August 5, 1972, 1.

[163] Lyndon Wade, Response to Questionnaire from Southern Regional Office," April 1, 1974, Box 128, Folder 26, Atlanta Urban League records, Robert Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center, Atlanta, GA.

[164] Notes from December 1973 Seminar on Crime, Box 207, Folder 3, Atlanta Urban League Records.

[165] Boyd Lewis, "Crime-Job Link Is New SCLC Thrust," *Atlanta Inquirer*, December 1, 1973, 17.

[166] Ibid.

asserted that the one of the most essential solutions to the problem of black crime was to create more employment opportunities for working class blacks and to end discrimination in hiring and promotion. "We're not born criminals," Williams contended, "We lack the access to opportunity. We are seeking equal access, equal involvement."[167] While Williams and other black progressives sought to provide employment opportunities to blacks, particularly black youth, they stopped short linking their conceptions of the crime problem to broader critiques of Atlanta's political economy. The issue, as they articulated in the press and in policy prescriptions, was not discrimination in hiring; it was the lack of opportunity for good jobs. In this logic, workable solutions were thus limited to the opening opportunity and creating more jobs, particularly for low skilled and young blacks.

The progressive black press also pointed to structural factors as the main causes of crime in Black Atlanta. A cartoon the *Atlanta Inquirer* published in the summer of 1972 illustrated this view. It featured a black thief haunted by a phantom with the phrases "unemployment," "housing," "lack of education," "broken homes," "liquor," "lack of religious faith," and "frustration," as he assaults another black man. The phantom has both men in its grasp, suggesting that both assailants and victims were trapped in their structural circumstances. However, more than the economic determinants, the *Inquirer* focused on what editor Ernest Pharr called "the subtleties of racism." In the fight against crime, Pharr insisted, "First, we must insist the 'subtleties of racism' be erased." "Racism and frustrations on the job," he argued, "have an impact on the Black person's treatment of his family and neighbors."[168] Pharr frequently used the particular phrasing of "subtleties of racism," almost always placing the

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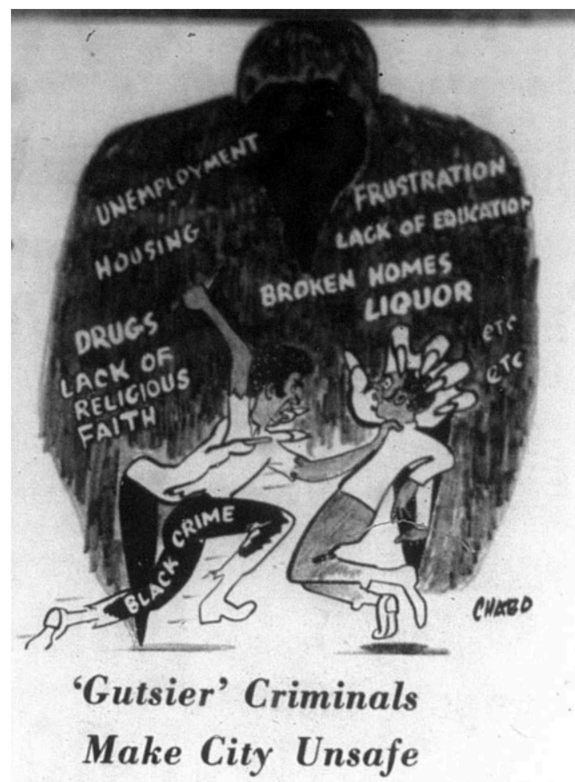
[167] Ibid.

[168] Ernest Pharr, "Black Crime—Why?" *Atlanta Inquirer* August 5, 1972, 1.

phrase in quotation marks. Rather than explicating the discernable structures of racial discrimination in housing, employment, and education, Pharr employed the vague catchall phrase to describe racist practices and policies that were not really subtle at all. The *Inquirer,* like the AUL, the SCLC, and other progressives, consistently argued that policy officials needed to address the structural economic and social barriers that drove black Atlantans into lives of crime. Their policy suggestions, however—creating more low wage jobs, establishing quotas for black employment, and eventually, affirmative action in city contracting procedures—illustrate that many understood the significance of economic inequality but perhaps underestimated the scale of the economic crisis facing low-income black Atlantans.



In their analyses of the black crime problem during the early 1970s crime wave, conservative blacks also acknowledged the structural and social constraints such as unemployment, poverty, poor housing and racism. Yet, to conservatives, these factors were no excuse for criminality. Black Atlantans, and black Americans broadly, had faced these problems since emancipation, and many had "fought their way out of these horrible holes" without stealing and killing one another. "Look around you, at those of us, who suffer daily; go without the good clothes and food; work two jobs, and take low, even when our pride is hurt because we are working for home, family and city in that order," *Atlanta Daily World* editor George Coleman

asserted, "All this without stealing; stepping upon another man's property, or even revenging ourselves upon the law, when it errs." "Who do you think you are," he continued, "how dare you tell us that racism is a valid excuse for crime?"[169] Conservative blacks placed the onus for crisis on the behavior of criminals and the supposed moral deficiencies among black Atlantans rather than economic and social inequities. They pointed to the "culture of permissiveness" and lack of respect for authority that existed among Americans in general. The permissive society, *Atlanta Daily World* editors claimed, "tended to abandon the stern discipline for persons and property." They continued, "How many thoughtless individuals do we see today, rampaging through public parks...public buildings...with no regard for others or the violation of the laws." Courts, law enforcement agencies, and municipal officials could do little to halt crime "in a country that knows not the restraint imposed by laws regarding property or persons."[170] This permissiveness, they argued, led directly to crime.[171] Young black men and women did not learn respect and self-control in their homes or their schools and, therefore, failed to understand the consequences of criminal actions.

Georgia state representative, Billy McKinney of Atlanta provocatively described the culture of permissiveness and lack of respect for law and order as "Nigger Anemia."[172] It was a "malady" whose "major symptoms are murder, robbery, rape, burglary, mugging and simple rip-off of law abiding citizens." The "anemia" affected black youth particularly who were growing

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[169] George M. Coleman, "Crime is Wrong; most Black Atlantans Know." *Atlanta Daily World*, Nov 21, 1971. 4

[170] "Crime Prevention Week," *Atlanta Daily World*, February 17, 1972, 4.

[171] Ibid.

[172] "Another 'Anemia' Sapping Life From City-Rep. McKinney," *Atlanta Inquirer*, January 12, 1974, 10.

up “totally without conscience or regard for another’s life of property.” “Somehow,” he argued, “we are allowing black youth to approach adulthood without the basic requirement necessary to produce a wholesome individual.” Likening the black crime problem to a disease like Sickle Cell anemia, a disease less threatening than the crime problem, McKinney asserted, because “it rarely kills.” Though the majority of Atlanta’s conservative blacks did not go so far as to describe black criminality as a sickness, many did pathologize criminal behavior, describing black crime as stemming from a cultural deficiency that affected multiple generations of black Atlantans.

Conservative blacks also pointed to the related phenomenon of the lack of respect for law enforcement and the glorification of black outlaws in black communities. “As strange as it may seem,” *Daily World* editors wrote, “arch criminals are better known to the general, public than are nationally reputed law enforcements; in fact, the highly trusted post of ‘keepers of the law’ are referred to simply as ‘the Fuzz, ‘Flat Feet,’ ‘Pig’ or the ‘legal murderers.’”[173] McKinney argued, “Black citizens have made the mistake of...defending the actions of criminals and blaming the ‘system for any depraved or despicable act…” Though some acknowledged the long history and still very present reality of police brutality and the legitimate causes for animosity between law enforcement and Atlanta’s black community, as illustrated by the *Daily World*’s occasional features about instances of police brutality, black conservatives believed that many blacks’ views of law enforcement were warped and caused more harm than good.[174] Black Atlantans were letting grudges from the past prevent them from accurately understanding the true sources of violence in the black community. “Brutality, this is a word I am sick of hearing, also the act of it,” deplored a local Elder J. E. Ross in a letter to the *Daily World,* “I hear no one

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[173] "The Growing Crime Rate," *Atlanta Daily World*, April 30, 1971, 4.

[174] George M. Coleman, "Handcuffed Man Dragged on Stomach." *Atlanta Daily World*, Oct 21, 1971, 1. More stories in the Inquirer

saying anything about brutality from both sides of the fence. Let the white man do one thing toward the Negro and you will hear the word brutality ringing God knows how far and long."[175] The hyperfocus on instances of police brutality, conservatives in the press contended, obscured the growing sense of lawlessness and disorder that fostered crime in Atlanta's black community. Editor C.A. Scott asserted in an editorial, "Obedience of the law is part of a system that honors the whole. The Negro must become part of this and improve upon what exists. In this way he can be believed when he shouts that he has been mistreated."[176] George Coleman described "a confused public, trying to bridge the chasm between the reports of the man who saves you from the bandits, and stories of the guy that knocks you around if you don't obey him…" "Let's be honest," he wrote, "Many officers have acted like 'pigs' in the past, but in Atlanta we are working toward a common goal of true police department, composed of all races and intelligent people to protect us."[177] Black Atlantans needed to put aside grievances with the police and cooperate with law enforcement officials to stem the crime wave. The crime problem, they suggested, persisted because some black Atlantans refused to give police the respect and cooperation they deserved. Black Atlantans needed to realize how dependent upon law enforcement they were in this moment, in which any person, at any time could become a victim of crime. After all, as George Coleman surmised, "even the man who has fought police brutality, and mistrusts everything in a police uniform may find himself calling [law enforcement] when

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[175] Elder J. E. Ross, "Letter to the Editor." *Atlanta Daily World*, April 06, 1973. 4

[176] "High Crime Kills all Beliefs." *Atlanta Daily World*, July 06, 1971. 6

[177] George M. Coleman, "Reasons to Support City's Police Appreciation Day." *Atlanta Daily World*, Apr 30, 1971. 4

the desperate burglar tears his home apart, when the sadist molests his daughter; when the rapist attacks his wife."[178]

As the crime panic continued and the crimes appeared to be increasingly heinous, black progressives' and conservatives' views about the crime issue began to converge. A November 1972 cartoon published in the *Inquirer* reveals black progressives' shifting conceptualizations of the black criminal during the crime wave. Whereas the criminal was once haunted by the phantoms of "unemployment," lack of education," and "broken homes," now the culprit was described as "a two-legged animal," whom the black community should "show no sympathy" when caught.[179] While the tension between structural and individual-centered notions of black crime persisted in Black Atlanta's political culture, black Atlantans, both progressive and conservative believed that drastic changes within both the criminal justice system and the black community needed to occur.

BLACK COMMUNITY SHOULD SHOW NO SYMPATHY WHEN THE TWOLEGGED ANIMALS ARE CAUGHT

In the midst of the crime panic, Atlantans prepared to elect a mayor. "Crime," the *Atlanta Constitution* declared, "is one of the major issues, if not THE major issue, of the current Atlanta

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[178] Ibid.

[179] "Give Me Your Pocketbook!" *Atlanta Inquirer*, November 25, 1972, 2.

mayor's race."[180] *Constitution* columnist Reg Murphy concluded, "The problems of crime in Atlanta won't be solved until they are discussed out in the open by the candidates for mayor."[181] The candidates, compelled to address the rising crime rates, proffered analyses and solutions to the situation. The race was crowded; candidates among other incumbent mayor Sam Massell, his vice mayor, Maynard Jackson, Georgia state senator Leroy Johnson, former representative Charles Weltner, businessman Harold Dye, and Socialist Workers candidate Debbie Bustin.[182] "Almost all of the candidates made various solutions to the crime issue a central component of their platforms. Harold Dye proposed creating an auxiliary police force to be used for traffic control and ticketing and "releasing" 200 to 300 policemen to focus on fighting "serious crime."[183] Socialist candidate Debbie Bustin stressed the need for "community control" of black communities and end to police brutality.[184] Charles Weltner, a former congressman and anti-segregationist judge on the Georgia Supreme Court, promised to reorganize the police and fire departments, to create a new Department of Public Safety, to "beef up" the foot patrol units, require permits for the purchase of handguns, and create a three digit emergency number for citizens to reach help more quickly. He also proposed developing police precinct in public schools and organizing volunteer constabularies in high crime areas which would "keep watch

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[180] "Crime Wave," *The Atlanta Constitution*, September 28, 1973, 1.

[181] Reg Murphy, "The no. 1 Issue in Atlanta Politics." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Jun 17, 1973. 1.

[182] Other candidates included businesswoman Betty Morrison, former policeman John E. Chambers, minister Rev. W. J. Stafford, former Lockheed employee Ernest Mochella, R. John Genins, and William Ogle of the Hare Krinshas. Frederick Allen, "Dye is 10th Candidate for Mayor." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Jul 03, 1973. 1

[183] Ibid.

[184] Townsend, Claudia. "Everyone has Crime Solution at GSU Clash of Candidates." *The Atlanta Constitution* Aug 02, 1973, 1; Boyd Lewis, "Rebellion Can Be Brutality Result," AI, September 22, 1973, 4.

and help preserve order."[185] Weltner also attacked Mayor Massell for his "crime blindness," arguing that Massell was "either unable or unwilling to do anything about crime." "How can a mayor who can't understand why crime should be an issue take any effective steps to control the killings and robberies which are now part of everyday life in Atlanta?" Weltner declared at a press conference in June 1973.[186]

Sam Massell, one of the last candidates to enter the race, found himself forced to defend his tenure as the mayor during which crime rates had appeared to spiral out of control. He argued that both the media and the other mayoral candidates exaggerated the extent of the crime problem in order to unnecessarily frighten voters. Atlanta's crime rates were comparable to other cities of its size, he claimed, and its crime problem was not unique.[187] Furthermore, Massell argued that crime rates were declining and the city was finally beginning to "turn the corner on crime."[188] Citing a report by the Atlanta Regional Commission, Massell claimed, "After a long history of crime increase, this may be the single most important breakthrough we've seen. Our commitment is stronger ever, and I guarantee that you will be the winner over crime in this city."[189] Massell also emphasized the crime control initiatives during his administration, such as the programs funded by the LEAA Impact federal grants.[190] Massell argued that his administration had "done some of the most innovative work on criminal justice procedure in the

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[185] Tom Linthicum, "Weltner in Mayor Race, Offers Plan for Police." *The Atlanta Constitution* , May 17, 1973, 1

[186]Sam Hopkins, "Weltner Attacks Massell for 'Crime Blindness'." *The Atlanta Constitution* , June 02, 1973, 1.

[187] Sam Hopkins, "Sam Massell Getting 'Raw Deal'?" *The Atlanta Constitution* , Sep 26, 1973. 1

[188] Sam Hopkins, "Crime Down in City, Says Mayor." *The Atlanta Constitution*, July 17, 1973. 1.

[189] Tom Linthicum, "Massell Says He'll Seek New Term." *The Atlanta Constitution* , Aug 17, 1973. 2

[190] Explain what these grants are

country" and its response to the crime wave served as a model for the rest of the country.[191] He vowed to continue his fight against crime by increasing the number of police. Throughout his campaign, he also emphasized support of the police department's controversial new police chief, John Inman.[192] Inman, a twenty-two year veteran of the Atlanta police department, was not popular in Atlanta's black community. Black police officers accused Inman of favoring white officers and condoning discrimination within the police force. Inman was known to support officers accused of brutality in the black community and was also accused of attempting to frame alderman Ira Jackson.[193] Rev. Stafford argued that whichever candidate was elected must replace Inman immediately.[194] Nonetheless, Massell placed his support behind Inman's "crime battle plan," which proposed doubling the size of the police force and decreasing the number of beats.[195]

The two black frontrunners, Maynard Jackson and Leroy Johnson, had long been engaged in the crime debates in Atlanta's black community. During their debates, in their interviews, and in their campaign platforms, the candidates engaged in the discourses of black crime, often blending both liberal and conservative conceptualizations of criminality and crime control. Their

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[191] Boyd Lewis, "Crime: Black Take Over Cry for 'Law and Order,' *Atlanta Inquirer*, June 23, 1973, 3, 20.

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[193] Granum, Rex. "Officers Blasting Chief Inman Get Hearing." *The Atlanta Constitution* , Apr 12, 1973. 2; "Inman-Jackson Comment, Check Crime, Citizens Ask," *Atlanta Inquirer*, March 17, 1973, 1; Atlanta Rising, 179-180

[194] Hopkins, Sam. "Must Oust Inman, Declares Stafford." *The Atlanta Constitution* , April 18, 1973. 1; Curiously, the other two black candidates did not come out in opposition to Inman. Jackson, a persistent foe of Inman in his term as vice mayor, refused to comment about his plans for Inman, while Johnson claimed that he could accomplish his program with Inman in place as police chief See Tom Linthicum, "Johnson Tells Police Plan." *The Atlanta Constitution* , June 15, 1973, 1.

[195] Tish Young, "Mayoral Candidates Differ in Reaction to 'Crime Battle'." *The Atlanta Constitution* , July 16, 1973, 1.

policy proposals often concretized the theories of crime and criminality that had been circulating in the black community.

Leroy Johnson was the first to enter the mayor's race. Johnson announced his candidacy at the final session of the Georgia state senate in early March 1973, stating, "When I think of this city's great past, I am filled with respect and love. When I think of this city's present. I am filled with fear and trembling. And when I think of this city's future, I am filled with the need to take out of my coat, roll up my sleeves and put my shoulder to the wheel."[196] Strong leadership, Johnson consistently declared, was what the city needed to stop the criminals from taking over the city. Under his leadership, Johnson promised that the city would have a more efficient police force and a special task force to address crime issue. Johnson argued that the one of the most pressing issues was the disarray of the Atlanta Police Department. "I'm disturbed about the police department," he stated in a speech at Emory Law School in May 1973, "Because you have a black organization and a white organization there. They're worlds apart but they all represent the city of Atlanta." He continued, "We must say to the black and white factions: Let's pull this city together. We must protect the city."[197] Johnson proposed a 10-point crime control program, which included hiring 500 more police officers and giving officers a $50 raise.[198] He also proposed the creation of a burglary squad and a metro-wide fugitive squad, which would, he described, "work on unsolved crimes, tracking down felons and searching out hoodlums wanted in other jurisdictions."[199] Johnson was not afraid to employ the phrase "law and order" in both

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[196] Ernest Pharr, "Johnson Launches '73 Mayor's Race," *Atlanta Inquirer,* March 24, 1973, 1.

[197] "Sen. Johnson Urges Mayor's Action on Police Problems." *Atlanta Daily World,* May 20, 1973. 1

[198] "Son. Johnson Tells Plans for Police." *Atlanta Daily World,* June 17, 1973.

[199] "Johnson's Police Plan." *The Atlanta Constitution* , Jun 16, 1973. 1,

black and white communities, reflecting the shift toward punitiveness in the broader black community.[200] Surveys showed that more black Atlantans—25 percent—considered crime to be the city's biggest issue in the election than white Atlantans—15 percent.[201] By the time of the 1973 mayoral race, as the *Inquirer*'s Ernest Pharr described, "Blacks' attitude on solutions to crime were almost of a Wallace vintage." In one *Atlanta Inquirer* survey, a majority of blacks "felt that stricter law enforcement was called for."[202] Johnson appealed to these attitudes among black Atlantans by accusing the Massell administration, which included his vice mayor Maynard Jackson, of being too lenient on crime. Under the weak leadership of Massell, Johnson asserted, "Atlanta is suffering from an epidemic of crime. Homicides are spreading like a contagion. We have a mass infection of assaults and muggings. The only cure I know is a big dose of extra strong leadership."[203]

Maynard Jackson also used a contamination metaphor to describe the crime problem. "A thriving fungus among us is crime. Throughout the city, everybody is crime's victim."[204] Jackson announced his candidacy two weeks after Leroy Johnson. Jackson emphasized his extensive work fighting against crime in his position as vice mayor. In addition to initiating the Citizens Crusade Against Crime,[205] Jackson was also recognized as a crusader against police brutality. As

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[200] Reg Murphy, "Law and Order: Look Who Uses it Now." *The Atlanta Constitution* , Mar 22, 1973. 1

[201] Ibid.

[202] Boyd Lewis, "Crime: Black Take Over Cry for 'Law and Order,'" *Atlanta Inquirer*, June 23, 1973, 3, 20.

[203] Ernest Pharr, "Johnson Launches '73 Mayor's Race," *Atlanta Inquirer,* March 24, 1973, 1.

[204] "Jackson Calls for City Free of Crime, Hate, Corruption." *Atlanta Daily World*, May 11, 1973, 8.

[205] Jackson launched the Citizens Crusade Against Crime, bipartisan, biracial and interdenominational anti-crime intitiative, in December 1972. Announcing the creation of the Crusade at a December meeting of the Atlanta Business League, Jackson contended, "We as citizens must marshal our power in the form of responsible citizen action and, thereby help fight crime and its deathly, deleterious effects on Atlanta."

president of the board of alderman and member of the aldermanic police committee, Jackson used his position to advocate for victims of police brutality. Jackson asserted at the beginning of his term as vice mayor, “Some of the men on our force think that policing means moving into a neighborhood or street area, like an occupational force, more militaristic than benevolent.”[206] Minutes from Police Committee meetings illustrate that Jackson pressed for investigations into allegations of police brutality, including the beating of 21 year old Tommy Mims in the summer of 1971 and the shooting of an unarmed store employed named Christopher Greenway in the summer of 1972.[207] Jackson became a liaison for black community organizations to advocate on behalf of victims of brutality. Leaders of organizations such as the Atlanta NAACP and the SCLC reached out to Jackson directly to alert him about “clear cases of police brutality,” knowing that Jackson would “check this case out.”[208] Throughout Jackson’s tenure, several police officers were investigated for allegations of police brutality. Several of them, including one of the officers found guilty of charges of brutality in the Tommy Mims case, were either suspended without pay or discharged from the Atlanta Police Department at Jackson’s request.[209] Jackson’s reputation as a staunch opponent against overzealous policing earned him the ire of critics. C. A. Laderoute of Atlanta complained, “It has reached the ridiculous point where every time a police officer attempts to make an arrest of some damnable hell raising melanic he must

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See “Poverty and Crime: Twin Challenges to Atlanta’s Greatness,” 1-16-73, Series D, Box 1, Folder 18, Maynard Jackson papers; S. C. Gordon, “Vice Mayor Reveals Citizen Crusade Against Crime,” *Atlanta Inquirer*, December 23, 1972, 1.

[206] Jeff Tucker, "Jackson Urges Police Changes." *The Atlanta Constitution,* August 09, 1970, 1.

[207] Hank Ezell, “Jackson Urged Police-Shoot Probe,” *Atlanta Journal*, June 23, 1972, 1.

[208] Letter to Maynard Jackson from Stoney Cooks of the SCLC, July 16, 1971, Series B, Box 11, Folder 11, Maynard Jackson Papers

[209] Sept. 2, 1971 daily bulletin; D. L. Stanley, “Vice Mayor Jackson Acts to Halt Police Brutality,” AI, July 10, 191, 1; Ernest Pharr, “two Police Fired; Brutality, Racism Cited,” AI, May 1, 1971, 1.

be prepared to justify and prove every second of the affray."[210] However, Jackson did not attack police brutality out of some sort of hatred of the police or in an attempt to challenge the legitimacy of police department, as his critics often contended. Rather, he was an ardent supporter for reforms in the police department that would increase the size and efficiency of the police. He argued that the police were "undermanned, under-equipped, and woefully, underpaid."[211] Police brutality was rampant in part because police did not have the equipment that would enable them to avoid violence and police effectively. Furthermore, their low pay was demoralizing and discouraged highly qualified people from joining the force. Better equipment, better pay, and an expanded force, Jackson insisted, would help to improve police behavior and thus, enable the force to better address the crime problem.

Black police officers also considered Jackson an ally in City Hall. On one April night in 1970, twenty-one officers from the Afro-American Patrolmen's League (AAPL) confronted Jackson at his home at 1:45 in the morning. The officers went on to express their concerns about the rampant racism within the police department, as well as the poor pay, for about an hour and a half.[212] A letter from the AAPL later elucidated several of the grievances the officers delivered, which included the lack of black superior and superintendents, the removal of patrol cars as punishment, the consistent degrading of black officers in the daily bulletin, and the confining of black officers to a riot task force which lacked proper training and equipment. The officers also demanded an investigation into the "unnecessary harassment and suspensions of black

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[210] Letter to Nick Ambrose, from C. A. Laderoute, July 17, 1971, cc'ed to Jackson, Box 11, Folder 6, Series B, Maynard Jackson Papers.

[211] Jeff Tucker, "Jackson Urges Police Changes."

[212] Note by Jackson, Box 11, Folder 6, Series B, Maynard Jackson Papers.

officers."[213] By the time Jackson was a mayoral candidate he was known as a defender of victims of police brutality and supporter of black officers in the Atlanta Police Department. Like Leroy Johnson, he was a proponent of law and order; he understood brutality and police department inefficiency as illustrative of a lack of law and order. Consequently, reform of the police department was central in Jackson's crime and law enforcement platform.

Jackson's platform, distributed as a compact handout and articulated in numerous speeches on the campaign trail, was divided into four proposals. In the crime prevention section, Jackson proposed installing high intensity streetlights to illuminate high crime areas, developing a crisis intervention program in a new department of human resources to "help harmonize public disputes before they become violent crimes," and inaugurating an "Operation Safety," a citywide campaign to reduce the opportunities for crime through citizen education. These proposals suggest that Jackson understood crimes such as robbery and car theft, for instance, as crimes of opportunity that could be stemmed by brightening dark streets and teaching citizens how to safeguard their person and belongings. Jackson's crisis intervention program also implied that he understood that the majority of murders, assaults, and rapes occurred between family members, friends and acquaintances. Under apprehension, Jackson suggested a study of the feasibility of installing brightly marked and easily available call boxes, encouraging the completion of a more effective metro Atlanta central criminal records index and a single fingerprint system for the state of Georgia, and "giving consideration" to the idea of decentralizing the APD and establishing a system of a precinct stations throughout the city. In his detection section, Jackson proposed increasing personnel by immediately filling the 125 vacancies in the Atlanta police department, a more effective allocation of police manpower by establishing foot patrols, two

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[213] Letter from the AAPL, undated, Box 11, Folder 11, Series B, Maynard Jackson Papers

man patrol units, employing meter maids to deal with parking tickets, and using cadets and civilian workers to work in clerical and administrative duties. Jackson also proposed upgrading the quality of police through increasing incentives such as pay and benefits, lengthening cadet training, increasing emphasis on lateral entry into the department, and establishing uniform performance standards by creating uniform promotional criteria. These changes would free the Atlanta Police Department from its disorganized and discriminatory tradition and evolve the department into a more modern, efficient crime fighting apparatus. In the last section, Community Relations, Jackson suggested promoting better community cooperation with the APD, inaugurating a program of public education to encourage citizens to report criminal activity, and continued support of the Atlanta Crusade Against Crime which he described as "the most effective citizen-controlled, anti-crime organization ever developed in Atlanta."[214] Jackson's platform revealed a desire to rationalize and professionalize the APD, particularly by making detection and apprehension of criminals more streamlined and effective. His position showed that he would be tough on crime by expanding the crime fighting power of the police through modern reforms that imposed efficiency and fairness.

By the summer of 1973, the two frontrunners in the race were vice mayor Maynard Jackson and former congressman Charles Weltner. A poll taken in June showed that Jackson had a strong lead among among blacks, while Weltner led among white voters, particularly those from the city's wealthy north side.[215] However, on election day on October 2, 1973, Jackson came out on top with 47 percent of the vote, with Massell in second with 20 percent of the vote. Mayor and vice mayor prepared for a runoff to be held two weeks later. Massell's strategy—as

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[214] Maynard Jackson, "Leadership Platform: Crime and Law Enforcement," Box 28, Folder 11, Series E, Maynard Jackson papers.

[215]"The Votes Percentagewise," *The Atlanta Constitution*, June 03, 1973, 1.

the *Constitution*'s Tom Linthicum described—was to "play on white fears" of a black-run City Hall. Whereas crime had been the driving theme of the general election, Massell made race a central issue in the run off. He deemed Maynard Jackson "a racist" for appealing to black voters and sought to tie Jackson to the provocative Hosea Williams, who was running for president of the city council.[216] His new campaign slogan, "Atlanta's Too Young to Die," plastered on billboards, print ads, and television spots, insinuated that a Jackson-Williams-run City Hall would mean the economic and social downfall of the city. The ads drew criticism from both white and black Atlantans, who saw through its thinly veiled racism.[217] Jackson responded by imploring voters to "reject the cries of the mongers," contending, "We move now—not just after this campaign has ended—to unite our city under the banner or brother, peace, prosperity, and love."[218] Jackson's cry for unity, in the end, perhaps put him over the edge, as he defeated Massell in the run off election on October 17, 1973. Jackson picked up 59.2 percent of the vote, while Massell won only 40.7 percent.[219] Jackson contended that his victory was "a resounding affirmation of the principles of unity and of brotherhood that have helped make Atlanta truly a city too busy to hate."[220] For a short time, the problem of crime in Atlanta took a backseat to the excitement over the new mayor. But, it would not be long before crime dominated Atlanta's headlines once again.

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[216] Jim Gray, "Jackson, Williams are 'Racists,' Says Massell." *The Atlanta Constitution*, Oct 08, 1973, 1.

[217] Allen, 180.

[218] Tom Linthicum, "Jackson Calls for Rejection of 'Fear Mongers'." *The Atlanta Constitution* , Oct 09, 1973, 1.

[219] Tom Linthicum, "Fowler in as Council President." *The Atlanta Constitution*, Oct 17, 1973. 2.

[220] Howell Raines and Jim Stewart. "For Jackson and Fowler--Cheers, Cheers, Cheers." *The Atlanta Constitution*, Oct 17, 1973, 1.

In his first inaugural address, the 35-year-old new mayor, Maynard Jackson declared Atlanta to be a "city of love." All Atlanta needed was love to combat poverty, drug abuse, and most of all, crime. In his inaugural statements on the crime issue, Jackson sought to balance the punitiveness of his campaign commitment to law and order with the message of love that was the theme of his address. He did this by emphasizing the root causes of crime and linking crime to persistence of poverty, which he could explain employing the black progressive rhetoric he had mastered as a public defender. "An accurate diagnosis of our malady shows that, although some become criminals out of greed," he explained, "all too often there are those who turn to crime because of the marginal existence of their daily lives."[221] Jackson continued, arguing that Atlantans must begin to acknowledge the relationship between poverty and crime and must "open our eyes if we are to begin to deal with the systematic eradication of poverty and the diminution of crime." He promised to address the growing problem of drug trafficking and abuse by seeking on pushers, suppliers, and sources. "We will be death on the drug trade," he asserted." He acknowledged that police, courts and prisons were necessary components in the attack on the drug trade and crime more generally, yet claimed that these institutions were less significant than the need for the "creation of a new vigorous moral spirit in the community." This new moral spirit had to be fostered in the community, particularly among the youth, who needed to be taught by example to be less materialistic. "Only as our values become less materialistic," Jackson claimed, "can we convince them that nothing is important enough to steal." Thus, as he pointed to cultural flaws in his assessment of the causes of crime, these flaws were societal, and characterized not only Black Atlanta, but the city and the nation as a whole. Jackson concluded by affirming, "So, in our great city, we will seek not only to punish crime with even-handed justice but to prevent it

[221] Maynard Jackson, Inaugural Address 1974, Box 2, Folder 4, Series E, Maynard Jackson Papers.

with honest compassion and intelligent planning."[222] This concluding sentiment exemplified a central tension in Jackson's politics of crime. Jackson and the criminal justice policy officials associated with his administration struggled to balance punishment and rehabilitation, to offset rigid state planning with care. While the Jackson administration was unequivocal in its plans to punish criminals, they grappled with ensuring justice and compassion to both victims and perpetrators of crime.

In his first year in office, Jackson began a program rationalizing the city's criminal justice system, the inefficiency of which fostered the crime problem. One of his first targets was the Atlanta Police Department. In May 1974, Jackson announced that he intended to replace John Inman with Captain Clinton Chafin. He charged Inman with "failure to provide adequate leadership to the Atlanta Police Department." Inman was to be suspended immediately and dismissed by the end of the month. Inman would not go without a fight, however.[223] He contested the decision in court and was allowed to temporary stay in office. However, Jackson had already made moves to attenuate Inman's power. Shortly after he was elected, Jackson appointed fourteen Atlanta residents the Reorganization Task Force on City Government. The task force was charged with devising recommendations for implementing the new city charter, which called for a "strong mayor" system. The task force made its recommendations just after the New Year. The group recommended the consolidation of city departments and the creation of

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[222] Ibid.

[223] I mean that quite literally. Inman and Chafin came close to a physical altercation, when on the day he was to leave his vacate his office to Chafin, Inman parked in the police chief's designated parking spot. Chafin, perturbed by the gesture, parked behind Inman, blocking his car in the spot. The two got into an intense article outside of the station that culminated in Inman calling in members of the SWAT team after Chafin supposedly threatened to physically assault him. When Chafin ordered the SWAT team members to leave, Inman suspended Chafin. In response, Chafin ordered the officers to remove Inman. Thus began an exchange in which Inman and Chafin "shouted orders and counter orders at each other." See Wells, Douglas. "City's Police Chief Dispute Set for Court Action Friday, " *Atlanta Daily World,* May 09, 1974, 1.

several new departments, including a Department of Public Safety that would include both the police and fire departments. The department would headed by a new “super chief,” who would have command over the fire chief and the police chief, John Inman. Jackson embraced the idea and appointed, Reginald Eaves, a fellow Morehouse graduate to head the post that August.

Jackson faced criticism from many sources for appointing Eaves, including the editors of the *Atlanta Constitution* and the *Atlanta Journal,* members of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, members of the Fraternal Order of the Police, and Atlanta City Council president Wyche Fowler who stated, “I’m very disappointed. I don’t believe Mr. Eaves has the background or qualifications this position commands.”[224] Critics charged that the decision stunk of cronyism, as Eaves had no experience in law enforcement and did not even live in Atlanta. However, despite the initial opposition, the Atlanta City Council’s public safety committee approved Eaves.[225] Chief Inman was initially irate but in a later about-face declared, “There was no man better for the job.” Relations between Jackson and Inman had smoothed out a bit when Jackson offered Inman the post of director of the bureau of police services, essentially the chief of police, in the new Department of Public Safety.[226] By September 1974, the Atlanta Police Department was reorganized and streamlined into Jackson hoped would be a more efficient crime fighting organization. Commissioner Eaves argued, “The main objective of the reorganization is to assign more officers into direct crime-fighting activities.” “The reorganization will simplify the command structure,” he continued,” provide for a better utilization of police personnel; provide

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[224] Frederick Allen and Jim Stewart. "Fowler Hits Jackson's Choice." *The Atlanta Constitution*, Aug 06, 1974. 2,

[225] Hank Ezell. "Council Panel Votes Eaves a 4-1 Approval." *The Atlanta Constitution* , Aug 11, 1974. 2,

[226] Jim Stewart and Jim Merriner. "Inman Endorses Eaves as Superchief." *The Atlanta Constitution* , Aug 17, 1974. 2,

stronger accountability by placing zone commanders clearly in charge of personnel operation in each of the five zones of the city."[227] Eaves promised to improve the perception of the police department among Atlantans concerned with law and order, by increasing foot patrol and making the force more active and present, while also improving the department's image among those concerned with police brutality by attacking it head on. Through the Department of Public Safety, the Jackson administration sought to rationalize and reform the police department to make into a modern crime-fighting and crime-preventing apparatus. These reforms, however, would not be cheap.

Fortunately for Eaves and Jackson, the federal government provided millions of dollars of funds to states for criminal justice planning. Beginning in 1968 with the passage of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, the federal government distributed block grants to states through the newly established Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. States could apply for funds for the improvement of law enforcement departments, the modernization of local criminal justice institutions, and the establishment of various crime prevention programs.[228] Atlanta first received funding from the LEAA in 1970, with a proposal that called for the improvement in law enforcement personnel through increased training and more recruitment.[229] The next year, the LEAA awarded $2 million to the Atlanta Region Metropolitan Planning Commission for criminal justice planning in the metro region. In 1971, the LEAA developed the High Impact Cities Program, which offered funds to select cities for the

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[227] Fred Steeple, "Eaves Begins Crime Fight by Reorganizing Police Bureau." *Atlanta Daily World,* August 25, 1974, 1.

[228] See Murakawa, 70-71 and Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 2, 56.

[229] "Atlanta Gets $2 Million to Fight Crime in 1971." *Atlanta Daily World*, Jan 31, 1971. 1

development of crime prevention programs and the redevelopment of criminal justice systems. The goal of the program was to reduce the rate of serious crimes by five percent in two years, and by twenty percent in five years in the country's most violent cities. Atlanta was selected as one of eight cities to receive funding under the Impact program in 1972. The LEAA required that states only fund projects in cities that created a criminal justice council to distribute and monitor the use of the federal funds. Subsequently the Atlanta Region Metropolitan Planning Commission established the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). The CJCC was responsible for coordinating policy and establishing new guidelines for the criminal justice system. The CJCC was also "a coordinating body for planning and problem areas that cross agency lines and political jurisdictional lines and provides resources for the analysis of management information system that allow for greater efficiency and effectiveness in the entire criminal justice system."[230] During the first year of his first term, Maynard Jackson, who had served as the head of the CJCC, established the Crime Analysis Team (CAT) to work under the CJCC. The CAT was responsible for securing funds from the Impact program, monitoring the use of the funds, reviewing grant applications, and implementing the recommendations of the CJCC. With the establishment of the CJCC and later the CAT, city officials perhaps hoped, the solutions to the crime issue could be decoded through carefully coordinated and systematized criminal justice institutions and procedures.

The CJCC and other criminal justice organizations reviewed hundreds of project proposals from the public safety institutions from across the Atlanta metropolitan region. A financial summary of the use of LEAA funds in the Atlanta Region between 1969 and 1971 illustrated the ways in which federal funds were utilized. The Atlanta region received a total of

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[230] History and Function of the CAT/CJCC, 1977, Box 19, Folder 8, Maynard Jackson Papers, Series B

$3.187 million dollars between 1969 and 1971, with the city of Atlanta receiving the largest sum of $1.352 million. Other areas that received funds included Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, and Gwinnett Counties, as well as the Metropolitan Atlanta Council of Local Governments. The majority of LEAA grants funded improvements of local police departments and courts, including new communications equipment, helicopters, and the expansion of detention centers.[231] In the city of Atlanta, the police department received a total of $582,928 in 1970 and $769,618 in 1971 to fund programs and equipment, which included communications equipment ($147,600), helicopter patrol ($128,750), and high crime foot patrol ($289,492), as well as community relations ($9,000) and community service officers ($28,558).[232] According to the Atlanta Regional Criminal Justice Supervisory Board, the predecessor to the CJCC, the stated criteria for programs recommended for funding in the regional plan included current crime rates, current inventories on men and equipment, "projects which would have substantial benefit to the region as a whole," "programs directly related to crime prevention," and "efforts to improve record keeping," among other items.[233] As in other cities, the LEAA funded police modernization projects, which public safety officials believed would improve the ability of the police to locate and apprehend criminal suspects. Furthermore, the mere presence of more police and other symbols of police surveillance power would address the issue of the fear of crime, which was becoming almost as concerning as the issue of crime itself.[234]

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[231] Hinton, 137-138.

[232] Atlanta Region Metropolitan Planning Commission, *Safer Streets in '72 for Six Metro Counties, Atlanta Region. Action Plan for 1972, Work Program for Five-Year Comprehensive Plan*, 1971.

[233] Ibid.

[234] Murakawa, 79-81.

Jackson and Eaves also believed the improvement of the police force would increase community involvement in the fight against crime. The community would need to be a major component in this modernized war on crime. Though federal funding boosted the size and weaponized power of the police department, Atlanta officials stressed that the fight against crime could not be waged by police or the government alone. Maynard Jackson had gestured at the increasing importance of the community with the Crusade Against Crime. However, with funds from the LEAA, Atlanta public safety officials could develop elaborate crime prevention programming that shifted some of the responsibility for crime control to citizens. One such initiative was the THOR, or Target Hardening Opportunity Reduction, program. Funded by the LEAA's Impact grant, THOR was a $2 million project headed by the Department of Public Safety. The intent of the program was to prevent opportunities for crime through target hardening, or the bolstering of security measures around homes, businesses, and individuals. The THOR program, and others like it across the country, exemplified a growing belief among progressive criminologists and public safety officials that most offenses, particularly those against property, were crimes of opportunity. Thus police departments began taking measures to decrease the risks and situations in which crime could occur. It reflected a belief that people were not born criminals, but driven to make poor choices of the opportunity arose.[235] The THOR division of Atlanta's Department of Public Safety began its work in the summer of 1974, with 88 police officers and 88 civilians running the program.

In November 1974, the THOR team opened four citywide crime control centers where Atlantans could stop in to educate themselves about the latest security measures. One crime

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[235] Situational crime prevention, as David Garland, argues shifted the focus of crime prevention away from the individual offender and instead toward, "the conduct of potential victims, to criminogenic situations, and those routines of everyday life that create criminal opportunities as an unintended by by-product." Garland, 129.

center featured a model home with modern door and window locks and a state of the art burglary alarm system. Other centers offered services such as residential and business surveys, "operation identification" in which officers marked high theft items with identification numbers, Operation Involvement in which officers made public safety presentations to schools, civic, church and business meetings, and provided literature about preventing crime. The black press was particularly central in the campaign. Editorials in the *Daily World* and the *Inquirer* had long urged members of the black community to learn to protect themselves from being victims of crime. The newspapers shared THOR's safety tips for readers who wanted to avoid be held up "keep a minimum of cash on hand," tips to prevent "Yule crimes" ("presents should be stored until Christmas Eve in an interior locked closet that is away from windows").[236] Officials noted that individuals made themselves vulnerable to crime by leaving doors unlocked, keys in cars, and walking alone on dark streets.[237] With the proper education, they believed, citizens could create safe environments where crime was stopped before it could occur.

Community crime control had been central in Atlanta's black community, stemming back to the early twentieth century. Black reformist leaders long policed their own citizens, sometimes seeking to prevent police involvement that often resulted in violence and unnecessary arrests and also working to protect community members when law enforcement failed to do so. Thus, calls

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[236] THOR Urges Atlantans to Read Crime Prevention Tips Booklet." *Atlanta Daily World,* Mar 23, 1975. 2;"THOR Offers Tips to Minimize Yule Time Crimes." *Atlanta Daily World*, Nov 28, 1975. 7,

[237] Women, leaders of THOR and others believed, were especially prone to placing themselves in dangerous situations where they made themselves vulnerable to robbery, assault, or rape. In the late 1970s, THOR published a magazine geared toward women called *Crime Confidential.* The magazine featured lurid stores about women being conned by cunning lovers, being assaulted by strangers in their own homes, with headlines like "I Picker My Lover From the Line-Up With My Husband By Me Side" and "A Burglar Broke into My Home, Busted My Marriage, and Saved My Life." The magazine also featured a "Dear Detective" advice column and a list of safety tips in both English and Spanish. See *Crime Confidential: Atlanta Edition,* 1977, Box 9, Folder 9, Lee P. Brown Papers, Woodson Research Center, Rice University, Houston, Texas.

for community involvement in preventing crime were not new to Black Atlanta in the 1970s.[238] Political and civic leaders called on black Atlantans to take responsibility for the proliferation of crime in the black community, often with a critical and condescending tone. Public Safety Commissioner Eaves, for example, delivered a speech at Free For All Baptist Church, in which declared, “There’s one thing we can all do [to stop crime]. Go home and call five friends or relatives and tell them to stop buying stolen goods.”[239] *Atlanta Daily World* editor Charles Price went one step further, arguing, “Those who buy stolen good are already criminals because they have criminal minds. They are people who want something for nothing and this is the frame of mind that leads to most criminal acts.”[240] In this view, the whole community was implicated in the proliferation of crime in Atlanta. Thus, the fight against crime had to be community-wide battle against criminal elements. Individuals needed to assess their own behavior--how were they making themselves vulnerable to crime, how were they participating in the perpetuation of crime through their own selfish and thoughtless decisions? The criminals were not the only guilty ones. “Somebody out there is guilty!” Eaves later declared to the Hungry Club forum in March 1976. “You’re a criminal too. And we’re going to knock on some doctors’ doors...some teachers’ doors, some preachers’ doors...and we’re going to make arrests for these crimes—for receiving stolen goods.”[241]

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[238] Editors of the *Atlanta Daily World* declared in 1936, “The police cannot do all. There is a work left for churches, the schools, and the general citizenry. With all heads pulling together, crime will get on the run and our city will again be a place fit to live in.” See "Crime Goes on." *Atlanta Daily World,* Sep 30, 1936. 6,

[239] "Eaves Urges Atlantans to Stop Buying Stolen Goods." *Atlanta Daily World,* Dec 20, 1974. 7,

[240] Price, Charles E. "Crime Fighting: A Duty of all." *Atlanta Daily World,* Dec 29, 1974. 4,

[241] Turner, Roger. "'You’re Guilty, Too,' Eaves Warns Stolen Goods Buyers." *Atlanta Daily World,* Mar 05, 1976. 1,

Black Atlantans also joined crime-fighting organizations through which they could further police their neighbors, and more often their neighbors' children. The APD's crime prevention unit encouraged businesses, churches, civic associations, and neighborhood organizations to form crime prevention groups to mobilize community members. Neighborhood organizations, particularly in working class and predominantly black neighborhoods, were on the forefront of organizing crime prevention programs. Community groups in Summerhill, Peoplestown, Dixie Hills, and Cabbagetown and housing projects like Perry Homes and Bankhead Courts—areas that had some of the highest crime rates in the city—organized demonstrations of security measures at community meetings.[242] Other neighborhood groups planned extensive crime prevention programs. However, working class neighborhood residents also emphasized the need to amend community relations with the police. As police brutality complaints decreased in number and frequency after the appointment of Eaves, working class blacks began to ask for a greater police presence in their neighborhoods. In 1973, the residents of Cabbagetown, for instance, met with the city's Community Relations Committee to request better police protection, and an increase in the number of black police officers in the area, who they argued "respect us more than the white ones do."[243] The Community Relations Commission, or CRC, became an important liaison between communities and the Department of Public Safety. The organization declared crime to be its "main target" in December 1973 and viewed police-community relations as a central component of the fight against crime. Residents needed to be willing and ready to report crimes to the police, and thus animosity between to the two only allowed crime to continue to fester. "The Commission recognizes that one of the

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[242] "Residents of Cabbagetown Ask for Better Police Protection." *Atlanta Daily World,* Jun 22, 1973. 8

[243] Ibid.

barriers in fighting crime is the lack of understanding between citizens and a lack of coordination of effort between the groups of good citizens in our community," the CRC official James Dean declared, "The Commission feels that is part of its mandate to lead in an effort to coordinate the efforts of our governments and our citizen groups in this battle, and pledges its full impetus and influence in this task."[244] Consequently, the CRC organized several police-community workshops with neighborhood leaders from housing projects such as Bankhead Courts, Perry Homes, Grady Homes, and neighborhoods like Cabbagetown, Vine City and Summerhill. The first workshop had over 150 participants who posited a list of recommendations which included the hiring of community marshals to be screened, hired and paid through neighborhood cooperative funds, and the establishment of a 24-hour operating city court and warrant issuing office. CRC vice chairman Joseph Lowery argued measures such as these would initiate the process of healing between the community and a police department that "killed more people than anywhere in this country." Yet, Lowery contended, more black citizens were killed by other blacks than by white people. He concluded, "We should be more concerned, or just as concerned of those killings."[245]

As reported incidents of police brutality decreased, neighborhood organizations began to turn their attention to combating criminal behavior among their own residents, particularly the youth. The East Lake Meadows Anti-Crime committee, located in the high crime East Lake area in southeast Atlanta, organized a youth employment project. The group formed a cleaning service that employed resident teenagers in janitorial and yard work. The committee's chairman explained, "We believe if we can keep them occupied, this will alleviate the high crime rate in

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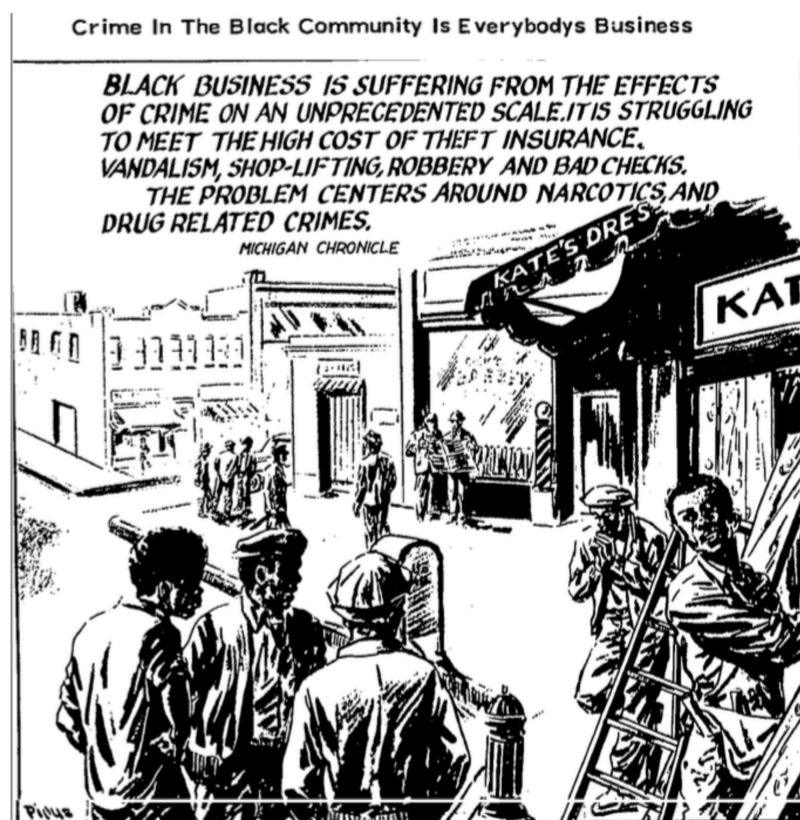
[244] "Crime, CRC's Main Target." *Atlanta Daily World,* Jan 01, 1974. 2,

[245] Stokes, Tom. "New Spirit of Cooperation Sought Between Citizens and Police Sought," *Atlanta Daily World,* Feb 19, 1974. 1,

the area."[246] An East Atlanta organization established a community pride group, which sponsored regular neighborhood clean up campaigns, seeking to remove both garbage and criminality from the area. Volunteers promised to "work with the DeKalb and Atlanta authorities to remove the criminal element." One volunteer asserted, "If you commit a crime in the community and we know about it, we are going to the call the Man."[247] Thus, residents of black neighborhood acknowledged and sought to ameliorate the long-standing tensions between black citizens and law enforcement, while at the same time combating crime through self-help anti-crime initiatives and traditional community law enforcement.



Business organizations were also particularly active in the citizen crime fight. Black businesses were particularly vulnerable to crimes such as burglary, larceny, and robbery.[248] Several businesses were forced to close or relocate out of black neighborhoods after repeated robberies.[249] Other businesses, particularly those downtown on Auburn Avenue and on

[246] "Anti-Crime Plan Tied to Work Project." *Atlanta Daily World,* Apr 29, 1973. 1,

[247] Myrick, Clarissa. "E. Atlanta Residents to Fight Crime With 'Community Pride," *Atlanta Daily World*, Jun 27, 1975. 2,

[248] "Business Losses from Crime are Increasing." *Atlanta Daily World*, Feb 22, 1972. 2

the west side on Hunter and Ashby Streets, suffered because shoppers avoided the areas out of fear of crime. A cartoon published in the *Daily World* in June 1973 entitled, "Crime in the Black Community is Everybody's Business," illustrated the anxieties about the effects of crime on black-owned business. The cartoon features a man rebuilding a seemingly vandalized dress shop with three young men looking on. The caption, a quote from the *Michigan Chronicle* read: "Black business is suffering from the efforts of crime on an unprecedented scale. It is struggling to meet the high cost of theft insurance, vandalism, shoplifting, robbery and bad checks. The problem center around narcotics and drug related crimes."[250] Assaults against black private property were especially deplored in Black Atlanta; the rights of property owners, particularly business owners, were sacred. "We urge the citizens to be alert," the editors of the *Daily World* warned, "and protect essential businesses in our communities." In 1973, Auburn Avenue business leaders organized an anti-crime committee. C. A. Scott served as the chairman of the group, which also included C. C. Hart, Roland Smith, John E. Calhoun, Geneva Haugabrooks, and Warren Cochrane as board members. The business leaders were concerned about rising crime rates and the seeming lack of police presence in the area. Other business organizations such as the Hunter Street Businessmen's group and the Atlanta Business League also joined the crime fight. The *Atlanta Inquirer* chaffed that "Black merchants along Hunter Street, Auburn Avenue and Simpson are now packing guns and now gun-toting robbers must now face the possibility of a 'citizens' SWAT guard' coming down on their heads with harsh and instant justice."[251] While some businessmen sought to protect their business through armed self-defense

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[249] "Crime Alert'" AI, September 9, 1972, 2; "Let's Protect Merchants." *Atlanta Daily World*, Aug 10, 1973, 4; Law and Order: A New Look," *Atlanta Inquirer*, June 1, 1974, 2.

[250] "Editorial Cartoon 1 -- no Title." *Atlanta Daily World,* Jul 17, 1973, 6.

[251] Law and Order: A New Look," *Atlanta Inquirer*, June 1, 1974, 2.

including, hamburger stand owner Hank Thomas, who after being robbed several times, shot and killed a burglar, others fought back in different ways. The Atlanta Business League, for example, received a grant from the LEAA that funded a Coordinated Juvenile Work Release Project. The program would provide jobs to first-time juvenile employees with ABL member businesses.

These community crime prevention initiatives, like the procedural reforms they were intended to complement, were rooted in the black liberal reformist tradition of self-help and the guiding principle of personal responsibility. Black Atlantans believed the crime issue could only be solved if citizens took seriously their obligation to prevent crime when and where possible. This sentiment was reflected in a speech delivered by Reginald Eaves at a chapel service for Atlanta's Goodwill group. One observer of the address wrote, "Pointing up the need for the individual citizen to be willing to become involved, to be concerned as a personal responsibility about law enforcement, Mr. Eaves reminded those assembled that we all should be ready to say 'Here I am, send me.'"[252] Quoting Isaiah, Eaves framed crime prevention as a civic rite that required individual devotion, sacrifice, and preparedness. Indeed, the salvation of the entire city was at stake.

Despite the consistent panic about more frequent and more appalling criminal acts, the crime rates steadily began to decline in 1974. It seemed as though the money and effort of Mayor Jackson, Public Safety Commissioner Eaves, the police department and the citizens of Atlanta had begun to pay off. In the metropolitan Atlanta area, robbery decreased 11.7% between 1974 and 1975, and decreased by 12.8 percent between 1975 and 1976. Burglary decreased by 0.7 percent between 1974 and 1975 and by 7.7 percent 1975 and 1976. Auto theft decreased by 5.9

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[252] Voice of Goodwill, Winter 1975, Box 117, Folder 9, Series B, Maynard Jackson Papers.

percent in 1975 and then 3.8 percent in 1976. Most notably to the crime conscious Atlantans, the murder rate decreased 20.7 percent in 1975 and by 2.9 percent in 1976.[253] It seemed Atlanta would not keep the "murder capital" title for long. Crime rates did increase, however, in the categories of rape, aggravated assault, and larceny, and the overall total crime rate increased 13.9 percent between 1974 and 1975, and by 7.6 percent between 1975 and 1976. Nonetheless, violent crime rates dropped. The numbers improved even more in 1977, where the crime rate decreased by 7.9 percent in Atlanta, and 9.8 percent in the metropolitan region. Furthermore, the rates of crime decreased in every major category, except rape, between 1976 and 1977. Commissioner Eaves boasted, "Very few cities are seeing this kind of decrease,"[254] and cited the THOR initiative and the emphasis on community crime prevention. "Preventing crime," he explained is always safer, cheaper, and in the long run much more productive than searching for criminals."[255]

The falling crime rates came at a good time for Maynard Jackson, as he began his re-election campaign in the summer of 1977. As he campaigned, Jackson felt confident about his record, boasting, "My biggest problem is going to be remembering things we've done. I've begun reviewing the record and I'm really impressed."[256] The Jackson team compiled a list of "Maynard's Accomplishments" in a pamphlet and focused a great deal of attention on the inroads made in combating crime in Atlanta. In the section entitled, "To Make Atlanta a Safer

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[253] Metropolitan Atlanta Crime Commission. *Crime in Metropolitan Atlanta, 1975-1979*. Atlanta: Metropolitan Atlanta Crime Commission, 1980.

[254] Jay Lawrence, "'76 Top Crimes Off, Eaves Says," *Atlanta Journal*, Dec. 29, 1976

[255] Yvonne Shinnhoster, "Eaves Sees Progress in City's Anti-Crime War," *Atlanta Daily World*, Feb 20, 1976, 1.

[256] Lawrence, Jay. "Jackson is 'Impressed' with His Record on Job." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Sep 13, 1977, 2.

City," Jackson emphasized his work rationalizing the police department and the creation a more efficient and respectful policing culture in Atlanta. He asserted that he completely transformed the old police department by putting more officers on active duty, increasing police personnel, and "more effective re-allocation, distribution, and of the manpower" through the employment of foot patrols downtown and other high crime areas, two-man car units, meter maids for issuing parking citations, and traffic cadets for traffic tickets.[257] Furthermore, the LEAA grants helped to modernize the department, funding a new computerized dispatching criminal justice information system, and improving community crime prevention through initiatives such as the THOR program. LEAA funds also provided for the establishment of anti-robbery squad, an anti-burglary squad and the foot patrol team. The mayor also touted the new Youth Services Bureau and juvenile delinquency initiatives, as well as upgrades the Department of Public Safety made to the city's detention facilities. However, Jackson concluded, "And perhaps, most important of all, there has never been a stronger spirit of cooperation between law enforcement and the people of Atlanta."[258] Though Jackson had the statistics to back up his record on crime control in Atlanta, he did not remain unchallenged in his bid for re-election.

Crime was a central issue in the 1977 mayoral election, though not as pivotal as it had been in the 1973, during the apex of the crime panic. Taxes, transportation, and unemployment were also major issues. Jackson faced six opponents: former mayoral candidate Harold Dye, Socialist Workers Party candidate Vince Eagan, Fulton County Commissioner Milton Farris, municipal worker, Emma Darnell, and write-in candidates Rayanna Childers and Ernest Moschella. Dye, who had been popular among business leaders in 1973, and Farris emphasized

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[257] "Summary of Major Accomplishments of the Jackson Administration, 1974 to 1977," Box 29, Folder 4, Series E, MJ Papers.

[258] "Maynard's Record Talks," Box 29, Folder 4, Series E, MJ Papers

the continuing migration of the city due to the fear of crime.[259] The two candidates claimed the crime rate was still too high, and the fear of crime was affecting Atlanta's economic development. Dye went a step further and claimed that Jackson and Eaves had falsified the crime rates that showed a crime decline. He also promised that he would Public Safety Commissioner Eaves if elected in October. Jackson retorted that Dye's accusations were "irresponsible and untrue."[260] Jackson continued to defend his record on crime, and defended Reginald Eaves' leadership and "superb record" in the Department of Public Safety. Atlantans, seemingly agreed with Jackson, and re-elected him in a landslide victory. Jackson received over 63 percent of the vote, with Harold Dye in a distant second.[261] In his second inaugural address, Jackson promised, "My second term as mayor will be even more active, more determined, more responsive and more successful."[262] Yet, he asserted, "Unemployment, economic and racial discrimination, crime, inadequate housing and other challenges will not permit us to rest on our laurels."[263]

However, a major scandal would not quite allow time for any rest. Public Safety Commissioner Eaves had been immersed in controversy since his appointment in 1974. Doubt about his ability to run a municipal department and address the crime epidemic in Atlanta shrouded his administration, despite the declines in violent crime during his first three years. Nonetheless, it was his administrative skills that foiled him and ultimately revealed the enduring incompetence and deficiencies in the police department. In 1977, four young black officers

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[259] Lawrence, Jay. "Mayor, 6 Candidates Talk Issues." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Sep 09, 1977, 1.

[260] Woolmer, Ann. "Jackson's Record Top Issue." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 02, 1977, 2.

[261] Lawrence, Jay. "Jackson Wins Mandate;" *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 05, 1977, 2.

[262] Lawrence, Jay and Lyn Martin. "Jackson: Second Term we must do Even Better." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Jan 04, 1978. 2,

[263] "Mayor Vows to be More Responsive, Successful than Ever Next 4 Years." *Atlanta Daily World,* January 5, 1978, 1.

accused Eaves of authorizing the administration of promotion exam questions to a select group of predominantly black officers ahead of the exam. When the accusations went public in September 1977, Eaves quickly denied involvement. A quick investigation by the city attorney ordered by the mayor's office exonerated Eaves and Jackson continued to defend the commissioner while running for re-election.[264] However, after the election, Jackson ordered a more thorough "outside" investigation into the accusations. The investigators, black attorney Felker Ward and white attorney Randolph Thrower, judged that cheating had taken place within the department. Eaves continued to deny any knowledge or involvement in the cheating scandal, asserting on a live broadcast that he "did not authorize nor approve in any way the distribution to anyone of either advance copies of the promotional examination or questions and answers on the examination."[265] Jackson equivocated while Eaves' supporters, which included Hosea Williams and city councilman Arthur Langford, organized marches and protests in his defense.[266] The controversy seemingly split the black community, with members of the black middle class and the governing coalition calling for Eaves' resignation and working class black Atlantans defended the popular commissioner. Events took a turn for the worse for Eaves when all four of his accusers, including the one who claimed Eaves personally asked him to distribute exam questions to the select group, passed a polygraph test while Eaves failed.[267] A final report from investigators Ward and Thrower concluded that Eaves did indeed expressly authorize the early

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[264] Willis, Ken and Lyn Martin. "Mayor Declares Eaves is Cleared." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Sep 29, 1977. 2,

[265] Alton Hornsby, "Not Eaves Please: Race, Class, and Atlanta's First African-American Commissioner of Public Safety, 1974-1978," in *Southerners, Too? Essay on the Black South, 1733-1990* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2004), 224.

[266] Holmes, Steven A. "300 Atlantans Gather and Urge 'Black Unity' in the City." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Nov 12, 1977. 1,

[267] Willis, Ken. "Cheat Probers See Eaves." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Jan 11, 1978. 1

administration of exam question and suggest that Eaves should be fired.[268] Jackson remained irresolute about Eaves. He argued that such behavior was not unprecedented in the police department and as recently as the 1960s, white officers had been “taken aside and tutored” for promotional exams. Yet, he acknowledged that some punishment was needed. His decision was delayed when Eaves was hospitalized for hypertension, which had been exacerbated by the stress of the situation. After Eaves was released, he met with the mayor and discussed the allegations. On March 7, Mayor Jackson gave a publicized address on the Eaves situation, in which he stated, “After reviewing all of the evidence, I am not able to come to the same conclusion [as Ward and Thrower].” However, he did conclude, “...in my view, the commissioner should have known, if he did not know, that cheating was taking place on such a wide and broad scale; and that he made serious errors of judgment in administering the promotional process in 1975, but at a time when he had been commissioner less than a year.”[269] Notably, Jackson did not reveal a punishment. Instead, the next day, Eaves submitted his resignation to be effective three months later on June 7. The *Atlanta Constitution* reported that Jackson had compelled Eaves to resign, after Jackson confidantes Jesse Hill and Julian Bond suggested the idea to the mayor. Nevertheless, the scandal illustrated that Jackson’s efforts to rationalize the police department into a modern and effective crime fighting institution were not yet realized.

Jackson’s choice for Eaves’ replacement reflected his desire to make good on his pledge to modernize and enhance Atlanta’s primary crime fighting organization. Jackson brought in an outsider, selecting Dr. Lee P. Brown, a police chief from Portland, Oregon as the new Public Safety Commissioner. Brown had been interviewed for the position in 1974 and had done some

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[268] "Eaves 'Grossly Negligent'." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Feb 21, 1978. 1,

[269] "Here is the Text of Jackson Speech." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 08, 1978. 1,

consulting work the department in 1975. Brown was highly educated; he earned a doctorate in criminology from the University of California, Berkeley, as well as two masters degrees, one in sociology and another criminology. Unlike Eaves, he has also had ample experience in law enforcement. The local press and municipal officials praised Jackson's choice. The Metropolitan Atlanta Crime Commission declared, "I am convinced he [Jackson] has made a wise choice. Lee Brown's professional qualification are top drawer and reports of his personality and style indicate he is the person for the job."[270] The *Atlanta Daily World* noted that Brown was a "well-educated, well-trained, well-qualified man, who has used humility and restraint in the past."[271] They also noted that his daughter attended Spelman College, suggesting that he was poised to fit well into Atlanta's black bourgeoisie.

Jackson chose an equally cerebral replacement for the revived police chief position, Dr. George Napper, who also had earned a doctorate in criminology from the University of California Berkeley. [272] Brown had previously served as the director of the CAT and taught in Emory University's psychiatry department and Spelman College's sociology department before he joined the Atlanta Bureau of Police in 1975.[273] He assumed the new position in June 1978 but not without controversy. Members of the Atlanta City Council claimed that the mayor had not informed the council of his decision to appointment Napper. While Jackson claimed that he had

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[270] "Mayor's Choice of Lee Brown Wins Praise." *Atlanta Daily World,* Apr 09, 1978. 2,

[271] "Solving Eaves' Appeal." *Atlanta Daily World*, Apr 07, 1978. 6,

[272] Director of Police Services John Inman still received $35,000 per year salary in powerless position. He finally resigned in August 1979 after Mayor Jackson sought to force him to work consistent hours, threatening, "Your free ride on the taxpayers is over…you will earn your pay or you will be gone." Steve Johnson, "'Disgusted' Inman Quits as City Police Director." *The Atlanta Constitution (1946-1984)*, Aug 17, 1979. 2; "Civil Service Board OKs Police Chief Post." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Feb 13, 1978.

[273] Maynard Jackson, Memo to Atlanta City Council dated May 15, 1978, Box 16, Folder 15, Series B, Maynard Jackson Papers.

not "intended to circumvent or surprise the council in any way," Jackson and the councilmembers agreed that Napper's appointment would be conditional and his contract renewed in March 1980 following satisfactory service.[274] Nonetheless, the new "young, gifted, and black" duo believed crime could be curbed in Atlanta when the citizens and the Department of Public Safety "worked together [to] put together a comprehensive program together."[275] Napper expressed his desire to build a police department "of tomorrow." This department would feature a robust administrative staff, officers with a fair and consistent promotional system and pay commensurate to rank, and a regular forum for communication between police and communities.[276] With their extensive research on the nature of black crime, experience in law enforcement, and reputation for integrity and fairness, the enlightened two seemed poised to undertake the continuing crisis of crime in Atlanta.

Brown and Napper faced some constraints in their attempt to build a modern police department. First, the two seemed to have faced some interpersonal issues that made the creation of an efficient and dynamic team rather difficult. Brown was an exacting and commanding manager. He often accused Napper of ignoring deadlines, being careless with confidential information, and not taking his responsibilities seriously.[277] The two also faced challenges outside of their rocky relationship. The ABPS remained severely understaffed. Hiring had been

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[274] Walter Huntley to Atlanta City Council, August 21, 1979, Box 16, Folder 15, Series B, Maynard Jackson Papers.

[275] Coleman, George M. "Police Bureau "of Tomorrow" Seems Atlanta Chief's Dream." *Atlanta Daily World,* Sep 21, 1978. 2,

[276] Ibid.

[277] In a handwritten note presumably concerning George Napper, Lee Brown listed several grievances concerning Napper's performance. He contended that during the child murders saga, Napper had left town before important briefings, showed poor judgment, and had not executed written directives. He also writes that Napper showed failures of leadership in personnel assignments, recruitment and budgeting. Note found in Box 11, Folder 36, Lee Brown Papers.

frozen since 1974 as a $20 million discrimination lawsuit filed by members of the Afro American Patrolmen's League filed in 1973 went through a series of appeals. The force was short by about 200 officers.[278] As soon as he took office, Napper had been in communication with the courts, seeking permission to hire new officers. Furthermore, Atlanta's police officers were remarkably underpaid. Napper explained that the bureau suffered from persistent resignations, as officers left the department for new positions with better pay and opportunities. Commissioner Brown warned that an upward crime trend would be in the city's future if the hiring ban were to continue. "If we are to continue to provide services, we'll have to get more people (officers) on the streets," Brown argued.[279]

Brown's predictions proved true in 1978. Between 1977 and 1978, the instances of robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, reported rapes and auto theft increased, while the number of murders in 1977 (243 in the metropolitan Atlanta area) slightly outnumbered the count in 1978 (241). In 1979, crime jumped in every major category, with the number of murders surging by 52.7 percent, reported rapes by 16.4 percent, robbery jumping by 28.5 percent, aggravated assault by 15.8 percent, burglary by 6.9 percent, larceny by 7.7 percent, and auto theft rising by 20.7 percent. The overall crime rate rose by 12.6 percent in 1978, and by 10.1 percent in 1979. The rates of crime increased across the seven counties of the metropolitan Atlanta region in 1979.[280] The upshots in crime were not unique to Atlanta. FBI Uniform crime reports revealed that crime was in up in every major category across the country in 1979. Crime increased by nine

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[278] George Coleman, "Police Bureau "of Tomorrow" Seems Atlanta Chief's Dream."

[279] Roger Turner, "Court Ban on Hiring Of Police Seen Curbing Anti-Crime Fight, " *Atlanta Daily World,* May 19, 1978, 1.

[280] Metropolitan Atlanta Crime Statistics.

percent in the United States between 1978 and 1979.[281] However Atlanta's crime wave received national attention. The *Wall Street Journal* published an article that described the crippling fear of crime that plagued Atlantans. The reporter vividly described rush hour around Central City Park in business district of downtown Atlanta, writing of "derelicts, swigging liquor or smoking marijuana" and "hundreds of commuters [clustered] on the edges of the park, nervously clutching their wallets and purses."[282] She quoted a banker originally from New York, who described an incident in which a man drew a sword and starting swinging it through the crowd. "I've never seen anything like this," he explained.[283]

As Jackson's second term continued, several more high profile violent crimes brought both national and international attention to the city of Atlanta. While city leaders were working to develop Atlanta into the "world's next great international city" by expanding its convention and tourism industry, Atlanta's reputation as a crime capital threatened its ascension to global city status. Crime, and the concomitant the fear of crime, would only become more rampant in Atlanta as the city entered the 1980s. Jackson's first term demonstrated that expanding the police force and making the department more efficient was not enough to stem the crime problem. The power of the police would need to be strengthened as well. Furthermore, citizen participation would also have to be intensified. Black Atlantans would not only have to be made aware of their role in helping police prevent crime, but they would also need to recognize their role in fostering the conditions that made crime possible. In the face of another crime panic, the city's black political leadership once again responded with rhetoric and political strategies that were

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[281] "Crime for 1979 Increased in All Areas, Totaling Over 12 Million Offenses," *Atlanta Daily World,* September 25, 1980, 1.

[282] Susan Harrigan, "Fading Image." *Wall Street Journal,* August 08, 1979, 1.

[283] Ibid.

informed by the black liberal reform tradition. Jackson and his allies in City Hall and the Department of Public Safety doubled down on law and order, this time with the emphasis on instating order on the streets of downtown Atlanta and, later, in the homes of black Atlantans.

Chapter 3
"Order as Well as Decency:" Crisis, Conventions, and Conceptions of (Dis)Order During Maynard Jackson's Second Term, 1977-1981

One early summer day in 1978, a couple of teens stopped at a red light at a busy intersection in downtown Atlanta. The passenger tossed some garbage out of the window, a few beer bottles and some snack wrappers. A loud honk sounded from the neighboring car. Mayor Maynard Jackson rolled down his window and pointing a finger exclaimed, "Don't you dirty our city!" The scene could have been one from a public service announcement for the Atlanta Clean City Commission, an office established at City Hall in 1976. That year, Jackson announced a war on litter. "As of today," he stated during a June 14 press conference, "all citizens are being put on notice that litter laws will be enforced."[284] The mayor had ordered police officers to get tough on litterers with a $25 fine or a ten-day jail sentence.

Jackson's crusade against litter reflected a growing concern with signs of disorder in the city and his willingness to criminalize disorderly behaviors if necessary. Members of the civic and commercial elite, both black and white, emphasized the importance of fostering an environment that would allow commerce and, more significantly by the late 1970s, tourism, to flourish. In order for this to happen, downtown Atlanta, many in City Hall and the downtown business community agreed, needed to be cleaned up. Litter, like cracked sidewalks and broken street lamps, was an easy and obvious target for the mayor. More divisive, however, were the calls for the elimination of particular people from downtown spaces, including streets, bus stops, and parks. Leaders from Central Atlanta Progress (CAP) had long called for the removal of "undesirable" types from the Central Business District. By the late 1970s, members were

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[284] "Litterbugs to Get Police Citations," *Atlanta Inquirer*, June 24, 1978, 1.

increasingly demanding City Hall and the Department of Public Safety address the issue through legal means if necessary. Hobos, hoodlums, and hookers, they contended, created an environment that made the city's business leaders feel uncomfortable and unsafe. More importantly in the eyes of CAP leaders, these unsavory types fostered an uneasy feeling among conventioneers, whose presence and spending downtown were becoming increasingly important in the city's economy. The business complaints about derelicts were often tinged with racism and a disdain for the poor people with whom they had to share the city space. Nonetheless, white business leaders found a receptive audience in the black political leaders.

Scholars who have examined the complicated role of African Americans in the construction of the carceral state have overlooked how black elected officials and ordinary folks targeted disorder in their demands for punitive crime measures. They have investigated how African Americans reacted to the scourge of drug abuse and violent crime by demanding tougher policing and sentencing.[285] However, historical scholarship has yet to consider how black people responded to non-violent crimes and so-called victimless crimes. This chapter argues that black political leaders confronted disorder just as forcefully as they did crimes against persons and property in their anti-crime measures.

Black Atlantans had long complained about the disruptive presence not only of litter but also of disorderly individuals, who harassed patrons outside of establishments and generally made commercial areas unpleasant. Black political officials also wanted to give the Atlanta police more power to regulate the behavior of people in commercial areas. Like their reformist

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[285] See James Forman, *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2017); Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From# BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation* (New York: Haymarket Books, 2016); Michael Javen Fortner, *Black Silent Majority: the Rockefeller Drug Laws and the Politics of Punishment* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2015).

predecessors they sought to impose order on disorderly black bodies in public spaces. The problem, however, was that poor public behavior generally was not a crime. It was certainly not harmful in like the muggings and murders that populated the newspapers. Black elected officials were often limited in their response to the issue by the Constitution.

However, two rather public murders created a panic about danger in downtown Atlanta that ultimately provided an entry point for politicians to attack disorder. First, in June 1979, Dr. Marc Tetalman, who was attending the national meeting for the Society for Nuclear Medicine, was shot and killed during a botched robbery on the busy Piedmont Road. Four months later, Patricia Barry, a former secretary for ex-Georgia governor Carl Sanders, was murdered in broad daylight near the Central City Park. Though the murders were unusual and unrepresentative of the usual kinds of crimes in downtown Atlanta—burglaries, larcenies, purse snatchings, and pickpocketings—the crimes set off a panic, pushing Maynard Jackson, Public Safety Commissioner Lee Brown, Chief of Police George Napper, and other members of the black governing class to respond swiftly and strongly. In the immediate aftermath of the crimes, they announced with a flurry of crime control tactics intended to assure Atlanta citizens and visitors of the safety of downtown. The Department of Public Safety reinstated and intensified tactics employed during the crime wave earlier in the decade with support from the city government and the downtown business community. Brown and Napper brought back the controversial decoy squad and stakeout teams and increased police visibility in the central business district with officers patrolling the streets by foot, on motorcycles, in marked and unmarked police cars, and on horseback. These strategies initiated a period of hyper-policing that emerged first in the central business district. Eventually, black business leaders, who had, demanded similar

protections for their own black-owned capital on Auburn Avenue and on the west side black business district.

Jackson and the black political leaders in the Atlanta City Council not only sought to increase the numbers of police in the streets, but also to give those police more power. Using city ordinances, Councilman Marvin Arrington, who in 1980 became president of the city council, led the governing body in cracking down on disorder in public spaces in the city. Black leaders also targeted guns, which they also viewed as a symbol and cause of disorder in black communities. In the Georgia Assembly, Representative David Scott became the leading advocate of gun control, and sought to empower police to lead on a war on guns in the streets of Atlanta.

The crackdown on disorder reveals how the black political class maintained a commitment to order and the protection of capital, which undergirded their response to crime and other issues of social crisis. Business leaders, both white and black, articulated a link between disorder and harm in their efforts to criminalize disorderly behavior. The harm, as they understood it, was economic in nature. Disorder intimidated tourists, irritated downtown business workers, and generally disrupted commerce in a way that hampered the city's economic development. In their efforts to codify and legislate these ideas about disorder, harm, and criminality, black political leaders, led by Jackson in the mayor's office, Brown in the Department of Public Safety, and rising stars David Scott in the Georgia Assembly and Marvin Arrington from the Atlanta City Council, became architects of a distinct form of order maintenance policing, that would later come to undergird policing practices in cities around the country. This method of policing shifted the role of the police from crime fighters to peacekeepers, a role police had played back when the first black policemen were appointed in Atlanta in the 1940s. Nonetheless, the effect of these campaigns against disorder, both successful

and unsuccessful, was to expand the power of the police to regulate the behavior of poor and working class black people. These policies also codified stereotypes of black criminality into post-civil rights black governance.

In a January 1978 letter to CAP president, mayoral chief administrative officer, George Berry wrote irritably, "The area between Marietta Street and City Hall has become a jungle."[286] Berry described his daily struggles with harassment from people loafing on the streets. That day he had been verbally abused and threatened by a black man, "a common occurrence to whites who walk through the area."[287] The situation for the black women who worked in city hall, he claimed, was worse. They were "constantly subjected to the abuse of the beer guzzler, wine drinking thugs who hang out in that area." [288] Berry lamented as he closed the letter, "People who are trying to earn a living get tired of being harassed if not assaulted by the drunks, panhandlers and punks who are getting bolder and bolder as they are challenged less and less." Dan Sweat was probably not shocked by the substance of Berry's letter, though he may have been a bit surprised by the author. He received dozens of letters such as this one, complaints about the state of downtown Atlanta and the treatment received from the unsavory characters who camped out there. Many employed stronger language than Berry's letter, whose use of the term "jungle," reflected the tone of racial resentment that colored many letters. Berry chose not to send this letter to his boss, Maynard Jackson, but rather sent it to Sweat, the president of Central Atlanta Progress. Perhaps, Berry feared his racist tone would offend his employer. More

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[286] George Berry to Dan Sweat, January 23, 1978, Box 170, Folder 8, CAP Records.

[287] Ibid.

[288] Ibid.

likely, he sent to Sweat because CAP had been engaged in a long struggle to rid the central business district of individuals who they believed made both workers and potential customers feel unsafe. CAP initially struggled to articulate exactly how these undesirable people posed a threat. The central business district had among the lowest rates of crime in the city and the Department of Public Safety struggled to justify the concentration of more resources in a section of the city where fewer crimes were committed. Yet, once they began explaining the economic threat that these individuals posed, they quickly had the ear of the black governing leaders.

CAP had been working to rid the central business district of "undesirable types" since the early 1970s. While they were able to convince the city council to close two particularly troublesome bars and to move a day labor center to another part of town, they were limited in their ability to attack other public nuisances that were not criminalized at the time.[289] By the late 1970s, their complaints about the "downtown environment" had begun to increase in number and severity. Chronic alcoholics, day laborers, peddlers, panhandlers, street preachers, and the homeless were now lumped together as derelicts, a term CAP members used with increasing frequency. At the same time, rising crime rates across the city and in particular downtown seemed to hint at increasingly criminal and violent derelict population.[290]

Downtown continued to have among the lowest rates of crime in the city, but fear of crime was on the rise. This fear reflected the growing presence of mostly black jobless and homeless people, troublesome though not necessarily dangerous, downtown. Though people

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[289] Dan Sweat to Members of the Aldermanic Police Committee, January 2, 1973, Box 160, Folder 5, CAP Records; Roy Kenzie to Dan Sweat, August 2, 1973, Box 172, Folder 3; Pamphlet for Day Labor Service Center, Box 172, Folder 3, CAP Records; Jim Merriner, "2000 Winos," *Atlanta Constitution,* Aug. 5, 1974, 13A.

[290] "Evil Lurketh Not in Downtown, Thanks to Mobile Action Unit," What's Up in Atlanta newsletter, September/October 1978, vol. II, no. 3, Box 170, Folder 6, CAP Records; CAP, Atlanta's Crime Task Force Planning for Police Effectiveness in Downtown Atlanta, c. 1979, Box 170, Folder 6, CAP Records.

passing through downtown were at relatively little risk for becoming a victim of violent crime, downtown business people and professional workers still raised vague concerns about crime in the area. They began to call for a greater police presence in the area to police the behavior of figures whose presence had previously been merely a nuisance. CAP leaders later contended, "Many Atlantans and visitors alike, regardless of facts, felt their public safety was not always assured. Such perceptions are costly to business and trade in the CBD; and if left unchanged can lead to deterioration of a healthy business climate."[291] The CAP organized a Public Safety Committee in June 1977 to address the business community's growing concerns. The group was charged with finding a way to decrease instances of real crime downtown but perhaps more significantly to address the perception of danger.[292]

One way in which CAP responded to rising fears of crime due to downtown disorder was elevate the police presence in the area, both figuratively and literally. In 1977, CAP's Public Safety Committee proposed a three-year demonstration program, which would entail the creation of a "mini-police precinct" in the central business district as well as an expansion of foot patrol in the area.[293] Furthermore, they proposed the creation of a downtown mounted horse patrol unit. Mounted policemen had been making a comeback in the cities across the country, according to a May 1978 issue of *Police* magazine. CAP Vice President Larry Fonts argued that the presence of the horses would "counteract" the perception that downtown was a high-crime area. He explained, "We saw that what we wanted was an increase in the visibility, not to the extent that

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[291] CAP, Atlanta's Crime Task Force Planning for Police Effectiveness in Downtown Atlanta, c. 1979, Box 170, Folder 6, CAP Records.

[292] Ibid.

[293] Ibid.

downtown is an armed camp, but so that people feel safe."[294] The total cost for the three-year project was $248,340, with the horses being one of the largest expenses. CAP agreed to provide space for the new mini precinct and ample parking for the additional officers committed to foot patrol. They also arranged to fund the Downtown Horse Patrol, as well as the training for the horses and officers. In exchange, the Department of Public Safety committed to providing fifteen additional officers for the foot patrol and six officers for the mounted horse patrol, and to initiate a training program for private security officers.[295]

Soon after Mayor Jackson and the Atlanta City Council approved the city's participation in the demonstration, CAP began fundraising for the $80,000 required to fund the initial costs.[296] They received donations from the city's largest corporations including Coca-Cola, Georgia Power, Portman Properties, and C&S Bank, as well as members of the convention and tourism industry such as Atlanta Hilton, the Omni International Hotel and Complex, and the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau (ACVB). James Hurst, executive vice president of the ACVB, was particularly pleased with the city's support for increasing police presence in the CBD. He wrote to Jackson in July 1977 to express the appreciation of the ACVB's Board of Directors.[297] He argued, "Increased visibility of police protection which will result from the location of this precinct will certainly assist us in making conventioneers and tourists feel welcome and safe in downtown Atlanta." He quickly continued, "As we know, Atlanta has very good crime statistics

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[294] Robert Carney, "The Return of the Horse," Police Magazine, May 1978, Box 170, Folder 7, CAP Records.

[295] CAP Crime Task Force Demonstration Program, Box 170, Folder 7, CAP Records.

[296] Sam Williams to James Hurst, August 4, 1977, Box 170, Folder 8, CAP Records.

[297] James Hurst to Maynard Jackson, July 13, 1977, Box 170, Folder 8, CAP Records.

in its downtown area, but our visitors carry with them preconceived ideas from their home locales and visible protection always alleviates any worries about safety."[298]

Nonetheless, while the CAP continued to fundraise for the demonstrations, members of the growing convention industry began to express with greater impatience their displeasure with the presence of derelicts in downtown Atlanta. Sal DePace, an executive vice president of the Omni International Complex was one of the most persistent critics. He complained to a newly appointed Lee Brown in June 1978 about the increasing number of purse snatchings and pickpocketing as well as instances of vandalism, shoplifting, and soliciting in the area near the Omni. He included a letter from a woman from Lilburn, Georgia, whose mother had her purse snatched by a "black fellow" while staying in the complex.[299] The woman shared the story in the *Atlanta Journal,* further publicizing crime issues in downtown Atlanta.[300] "This woman's complaint," he claimed, "is indicative of the numerous complaints that we at the Omni International, the World Congress Center, and the Omni Coliseum receive consistently."[301] Incidents such as the one reported undermined the business community's efforts "to attract the suburban population back into the inner city" and satisfy "visitors, tourists, and conventioneers who come to our fine city." Security costs had reached $400,000 annually, including donations to CAP and the Department of Public Safety. Nonetheless, DePace argued, "We cannot continue to contribute this enormous amount of expenditures when the responsibility of police services

[298] Ibid.

[299] Rose Marie O'Neill to Heinz Schutz, May 30, 1978, Box 170, Folder 8, CAP Records.

[300] Rose Marie O'Neill, "Hoodlums Hurt," Box 170, Folder 8, CAP Records.

[301] Sal DePace to Lee Brown, June 8, 1978, Box 170, Folder 8, CAP Records.

rests with the Police Department of the City of Atlanta."[302] DePace requested a meeting with Brown at his earliest convenience to discuss a "solution to correct the problems that continue to escalate in this area."[303]

The leaders of the convention industry gained more influence among both the business community and City Hall, as the industry became a more significant sector in the economy of metropolitan Atlanta and the state of Georgia. Atlanta, a transportation hub from its founding, had been a regional convention center since the early twentieth century.[304] Promising southern hospitality and a blend of antebellum gentility and New South modernity, Atlanta's business leaders in the Chamber of Commerce and the Convention Bureau promoted the city as an ideal convention site. By the 1920s, Atlanta was host to more than 300 conventions and meetings each year.[305] By the 1950s, the national convention industry exploded and cities began to compete to host meetings. Atlanta's business leaders worked with the municipal government to expand the city's convention capacity beginning in the 1950s. The Atlanta Metropolitan Planning Commission proposed the construction of a civic convention center with an auditorium in the heart of downtown Atlanta. The center would serve both an economic and a spatial purpose by increasing property values and redeveloping the city's declining core while facilitating the removal of slums adjacent to the business center. Beginning in 1962, the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce proposed several bond proposals to finance the construction of a convention facility as well as an arts center, a large athletic coliseum, and a stadium. These massive projects would

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[302] Ibid.

[303] Ibid.

[304] See Harvey K. Newman, *Southern Hospitality: Tourism and the Growth of Atlanta* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999), 90-100.

[305] Newman, 98-99.

include slum clearance, displaying thousands of mostly black families from the center of the city. Atlanta's voters, particularly its highly organized black voting bloc, defeated the ambitious measures in 1962. Voters approved a more conservative plan, a civic center slightly northeast of the city's downtown in 1963. The Atlanta Civic Center opened in 1967.

By the center's first anniversary, business leaders were already arguing that the Civic Center was "inadequate as to both meeting space and exhibition area."[306] By the late 1960s, business elites moved away from seeking public approval through bond issues and found ways to finance public projects without a public vote. In 1969, they turned to the state to finance the construction of a new convention center. The state financed Georgia World Congress Center opened in 1976, boosting the city's convention capacity and making Atlanta competitive with other top convention sites such as Chicago, New York, and New Orleans.[307] By 1976, over 635,000 people were attending conferences and conventions in Atlanta, bringing in an estimated $204 million in total revenue.[308] In 1978, the number of convention delegates reached 800,000. Thus, by the late 1970s, the convention industry was bringing in a significant amount of revenue to the city of Atlanta, as well as the metropolitan and state economies.

Atlanta's spreading reputation as a high crime city threatened the success of this convention economy. ACVB's James Hurst lamented to Dan Sweat, "I continue to be worried about stories relating to crime in the downtown convention-related area because if we were to a

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[306] Heywood T. Sanders, *Convention Center Follies: Politics, Power, and Public Investment in American Cities* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 304.

[307] Sanders, 308.

[308] Exhibit 1: 1966-1976 convention activity, Atlanta Metropolitan Area Review, Jan-Feb, 1978, Box 169, Folder 8, CAP Records.

get a reputation such as Detroit's, our business will evaporate overnight."[309] Two persistent sources of complaint from representatives in the convention industry were prostitutes and panhandlers. Hotel managers received numerous complaints about the presence of prostitution around hotels and other convention areas. Susan Braido who had attended a conference wrote to the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce to complain about the "very obvious presence of prostitutes in and around the convention area."[310] Their presence led to the cancellation of at least one convention. Corbin Davis of the Blue Bird Body Company, most prominent for their busses, explained to Richard Stormont of the Marriott that the company was cancelling their convention because the city appeared to have "a morality problem."[311] While presumably conventioneers would provide an easy market for sex workers, convention officials argued that conventioneers sought family friendly environments with safe entertainment suitable for spouses and children. The Atlanta Business Coalition—a group comprised of CAP, ACVB, the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, and the Atlanta Business League, among others—formed task force to address the issue of prostitution.[312] They pushed legislative officials on the city council and in the Georgia state legislature to pass more stringent laws regarding soliciting. They also began to pressure the police department to enforce existing laws and judges to administer stricter sentences to repeat offenders.[313]

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[309] James W. Hurst to Dan Sweat, November 29, 1978, Box 170, Folder 8, CAP Records.

[310] Susan Braido to Pete Woodham of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce from, November 22, 1978, Box 170, Folder 8, CAP Records.

[311] Corbin Davis to Richard Stormont of Marriott, April 11, 1979, Box 171, Folder 3, CAP Records.

[312] Thomas K. Hamall, to Judge Nick Mabros, April 10, 1979, Box 171, Folder 4, CAP Records.

[313] Ibid.

Addressing the issue of the numerous peddling and panhandlers in the central business district and around convention areas was a bit more difficult. Dan Sweat sought to include the areas around the Omni complex and the World Congress Center in the Restricted Business Zone, so that peddling and panhandling would be prohibited in high traffic convention areas.[314] However, the city's rather liberal ordinances regarding peddling complicated matters. While city ordinances forbade most peddling in the area, laws made particular exceptions for "disabled persons selling fruit, or disabled persons, widows or children under 16 selling flowers on their own account."[315] However, these peddlers had to be licensed and were forbidden from "shouting and crying" and making "loud, disturbing and unnecessary noises."[316] In a memo to Dan Sweat, CAP attorney Jane Childs explained, "Even if all illegal peddlers were removed from [the area], some persons who might be possibly 'undesirable' would remain."[317] These persons could potentially "congest pedestrian traffic by positioning themselves in the doorways of high frequented buildings." Childs argued that business leaders could remove the peddlers by pressuring the city council to make licensing requirements for stringent or by removing the language that allowed the exceptions. Begging and panhandling were also forbidden in the central business district but again enforcement proved an issue. Childs suggested similar methods for dealing with prostitutes, "trying to educate policemen to make arrests, obtaining harsher treatment by judges for violations, and increasing police visibility."[318]

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[314] Dan Sweat to James Hurst, December 5, 1978, Box 170, Folder 8, CAP Records.

[315] Jane Childs to Dan Sweat, June 29, 1979, Re: Derelict Problems in Atlanta Central Downtown Area, Box 171, Folder 8, CAP Records.

[316] Ibid.

[317] Ibid.

[318] Ibid.

The disputes over the sidewalks illustrate the limitations of the convention and business community's ability to control public spaces in the center of the city and the public sphere broadly. Business leaders had been seeking to control the interactions between those who existed predominantly in private spaces—downtown high rises, hotels, and businesses—and those who inhabited public spaces—parks, street corners, and sidewalks. One response was to turn inward, enclosing activity that had once been done publically into private space. This practice, described by architecture scholars as interior urbanism, had been a feature in downtown areas across the country since the era of urban renewal.[319]

The figure to implement this enclosure most successfully in Atlanta and cities across the country was John Portman. Portman, an architect, developer and one-time president of CAP, transformed the geography of downtown Atlanta with his pioneering vertical, mixed used development, Peachtree Center. The complex began a Merchandise Mart in 1961 and gradually expanded to include several more office high rises, a shopping mart and—by 1976—two prominent hotels.[320] Portman's signatures included vast atriums, such as the twenty-two-story Hyatt Regency atrium as well as several blocks of high-rise, pedestrian "skybridges" that connected Portman's developments above and across the streets.[321] Portman described his architecture as, "creating space, and opening up a tight, congested city…"[322] A *Los Angeles Times* article, however, described Portman's complexes as having "the appearance of a sanitized

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[319] Charles Rice, *Interior Urbanism: Architecture, John Portman and Downtown America* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 4, 99.

[320] "22-Story Office Building to Be Built on Peachtree," *Atlanta Constitution,* March 12, 1965, 1; Tom Walker, "Peachtree Center Expansion Highlights 20th anniversary," *Atlanta Constitution,* July 19, 1981, 13C.

[321] "22-Story Office Building to Be Built on Peachtree," *Atlanta Constitution;* Frederick Allen, "John Portman," *Atlanta Journal,* March 12, 1976, 1A.

[322] Frederick Allen, "John Portman."

hobbit trail for hamsters—a myriad of boxes and spheres joined by Plexiglas tubes rendering a fortress city within the city—which is safe enough as long as the hamsters stay within the plastic confines."[323] Thus, Portman created a city within a city, separating the interior spaces from the congested streets with glass and, by the late 1970s, private security. Security guards, often off-duty police officers, became a constant presence in and around the buildings downtown. [324]

Despite their turn inward and secure their businesses and offices, downtown business leaders still could not prevent common crimes such as muggings, pickpocketing and purse snatching, and could not rid the streets of obnoxious, though technically lawful derelicts. The business elite wanted a return to an older form of policing, a restoration of officers to their late 19th and early 20th century roles as neighborhood "peacekeepers." Back then, police officers walked beats, knew the neighborhoods, and its residents, and were involved in mediating disputes. This form of policing often led to corruption and abuse, as police officers took advantage of their constant interaction with residents. By the 1960s, reformist criminologists were advocating for decreased police presence in urban areas and less interaction between police and civilians. By the 1960s, police were no longer peacekeepers but rather were crime fighters, who responded to incidents after the fact.[325] Furthermore, the Warren Court in the 1960s

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[323] Scheer, Robert. "Queen City of the South," *Los Angeles Times* Nov 20, 1978, 28.

[324] Part of the Three Year Crime Demonstration

[325] However, even after police officers made the transition to crime fighters, crime rates increased and police brutality continued to be an issue. In response, progressive criminologists like Lee Brown quickly began to advocate a return to traditional policing practicing such as pedestrian beat patrol. Progressives argued that police should return to roles as admired, peacekeepers in the neighborhoods and work to establish trust between departments and community. As Lee Brown wrote in the aftermath of 1968 urban rebellions following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., "What we must do, and it is imperative that we do so is work toward bringing about a change in the relationship between the police and the public by fully integrating the police into the community." Thus, the idea of community policing, discussed in chapter four, and order maintenance form two sides of the same coin, both emerging from a desire to impose order as one side call it, or peace as the other. See Lee Brown, "Dynamic Police-Community Relations At Work," *The Police Chief*, April 1968, Box 1, Folder 54, Lee Brown Papers.

strengthened the rights of the accused and placed limits on the discretionary power of police officers. Thus, the early 1970s witnessed professionalization of police departments, which entailed the modernization of policing procedures, as previously described, as well as the "deregulation" of urban areas.[326] During the period of deregulatory policing, disorderly behaviors like public drunkenness and panhandling were decriminalized in many cities, including Atlanta. Thus, while the drunken man muttering profanities on a crowded street was a nuisance, he was not committing a crime.

Maynard Jackson and Lee Brown responded sympathetically to the business elites' complaints and held numerous meetings with Dan Sweat and other business leaders, black political leaders argued that they did not have the resources to expend to increase police presence downtown. This was likely due to crises within the police department, such as the police cheating scandal and police discrimination suit during which hiring of new police was halted.[327] But, as two high-profile murders put Atlanta's crime problem in the national and international press, the state of Georgia finally afforded Jackson and Brown the chance to expand police numbers, presence, and power in the city. While these police were commissioned in response to two violent crimes, their target quickly became the symbols of disorder that supposedly stoked fear of crime.

In June 1979, Dr. Marc Tetalman, an Ohio-based doctor attending the meeting for the Society of Nuclear Medicine, was shot and killed in a botched mugging while out to dinner with

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[326]Nicole Stelle Garnett, *Ordering the City: Land Use, Policing, and the Restoration of Urban America* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2010), 11-13.

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his wife and assistant, who was also shot but survived.[328] News of Tetalman's murder rumors of dozens of conventioneers being robbed and brutalized in the halls of Portman's hotels and skybridges reached national news. Jackson and others in the city government felt the pressure to respond with swift and immediate action. When the Radiological Society of North America, many of whose members attended the Society for Nuclear Medicine meeting, threatened to cancel their November 1979 meeting in Atlanta, Al Rapuano, executive vice president of the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, organized a meeting with Mayor Jackson, Commissioner Brown, Dr. William T. Meszaros, president of the RSNA and representatives from the major downtown hotels and convention centers. [329] During the August meeting, Commissioner Brown outlined an intensive public safety plan that addressed the concerns of the convention organizers and explained how a private security detail could supplement the city and state police.[330] The downtown hotels would coordinate their security efforts with the RSNA's actions for maximum protection for guests throughout the downtown area. Brown also announced a $20,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of Tetalman's murderer. Satisfied by the agreement, the RSNA decided to hold their convention in Atlanta as planned. Nonetheless, the city paid a steep price to assure their RSNA's continued business. The plan agreed upon included further details that went beyond addressing to the concerns of the RSNA conventioneers toward addressing longstanding concerns of the business community. In response

[328] Joe Ledlie, "Summer Murder Wave Has Atlantans on Edge," *Washington Post,* August 5, 1979, washingtonpost.com, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1979/08/05/summer-murder-wave-has-atlantans-on-edge.

[329] Radiological Society of North America's Memorandum of Understanding, August 8, 1979, Box 167, Folder 4, CAP Records.

[330] Dr. William T. Meszaros President of RSNA to RSNA members, August 1979, Box 167, Folder 4, CAP Records.

to the Tetalman murder, the city's political and business leaders created an anti-crime plan that briefly turned downtown Atlanta in to what some would describe as a police state.

Maynard Jackson outlined the plan in a televised address on August 10, 1979, two days after the meeting with convention organizers. He explained the renewed significance of the city's crime issue in the aftermath of the murder and a summer of rising crime rates. He laid out the crime statistics, exhaustively listing percentage changes and numbers in every major crime category and making clear that crime indeed was on the rise. Pointing to unemployment and inflation as the primary causes of crime, he noted that, "[Criminals'] frustration, their anger, and their need may sometimes lead some of them to steal or rob their neighbors and others."[331] Yet his compassion went only so far. "We can offer no excuses for anyone committing any crime," he made clear, "Understanding why does not excuse the criminal act. There is no excuse for breaking the law."[332] He went on to outline a twenty-one-point program that expanded the downtown police force, among other initiatives to maximize security in downtown specifically.

The Department of Public Safety primary task was to increase police visibility and power in the central business district. The police department doubled the police manpower in zone 5, the police zone that contained the downtown area. They also established a new police precinct in the Omni Complex near the Central City Park, which would provide more visibility near the convention areas on the west edge of downtown, particularly the World Congress Center. The police department also reactivated and expanded the decoy squad in the downtown area. The police department had initiated the decoy program in 1973 during the earlier crime panic. Officers in the unit would wear disguises intended to help them blend into high crime

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[331] "Jackson: 'We Will Not Abandon the Streets to Criminals'," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Aug 17, 1979, 27A.

[332] Ibid.

environments. Dressed as a drunks, derelicts, and prostitutes, they lured people into criminal situations and then arrested them for any crimes they discovered in their disguise. Unsurprisingly, the decoy squad did not function without controversy. Squad members were accused of entrapment, and targeting young black men specifically. The unit came under fire after officers killed two suspects during an arrest attempt in April 1974.[333] Less than a year into their service, the squad had killed seven people.[334] Black Atlantans protested the squad, calling it "a way of destroying the black man."[335] Though Mayor Jackson sought to reform the squad by creating stricter protocols, requiring psychological testing, improving training, and swiftly punishing wayward officers, the controversial squad was deactivated in 1978.[336]

Lee Brown assured worried Atlantans that the new decoy squad would be much improved, functioning according to precise procedures. The new squad was "modified to ensure that we are at maximum effectiveness with minimum problems," he said, adding, "The decoy officers will now dress in a manner that will be consistent with the environment in which the operation is taking place."[337] The police department reactivated the almost equally contentious stakeout squad as well. The stakeout squad scouted banks and high crime businesses such as convenience stores, gas stations, and fast food restaurants, and waited for robbers to attack. The

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[333] "Decoy Police Kill Accused Robbers." *Atlanta Daily World,* Apr 23, 1974, 3.

[334] "Mayor Plans 'Strict Controls' over Police Dept. Decoy Squad," *Atlanta Daily World,* May 16, 1974, 1.

[335] Tillman Bryant, "Letter to the Editor," *Atlanta Daily World*, May 21, 1974, 6.

[336] Ray Hope, "Whatever Happened to...?" *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 09, 1978, 1.

[337] Alexis Scott Reeves, "City Maps New Fight on Crime." *The Atlanta Constitution,* May 02, 1979, 1A, 2.

unit had also been discontinued in 1977 after several police killings.[338] The revived stakeout program would, according to Brown, “include an emphasis on the appropriate use of firearms.”[339] The problem with the stakeout and decoy squads, as Brown perceived, was not that their very presence exacerbated crime and violence between police and civilians, but that they were not efficiently trained and did not execute their directives effectively. Improvement of the guidelines, he believed, would solve the problems of the past and lower the rate of robberies, muggings, and purse snatching that affected Atlantans and visitors.

The Department of Public Safety also initiated a glut of new programs and initiatives that further increased police activity in the downtown area. The Field Investigation Team was a squad dedicated to investigating serious, violent crimes, while the metro fugitive squad tracked down criminals, particularly those involved in the interstate drug trade. In the new Drop In program, officers would “drop in” randomly at places that had a high robbery rate. The department also formed a special “flying squad,” which consisted of between fifty and sixty “very visible, very mobile” uniformed, heavily armed officers who patrolled high crime areas. Furthermore, the police department hired eight-one new police officers, after the court finally lifted the hiring ban. They promised to hire more officers in the near future as soon as the new recruits graduated from the academy. In perhaps the most drastic response to the Tetalman murder, Mayor Jackson requested additional state police from Governor George Busbee. Jackson intended for the troopers to serve as backup police, working mainly as traffic officers and in administrative capacities. However, Busbee demanded that they have full powers. By August

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[338] Yvonne Shinhoster" Robbery, Burglary Suspects Killed by Stake-Out Squads," *Atlanta Daily World,* May 16, 1976, 1; "3rd would-be Robber Killed by Policemen," *Atlanta Daily World,* Dec 22, 1974, 1; "2 Men Killed during Robbery Attempt at Shopping Center," *Atlanta Daily World,* Jun 12, 1973. 1

[339] Alexis Scott Reeves, "City Maps New Fight on Crime.”

1979, Georgia state troopers were patrolling the streets of Atlanta. Though the presence of the state troopers may have brought relief to downtown business leaders and convention attendees, they did not go over well among many of the city's police officers. The Afro-American Patrolman's League released a press release urging Jackson, Brown, and Napper against bringing in troopers. They argued that while crime rates were increasing and one high-profile tragedy had occurred, the situation was a not a crisis.[340] One officer later explained, "They're not used to the kind of problems we deal with, and the state patrol is undermanned throughout the state so sending [some] to Atlanta is just going to make them weaker."[341] The Atlanta police department, these officers contended, was capable of addressing crime in Atlanta without outside meddling.

Police officers were not the only Atlantans vexed by the presence of state troopers. Many black Atlantans, particularly those from low-income and high crime communities, resented the hyper-policing that emerged in downtown Atlanta in the aftermath of the Tetalman murder. A group called the People United for Freedom sought to organize black Atlantans to fight against the oppression of black and poor people intensified by heightened police. At a September 9, 1979 meeting at the Techwood and Clark Howell Community Center, the group called for the immediate removal of the state troopers who "beat and arrested Atlanta Junior College students who were peacefully protesting racist policies just last year." They also demanded the disbandment of the stakeout, decoy, and especially the flying squad. "By starting the Stakeout and Decoy Squad again," they declared in their call to arms, "it's just a matter of time before Black and poor youths get lured into traps and then shot down in cold blood. We haven't forgotten that 40 people were murdered this way by police a few years ago." The flying squad,

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[340] Press Release, August 10, 1979 from the Afro-American Patrolman's League, Box 50, Folder 4, MJ Papers.

[341] Gail Epstein, "Police Officers Not of 1 Mind on 'Aid,'" *Atlanta Constitution*, August 10, 1979, 23A.

they contended, was "just another method of intimidating and harassing Black and poor people."[342] Jackson, Brown, Napper, and other Atlanta political officials, they continued, needed not to worsen the crime issue through heightened police activity, but to address the foundations of crime. They explained, "We want to see politicians deal with the real causes of crime: unemployment, drugs, poor housing, bad education, inflation, and the desperation that comes from these things." Group leaders explained, "The economy is in a crisis of recession and inflation. This is the underlying reason for increased crime and increased police repression. In every area, conditions are going from bad to worse: programs are being cut back, tenants getting evicted, students, especially black students, are getting kicked out of schools and colleges, and the KKK is on the rise." They also cautioned, "Let it be known that we strongly oppose crime, which in fact is the worst in the Black and poor communities. We realize, however, that when politicians talk about a 'crime wave' they are mainly concerned about crime that threatens of the profits of the big corporations downtown."[343] The People United for Freedom foregrounded the aspects of the increased crime rates that had been obscured in push toward hyper-policing in the aftermath of the Tetalman murder.

The People United for Freedom understood the rising crime rates in the context of the nationwide urban economic crisis. The late 1970s was a trying time for cities around the country. Deindustrialization, capital flight, rising rates of unemployment, inflation and stagnant economic growth (or stagflation) combined with growing fiscal austerity and disinvestment from city, state, and federal governments. Conditions were worse for black Americans, whose rate of unemployment was double that of whites. In metropolitan Atlanta, black unemployment was

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[342] Flyer from the Organizing Coalition to Form People United for Freedom, Box 50, Folder 4, MJ Papers.

[343] Ibid.

three times that of white Atlantans—sixteen percent versus five percent in 1978.[344] Furthermore, poverty among black Atlantans was increasing. Economic Opportunity Atlanta estimated that the poverty rate grew to 21.2 percent in 1979, a majority of those black. An estimated 36.8 percent of black Atlantans lived below the poverty line.[345] The crisis in Atlanta and other urban areas only worsened during the Carter administration. The former Atlanta resident campaigned on a promise to reverse the previous Republican administrations' abandonment of the cities.[346] Consequently, he garnered the support of black leaders such as the Urban League's Vernon Jordan and Joseph Lowery of the SCLC. However, by 1979 it seemed Carter's reforms had not gone far enough. Though he made some reforms to the Department of Housing and Urban Development and developed the Urban Development Action Grants, Carter continued to his predecessors' austerity policies.[347] When Carter came to Atlanta to observe Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday in January 1979, the SCLC, Atlanta NAACP, and Dekalb County NAACP organized a protest. Seeking to "carry the poor people's message to the president," Joseph Lowery argued, "Mr. Carter himself acknowledges that he rode to the presidency on the tide of SCLC activities led by Dr. King. Now his administration is proposing austerity measures which will place the heaviest burden on those least able to bear it—the poor and unemployed."[348] Indeed, black leaders such as Lowery and Jordan, like those of People United for Freedom,

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[344] DeWitt Rogers, "Year's Challenge: Jobless Atlantans," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Jan 08, 1978, 1S.

[345] Hank Ezell, "20% of Atlantans Fall into 'Poor' Category," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 12, 1980, 1B.

[346] Roger Biles, *The Fate of Cities: Urban American and Federal Government, 1945-2000* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2011), 222-225.

[347] Biles, 248-249.

[348] Rebecca Linn, "SCLC Plans Protest March For Carter Visit," *Atlanta Constitution,* Jan 11, 1979, 1C.

recognized the issue of crime as undergirded by a principal black vulnerability, fostered by economic insecurity.

Nevertheless, many other black Atlantans welcomed the heightened presence of the police. By 1977, the *Atlanta Daily World* had begun regularly publishing crime reports that shifted between the quotidian—in one case two teenagers shoplifted a copy of *Roots* from a bookstore—and the lurid, with details of people murdered, mugged, and abused.[349] During one twenty-four hour period on August 13, 1978, the paper reported, there were two murders, six aggravated assaults, twelve cases of simple battery, four persons found dead. Crimes against property included twenty burglaries, twenty-seven larcenies, thirteen thefts by taking, four armed robberies, and three purse snatchings. The newspaper also sometimes included the names and addresses of victims of these crimes, and the locations of the attacks. In community meetings with officers and police administrations, black Atlantans demanded more police and better trained ones at that.[350]

Despite the presence of state troopers, flying squads, decoys, stakeouts, and the new set of police horses donated by the CAP, another public, violent crime occurred in the October 1979. On the way back from a celebratory lunch for twenty-sixth birthday, Patricia Barry, a secretary at the law firm Troutman, Sanders, and Admore and one-time secretary for former governor Carl Sanders, was shot and killed by Raymond Bunting, a mentally unstable black man originally

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[349] "Crime Report," Atlanta Daily World, Feb 03, 1977, 2.

[350] "AUC Schedules Anti-Crime Meet," *Atlanta Inquirer*, April 21, 1979, 1; "Citizens Organizing to Plan Action to Combat Growing Menace of Crime," *Atlanta Daily World*, Mar 22, 1979, 1; "But we do Need More Police." *Atlanta Daily World*, Feb 04, 1979, 4; "Public Safety Committee Scheduled Five Hearings," *Atlanta Inquirer*, September 2, 1978, 1; More Police Urgently Needed," *Atlanta Daily World*, Sep 24, 1978, 4; Brookins, Portia S. Brookins, "Citizens, Police Chief Discuss Ways to Fight Menace of Rising Crime," *Atlanta Daily World*, Sep 21, 1978; "Public Safety Committee Scheduled Five Hearings," *Atlanta Inquirer*, September 2, 1978, 1.

from New Jersey. The man then turned the gun on himself. The *Atlanta Constitution* published graphic photos of the scene, with a shrouded Barry on the ground and a stream of blood flowing from her head.[351] The random murder of the promising young woman set off another uproar among Atlantans, particularly whites. Longtime *Constitution* columnist Lewis Grizzard wrote an impassioned screed, scorning the mayor, Chamber of Commerce, and the police, declaring, "[This] city is going to hell. It may already be there."[352] The problem, he asserted, was the downtown area, a "zoo" with "drunks and punks everywhere." "Drunks and punks get crazy," he argued, "They get mean. They rob. They steal. They kill."[353] Somebody, he believed, needed to get the drunks and punks off the streets and "make the city safe again." [354]

Two weeks after the murder, five hundred Atlantans, many of whom worked downtown like Barry, held a rally at Central City Park. A group, who identified themselves as "women working downtown," organized the gathering. In a flyer advertising the event, "Women and men have the right to walk down the streets of Atlanta without being MUGGED RAPED, SHOT, HARASSED BY OBSCENE LANGUAGE, MOLESTED, STABBED!!!" [capitalization in original].[355] The flyer posited, "Do you know that your rights are being violated everyday," evoking what Nixon had once referred to as the "first civil right…to be freed from domestic violence."[356] At the rally, participants carried signs with messages like: "Make Our City Safe,"

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[351] Barry King and Angelo Lewis, "Stranger Kills Secretary on Peachtree St." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 18, 1979, 2.

[352] Grizzard, Lewis. "Atlanta's Going to Hell—Does Anybody Care?" *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 18, 1979, 1.

[353] Ibid.

[354] Ibid.

[355] Flyer, "Do You Know Your Rights are Being Violated Everyday?" Box 167, Folder 4, CAP Records.

[356] Murakawa, 1.

"Ban Public Drinking on the Streets," and "Gets the Punks and Drunks Off the Streets."[357] Former Governor Carl Sanders delivered a fiery speech that assailed the supposed sluggishness of Lee Brown and George Napper to much applause. Notably, the majority of people in attendance were white.

However, also in attendance was thirty-four-year-old state representative David Scott. Scott was a close associate of Maynard Jackson and a rising star in the black political class. The Florida A&M and Wharton School of Finance graduate had been elected as representative of Georgia's thirty-seventh district in 1974. Before that, he had served as Gov. Carter's Intergovernmental Relations Staff. At the rally, Scott claimed to speak for "the black community," and appealed to the values of the black liberal reform tradition. He claimed, "Nine-nine and nine-tenths of every black man, woman and child in the state of Georgia wants the same thing that you do. They want, they want order as well as decency, they want respect for their women, they want respect for their homes that they had to work for 10 times harder than any white person."[358] Black folks, Scott suggested to the mostly white audience, were just like white folks.

The Barry murder sparked debates about gun control among Atlantans. Many wanted to know how a man like Bunting could have access to the gun that he used to murder Barry. There appeared to be a serious flaw in the institutions that controlled access to handguns. In his speech in the aftermath of the murder, former governor Sanders suggested making carrying a gun without a license a felony with a mandatory minimum sentence.[359] Governor George Busbee, Lt.

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[357] Tyrone D Terry, "More than 500 Attend A Rally to Stop Crime," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Nov 03, 1979, 1.

[358] Ibid.

[359] Ron Taylor, "Gun Control Statutes Trapped in Crossfire," *Atlanta Journal*, October 21, 1979, 1.

Governor Zell Miller, and Georgia Speaker of the House Tom Murphy spoke out against the proliferation of gun sales and promised to tighten gun control laws.[360]

The leading advocates for gun legislation in these debates, were black liberals from the governing class, Maynard Jackson and David Scott. Scott was a leading advocate for gun control in Atlanta and in the Georgia Assembly.[361] In 1975, Scott authored five control bills, which would require gun licenses, registration, minimum qualifications, and a ten-day waiting period before purchase. Jackson had long been an advocate of gun control and had been refining his gun control program since his days as vice mayor. In 1972, he addressed students at Atlanta University and argued that the proliferation of guns was one of the major problems facing in Atlanta in its war on crime. He described Atlanta as "an armed camp" where "there are so many guns in Atlanta now that no one can even closely guess the number. Murderers, rapists, burglars, thieves and other criminals are illegally possessed of guns."[362] He advocated "cracking down on the illegal possession and use of guns in the city of Atlanta." "He continued, insisting, "This is a must if we are to survive as a decent city that is fit to raise our children in."[363]

Throughout the 1970s, Maynard Jackson was one of the active gun control activists in the nation founded and served as the chairman of the National Gun Control Center. The Center was intended to serve as lobbying group that would counter the National Rifle Association through a forceful public relations campaign.[364] As a nationally recognized gun control advocate, Jackson

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[360] Ibid.

[361] Fred Steeple, "Push for Gun Laws Eyed Cautiously By Atlanta Solons," *Atlanta Daily World,* Dec 06, 1974, 1; "David Scott Will Speak at Greater Mt. Calvary Sunday," *Atlanta Daily World,* Jun 21, 1974, 2.

[362] "Vice Mayor Asserts Atlanta Is an Armed Camp," *Atlanta Inquirer*, September 16, 1972, 2.

[363] Ibid.

[364] "Mayor Unveils National Gun Control Center," *Atlanta Daily World,* Apr 18, 1976, 7.

thus delivered several speeches about handguns both before and during his mayoral regime. In 1975, he addressed the National Forum for Handgun Control and the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Crime, in May and July respectively. Addressing the group as the mayor of the city that "leads the nation in homicides" per capita, Jackson blamed the situation on "the abundance of handguns."[365] They were responsible for sixty-six percent of murders in Atlanta between 1972-1975, he estimated. Jackson gave his support for the recommendation of the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards Goals which stipulated that the sale of handguns be limited to law enforcement personnel and that the private possession of guns be prohibited completely by 1983.

Jackson outlined a four-point plan for achieving such a goal. The first step was the "immediate establishment in every state of a handgun control project similar to the national project of the U.S. Conference of Mayors," an organization that Jackson also headed at the time. Each state would create an active and effective lobbying group to "out-lobby the control activists" and research the impact on handguns in each state. The next steps involved establishing new local handgun control laws in every state by 1978, followed by the passage of strict federal legislation to control the illegal gun trade by 1980. The final point was the passage of federal gun control legislation by January 1983.

Jackson's suggestions targeted both the supply and demand sides of gun sales. He recommended in this legislation the prohibition of private possession of guns, the prohibition of manufacturing of handguns except for distribution to law enforcement personnel, the enactment of state legislation prohibiting the sale of guns, ammunition, and any parts, as well as the funding and creating of state agencies responsible for buying back personal guns. Lastly, Jackson

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[365] National Forum for Handgun Control, May 27, 1975, Box 1, Folder 5, Series D, MJ Papers.

suggested the enactment of state legislation "providing for police discretion in stop-and-frisk searches of persons and searches of automobiles for illegal handguns."[366]

As reasonable as Jackson's recommendations seemed to many, conservatives in the Georgia legislature resisted. By 1979, no major gun control laws made it through legislation in the Georgia Assembly, where an influential pro-gun lobby headed by Charles Lyles of the Georgia Wildlife Federation and members of the National Rifle Association consistently blocked gun control measures.[367] In 1976, the Georgia Assembly passed a law that allowed private citizens to carry concealed weapons, ironically in response to the panic about street crime.[368] Backers of the bill argued that citizens needed to be able to defend themselves in case they were accosted on the streets.

A week after Patricia Barry's murder, Mayor Jackson took the debate directly to the legislature. In November 1979, Jackson testified before the Georgia Senate Law Enforcement Subcommittee to discuss how Atlanta was faring in its fight against crime. In addition to demand more and better-paid police, he delineated more recommendations for handgun control. He edited his previous recommendations slightly, suggesting stricter licensing and purchasing

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[366] Ibid.

[367] There were several handgun control measures proposed in the Georgia legislature in 1975. The most stringent was Rep. David Scott's, which would tighten licensing requirement, establish a fifteen day waiting period, and would outlaw "Saturday night specials," which were cheap, small guns sold at pawnshops around the city. Rep. Nathan Knight-Newnan proposed raising the fee for pistol licenses from $3 to $10 while Rep. Billy McKinney, D-Atlanta suggested stiffening the punishment for carrying a pistol without a license from a misdemeanor to a felony. Rep. Dick Lane, R-East Point proposed a bill that established a fifteen-day waiting period. Other measures sought to provide more freedom to gun owners. Rep. Jim West created a bill that would make carrying a concealed weapon. All bills were tabled until 1976; Gun Control Hearings Begin here July 21," *Atlanta Daily World,* Jul 20, 1975, 3; Gun Control Measure Tabled Until 197,." *Atlanta Daily World,* Feb 16, 1975, 1.

[368] The bill had the support of Lt. Gov. Zell Miller, and Busbee, though he told David Scott that he opposed the bill and acknowledged that "it would get people killed," but signed it anyway, much to Scott's chagrin. "Rep. Scott Blasts Busbee's Role in Signing Gun Law," *Atlanta Daily World,* Sep 17, 1976, 1.

procedures. He urged that every gun owner be required to hold a permit, have a license, submit to a background check, and agree to waiting period of no less than sixty days. Jackson also suggested determinate, mandatory sentencing for violation of handgun laws and finally, "that there be a requirement that the use of a handgun in the commission of any crime will be considered to a be spate offense carrying with it a much more serious penalty than we have now." [369] Jondelle Johnson, former head of the Atlanta chapter of the NAACP, also gave a statement before the subcommittee. She backed a comprehensive handgun control bill and that required a waiting period, a bond, a background check for criminal records and mental medical history, and a separate permit for each weapon purchased. She concluded, "Handguns do kill--and they kill people!"[370] Jackson and Johnson had an ally in Rep. David Scott of Georgia. After the Tetalman and Barry murders, David Scott again called for gun control, insisting that it was a small, but necessary component of the war against crime. His proposed mandates gained support from Governor Busbee and several legislators from Atlanta. Despite the advocacy from Atlanta's black leaders, gun control laws repeatedly failed to pass in the Georgia Assembly.[371]

Gun control legislation was slightly more successful at the municipal level. In the fall of 1979 and winter of 1980, the Atlanta City Council reviewed several gun control ordinances. The first ordinance proposed by Marvin Arrington, then the new chairman of the Public Safety Committee and the president of the city council, proposed strengthening the conditions for purchasing handguns. Handgun purchasers would be required to apply for the gun and that

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[369] Testimony Before the Senate Law Enforcement Subcommittee, November 15, 1979, Box 1, Folder 27, Series D, MJ Papers.

[370] Draft of speech for Jondelle Johnson of the NAACP, Remarks for the Senate Subcommittee on Law Enforcement, November 15, 1979, Box 50, Folder 4, Series B, MJ Papers.

[371] Yvonne Shinhoster, "Rebuffed in Ga., Rep. Scott to Take Gun Law Crusade Nationally." *Atlanta Daily World,* Feb 24, 1977. 2,

application would have to be approved by the Commissioner of Public Safety. The commissioner reserved the right to deny people convicted of a felony, those who suffered from mental illness, and people "not of good moral character."[372] The executive branch of the city council proposed two ordinances. The first made it unlawful to carry a concealed weapon or ammunition, countering the 1976 bill passed by the Georgia General Assembly. The second required a $1000 surety bond for the purchase of handguns and mandated a fifteen-day waiting period.

Two of the ordinances proposed by Dozier Smith expanded the power of the police in the fight against handguns. The first authorized police to stop and search persons suspected of carrying of a gun if the person was acting in a "menacing" manner or "if the officer can reasonably justify a suspicion that the person is carrying a gun." The second ordinance gave police the power to stop, detain, and question, or stop and frisk, persons suspected of carrying a gun through "reasonable suspicion based on specific objective facts" based on "reasonable inferences."[373] Smith explained, "The whole thing I'm trying to search for is to take measure we can to give the police all the tools we can." [374] These two ordinances were comparable to the legislation Maynard Jackson argued in 1975 was necessary for the total abolition of handguns. Jackson's suggestion, however, went one step further; he argued that police should be authorized to search both persons and cars for illegal weapons. Though the stop-and-search and stop-and-frisk ordinances did not pass in the city council,[375] the Atlanta City Council passed a handgun

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[372] Larry Dingle to Members of the City Council, November 16, 1979, Box 50, Folder 4, Series B, MJ Papers.

[373] Ibid.

[374] T.L. Wells, "Council may be Bucking Bill of Rights on Crime," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Nov 07, 1979, 2.

[375] City councilman John Sweet argued about stop and search and stop and frisk ordinances, he claimed, "I don't think suspicion (that someone is carrying a weapon) is enough. Random searches and seizures are unconstitutional. Otherwise, we'd have a garrison state."

control law in March 1980. Handgun owners were now required to fill out an application that had to be approved by Commissioner of Public Safety, to successfully pass a background check, wait for fifteen days, and be at least twenty-years of age.[376] The laws were not as far-reaching as Jackson had advocated five years earlier, yet there were in Jackson's estimation a step forward.

Outside of Atlanta, black political leaders were more successful in passing wide-reaching gun control legislation. In Washington, a city that often jockeyed with Atlanta for the title of Murder Capital, the predominantly black city council proposed gun control legislation that would seem quite radical in modern day political debates. The law required current owners to register their weapons and prohibited people from buying new ones. Violators would be subject to a ten-day jail sentence. Astoundingly, to today's observers, these laws passed by a 12-1 majority in the D.C. Council and Washington D.C. had the nation's strictest gun control laws.[377] Washingtonians had the benefit of home rule, whereas Jackson and other gun control advocates in Atlanta faced a conservative Georgia Assembly.

Given African Americans' history of armed self-defense and their fight to have access to weapons in the 1960s, the move toward gun control may appear unexpected. Scholars have argued that black reformers abandoned their support of armed self-defense once guns weapons were seemingly no longer needed to protect against white extralegal violence.[378] However, this explanation does explain why black reformers would not support armed self-defense against other forms of danger. Why is one form of self-defense legitimate and the other not? The context of black liberal reform tradition provides more insight into black political leaders' advocacy of

[376] Evelyn L. Newman, "Crime Still Too High in City, Brown Declares," *Atlanta Daily World*, Mar 30, 1980, 1.

[377] Forman, 75.

[378] Forman, 72.

gun control. Handguns represented a serious threat to public order and established procedures, as any person who had access to a weapon could take justice into their own hands. Black liberals believed that the state, which had developed processes and guidelines for fairly meeting out justice, should have a monopoly over violence. Ordinary citizens, they believed, should not have access to such power. Black reformers were willing to use the full power of the state, even if it meant violating the rights of the individual, to ensure that protection of the collective and the preservation of order.

Gun control ordinances were not the only crime control measures undergirded by notions of order. Other ordinances targeted the chronic drunks and derelicts downtowns, much to the pleasure of the CAP and downtown business leaders.[379] Marvin Arrington, Richard Guthman, and Buddy Fowlkes authored an ordinance that concerned the behavior of people passing through downtown Atlanta. It declared, "It shall be unlawful for any person to act in a violent, turbulent, boisterous, indecent, or disorderly manner or to use profane, vulgar, or obscene language in the city, tending to disturb good order, peace, and dignity in said city."[380] The ordinance sought to give police the power to regulate the behavior of the downtown "derelicts." Jackson argued, "For several years, for example, our law enforcement efforts have been hampered by inadequate laws to regulate public behavior." Arrington echoed Jackson, contending, "I have seen people using all kinds of vile language on the streets of Atlanta, apparently to people they don't even know sometimes."[381] Jackson asserted, "We will not tolerate the harassment and intimidation that have become an all too common occurrence in our

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[379] Carole Ashkinaze, "Winos A Fact of Life in Park," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Jul 31, 1979, 2.

[380] Memo from Larry Dingle to Members of the City Council.

[381] T.L. Wells, "Council may be Bucking Bill of Rights on Crime," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Nov 07, 1979, 2.

city streets. Our police officers are making arrests every day, but they need better legal tools to deal with these problems more effectively."[382] What was considered appropriate public behavior or "harassment and intimidation," however, was subjective and left up to interpretation by police officers, enabling discriminatory selective enforcement.

Another ordinance authored by Marvin Arrington and Richard Guthman prohibited public drinking on streets, sidewalks, alleyways, or parks in the central business district.[383] Dan Sweat praised the ordinance during a CAP meeting, saying that he believed it "would have immediate positive benefits on the real and perceived downtown crime picture."[384] Relatedly, Marvin Arrington proposed an ordinance that prohibited urinating and/or defecating on property in public view. The city council also proposed regulating parking lots in the city. Parking lots had become dangerous sites, particularly in downtown Atlanta, where muggings, assaults, and murders occurred regularly. The ordinance would require downtown parking lots to have uniformed attendants. Though the attendants were not armed or trained in security or law enforcement, these parking lot attendants, they believed, would at least provide a measure of protection for downtown drivers.

The proposed ordinances, which expanded the power of the police to detain "boisterous" loiterers or stop and search people suspected of possessing weapons, were controversial, even within the council chambers. Councilman John Sweet believed that the "obscenity" ordinance was unconstitutional. Though he "sympathized" with the intent of decreasing street harassment, he argued, "My gut feeling is that it is unconstitutional. I don't think you can 'offend the dignity

[382] Testimony Before the Senate Law Enforcement Subcommittee, November 15, 1979.

[383] Marvin Arrington to Dan Sweat, July 25, 1979, Box 171, Folder 8, CAP Records.

[384] Minutes from August 16, 1979 CAP meeting, Box 171, Folder 5, CAP Records.

of the city.'"[385] Others also predicted constitutional barriers to the anti-loitering and disorderly conduct ordinances. Jackson admitted that in the past, such laws had given the police opportunities to harass and abuse people. However, appealing to a faith in procedure, he argued, "I believe now that we have the kind of police department that would not engage in those abuses and the level of political sensitivities and that would not allow the abuses that were done under the old idling and loitering ordinance and could be undertaken under a new one."[386] Subsequently, Jackson altered the ordinance to model the anti-loitering law recently passed in Macon.[387] Their ordinance read: "It shall be unlawful for any person to act in violent, turbulent, voiceress, indecent or disorderly manner or to use profane, vulgar, or obscene language in the city tending to disturb good order, peace and dignity in said city."[388] The Macon law had been upheld by the Georgia Supreme Court. Jackson contended that the police would follow prescribed protocols and employ the law judiciously and impartially. Nonetheless, the revised ordinance failed to pass in the city council.[389] The successful crime control ordinances included the prohibitions against public drinking, public urination and defecation, and the parking lot

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[385] T.L. Wells, "Council may be Bucking Bill of Rights on Crime."

[386] Maynard Jackson, "On Gun Control," October 24, 1979, Box 2, Folder 3, Series D, MJ Papers.

[387] Untitled Piece, undated, has "synopsis" scribbled out on top, ca. 1979, Box 50, Folder 2, Series B, MJ Papers.

[388] Maynard Jackson, On Gun Control.

[389] Other crime control ordinances/resolutions that were introduced but rejected by the Atlanta City Council: "Ordinance requiring the installation of bullet-proof transparent shields between passenger and driver in taxicabs," "ordinance making it unlawful for a dealer of firearms to sell, trade, or dispose of any firearms unless the person obtaining the firearm shall furnish identification to the dealer," and the "ordinance making it illegal to leave keys in cars." Metropolitan Atlanta Crime Commission. *Controlling Crime in Atlanta*. Atlanta, Ga: The Commission, 1980, 41.

ordinance.[390] Thus, while Jackson and the city council were able to extend the power of law enforcement to police the behavior of citizens to some extent, they could not go as far as they believed would be necessary to stem the tide of disorder in downtown Atlanta.

The policing and legal reforms passed in the wake of the high profile crimes of 1979 were initially limited to the downtown business areas. But it was not long before black business owners were calling for similar stipulations in the black business districts. Like the business owners in the central business district, black business owners began to link disorderly behavior to social and economic harm and argued that loitering, public drunkenness, and prostitution were undermining economic development on Auburn Avenue. Bar owner Bennie Smith spoke for many of the business owners when he complained, "the criminal elements are slowing down economic development and making life miserable for many merchants."[391] Black business and property owners, like others in governing coalition, believed economic development was the key to solve the economic issues, particularly unemployment and poor housing, that fostered crime in the first place. The expansion of black businesses and capital development in the Auburn Avenue area and then in other parts of the city would provide employment to unemployed young blacks, invite corporate investment which would contribute to the declining tax and fund public schools. However, crime and the fear of crime were persistent threats to black economic development.

[390] Other successful ordinances/resolutions included: "Ordinance providing that adult entertainment establishments cannot get beer and wine licenses," "ordinance establishing new restrictions to hours of operations of billboard rooms," "ordinance allowing extended use of unclaimed impounded vehicles by police undercover personnel," "resolution accepting drug sniffing dog and approving its use by police," "resolution authorizing the Mayor to allow the use of speed detection devices by Atlanta police," "resolution appropriating $20,000 for the operation of the Neighborhood Justice Center," and "resolution authorizing shotgun training for Atlanta police," Metropolitan Atlanta Crime Commission, *Controlling Crime in Atlanta*. Atlanta, Ga: The Commission, 1980, 40-41.

[391] Rozell Clark, "Auburn Ave, Committee to Combat Crime in the Area," *Atlanta Daily World,* Mar 12, 1981, 1.

Thus, the merchants as well as the Department of Public Safety underscored the need to control crime and, in particular, protect black capital from both real and imagined black criminality.

In 1979, the Auburn Avenue Revitalization Committee (AARC) conducted a survey of Auburn Avenue-based business owners and found that public safety was the most pressing concern for more than 80 percent of those surveyed. Many complained about the presence of prostitutes, drunks, and "excessive loitering" in the area. This included, oddly enough, a liquor store owner named Welcome Harris who claimed people were fearful to walk into his shop because drunks hung out around outside. Several others mentioned that the presence of loiterers who frightened their customers, who often had to walk a distance to get to the establishments due a lack of available street parking (the second most frequent complaint).[392] Notably, none of the business owners cited other crime such as robberies, assaults, or burglaries in their complaints about public safety. Their main sources of complaint were the so-called "victimless crimes," crimes that disrupted order and threatened their economic vitality of their enterprises.

The merchants later met to discuss issues of crime with Jackson, Brown and other police officials at a meeting of the Auburn Avenue Revitalization Committee on August 27, 1981. The purpose of the meeting was to create a Police/Community Agreement, a component of Atlanta's Partnership Against Crime, a new program engineered by Public Commissioner Lee Brown. The purpose of the partnership was to "involve Atlanta citizens in a direct and meaningful way in the identification of public safety problems and in the development of programs and strategies to make Atlanta a safer city."[393] Public safety representatives would meet with groups of citizens

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[392] AARC Survey Suggestions and Recommendations, August 28, 1978, Box 24, Folder 5, JHC Papers.

[393] Lee Brown, "Partnership Against Crime: The Key to a Safer Atlanta," c. 1981. Box 12, Folder 11, Lee P. Brown Papers, Woodson Research Center, Rice University, Houston, Texas.

from a particular beat including neighborhood associations, tenant organizations, and business groups.

The merchants who attended the AARC meeting held nothing back. A Mr. Barnsdale, who worked at a local funeral home, complained that purse snatchings occurred all the time and that three cars were recently stolen out of the parking lot. Just the week before, he explained, someone broke into the funeral home and took only a clock off the wall. Oscar Hall, who owned a gas and service station, complained of broken windows at the station and about the station's parking lot being used as a prostitution hub. He was not the only one to raise the issue of rampant prostitution in the area. A representative from the newly erected Martin Luther King Jr. Center argued that the area near the chapel was "almost a house of prostitution," while the apartments owned by Wheat Street Baptist Church and Big Bethel A.M.E. functioned as another site for sex work. The representative lamented, "There's a lot at stake here since the complex is part of the historical area," which had 200,000 to 300,000 visitors annually.[394]

Several citizens pointed to the problems of enforcement within the criminal justice system, particularly at the municipal court level, arguing that the courts needed to be stricter and more systematic in their sentencing. Mayor Jackson agreed, stating that his administration needed "do more with the judges," perhaps by seeking minimum sentencing for prostitution such as a $500 fine and mandatory jail time. Jackson also expressed his concern for issues such as purse snatching and the constant loitering in front of establishments, which was a consistent complaint of business owners. Jackson promised, "to do whatever [was] necessary to achieve a safe and secure Auburn Avenue" and that "police leadership had 'carte blanche' to reach that

[394] Notes from AARC Meeting, August 27, 1981, Box 12, Folder 15, Lee P. Brown Papers, Woodson Research Center, Rice University, Houston, Texas.

end."[395] *Atlanta Daily World* owner and editor, C.A. Scott declared, "We need more police immediately," and the group of merchants agreed that more police visibility was necessary to solve the problems that plagued the area. At the end of the meeting, the group passed a motion "to go on record to the City Council to use whatever means necessary to speed up the hiring and training of police officers."[396]

The merchants and the Department of Public Safety representatives signed a Police/Community agreement three weeks later. The provisions agreed to were in many ways identical to the specifications passed in the central business district two years before. The Department of public safety agreed to double the beat patrol immediately and begin a foot patrol on the weekends. They also consented to begin pulling the liquor licenses of institutions in the area that had recurring problems and promised to institute Operation Cleanup, an intensive crackdown on the issue of prostitution. In essence, the police committed to increase their visibility in the area, surveilling the space for potential criminals and "creating," as Maynard Jackson described, "an environment where people do not feel comfortable standing on the corner."[397] This would address the issue that business owner Dewitt Martin raised concerning day laborers who assemble in search of work on the corner of Edgewood Avenue and Butler Street, and had supposedly begun scaring pedestrians by laying out on the side of the street.[398] In exchange, the merchants of the AARC promised to post flyers around the neighborhood warning potential criminals about the impending crackdown on crime. They also committed to meeting

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[395] Notes from AARC Meeting, August 27, 1981.

[396] Ibid.

[397] Ibid.

[398] Ibid.

with the municipal court judges to demand for stronger sentences for prostitution and increased enforcement of the laws through the courts.

The AARC's Police Community Agreement reveals the how push for order maintenance policing in black neighborhoods was buttressed by ideologies stemming from the black liberal reform tradition. Auburn Avenue business owners demanded more police in the area, not only because they were afraid of being victims of violent assaults or crimes against their property. They wanted more police in the area to impose order on the space outside of their businesses. Whereas Auburn Avenue had once been known as a bustling center of commerce and culture, the "right kind of people" had been supplanted by ne'er-do-wells. Thus, they needed to be removed from the space by any means necessary. The business proprietors also demanded that police protect black enterprise, to which the loiterers and loafers posed a serious threat. Disorderly people, whether they drunks hanging out in front of liquor store or day laborers resting on the sidewalk, interrupted the flow of commerce, an offense black business owners understood as criminal. In sanctioning greater police presence and activity in the Auburn Avenue area, Auburn Avenue property owners and business proprietors legitimated the criminalization of the behavior of those at the margins of Black Atlanta, those most affected by global economic restructuring.

In March 1982, *The Atlantic* magazine published one of the most influential criminology studies in the history of the discipline. The argument was quite simple—crime and disorder were "usually inextricably linked."[399] Criminologist James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling argued in their article, "Broken Windows," that signs of disorder such as litter, teenage loiterers, or the

[399] James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, "Broken Windows," *The Atlantic,* March 1982, *http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465* (accessed December 12, 2016).

symbolic broken window, signaled to both disorderly criminals and orderly, law-abiding citizens that that community did not care about crime. These symbols of disorderliness led to increased rates of violent crime and, more significantly to Wilson and Kelling, fear of crime. Consequently, upstanding people, who could afford to, moved out of the neighborhood and troublemakers moved in. “Disorder demoralizes communities, undermines commerce, leads to the abandonment of public spaces, and undermines public confidence in the ability of government to solve problems,” they argued, “[F]ear drives citizens further from each other and paralyzes their normal, order-sustaining responses, compounding the impact of disorder.”[400]

Signs of disorder were not limited to spatial representations such as the wall of graffiti or the boarded up home, disruptive people, too, served as signals. They argued, “The unchecked panhandler is, in effect, the first broken window. Muggers and robbers, whether opportunistic or professional, believe they reduce their chances of being caught or even identified if they operate on streets where potential victims are already intimidated by prevailing conditions.”[401] They continued, suggesting, “If the neighborhood cannot keep a bothersome panhandler from annoying passersby, the thief may reason, it is even less likely to call the police to identify a potential mugger or to interfere if the mugging actually takes place.”[402] Kelling and Wilson advocated that police departments return to foot patrols and a crackdown on small infractions such as public drunkenness, jaywalking, and loitering, which compounded to create a sense of disorder and foster even more crime.

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[400] James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, “Broken Windows.”

[401] Ibid.

[402] Wilson and Kelling.

The "Broken Windows" article was paradigm shifting in the field of public safety. As Christina Hanhardt has argued, liberals and conservatives both supported the method, signaling the convergence of liberal and conservative views on issues of crime control. She writes, "The emphasis on the primacy of an individual's sense of safety or fear, the proposed solution of citizen-police collaboration, and the idea that signs of disorder might lead to bigger threats were at the time not only the tenets of conservatism but consistent as well with the approach to inequality adopted by postwar liberal politics."[403] Police departments around the country quickly adopted the method. The most famous use of broken windows was in New York City in the early 1990s. In 1993, Republican mayor Rudy Giuliani was elected on tough-on-crime platform. Along with Police Commissioner William Bratton, Giuliani led a crackdown on panhandlers, fare-dodgers, and the infamous squeegee men, who they argued affected the "quality of life" in New York City.[404] As crime rates in New York decreased significantly in the 1990s, observers credited the quality-of-life policing instituted by Bratton. While scholars have challenged the role of broken windows policing in this crime decline, the policing practice spread to cities around the country.

But quality-of-life police in New York City did not begin with Rudy Giuliani. The campaign against public nuisance had begun under his predecessor, David Dinkins, New York's first and only black mayor, whose commissioner of police was none other than Lee P. Brown. In

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[403] Christina B. Hanhardt, "Broken Windows at Blue's: a Queer History of Gentrification and Policing," in Jordan T. Camp and Christina Heatherton. *Policing the Planet: Why the Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter* (London; New York: Verso, 2016), 49.

[404] Squegee men were panhandlers who washed the windshields of drivers at stoplights and then demanded payment. The campaign against the practice actually begin in the Dinkins administration, though it is often associated with Giuliani administration. See Alex Vitale, *City of Disorder: How the Quality of Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 139.

1990, Brown release a policing reform plan, which he called "Safe Streets, Safe City." Brown proposed the addition of a thousand new officers to the New York police force, who would be employed in a new community policing unit. [405]The new unit would be charged with monitoring assigned neighborhoods and analyzing crime patterns. The community policing unit would work in tandem with anticrime, narcotics, and other units. The primary purpose of the officers, nonetheless, was to "not only fight crime in the neighborhood but [also] seek to restore a sense of order in their assigned area and to enhance the quality of life for its residents."[406] Brown and Dinkins did not implement the plan, as Brown left his position in 1992 and Dinkins was unseated by Giuliani in 1993. Nonetheless, much of the plan would be implemented by Bill Bratton and the Giuliani administration.[407]

Nevertheless, a decade before Dinkins and Brown sought to increase police presence in New York City, Jackson and Brown did the same in their crackdown against symbols of disorder. Indeed, Atlanta's governing and commercial leaders were on the forefront of order maintenance policing. Maynard Jackson, Lee Brown, and black and white business owners articulated a connection between disorder—whether it was litter or derelicts—and harm years before Wilson and Kelling made the case.[408] Disorderly behaviors and individuals were not only annoying but indeed harmful. What were once considered victimless crimes—prostitution and

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[405]Vitale, 138-139.

[406] As quoted in Alex Vitale, *City of Disorder: How the Quality of Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 138.

[407] Vitale, 139.

[408] Bernard Harcourt describes the rhetorical turn to the harm principle—that is "harm as a necessary but not sufficient condition for legal enforcement"—within broken windows theory. He argues that the turn to harm has "transformed offensive conduct into harmful conduct." Furthermore, he writes, "Sheer disorder has become the harm that justifies criminal punishment. And the principle justification is no longer offense nor immortality but harm—the harm that these misdemeanor offenses cause." See Harcourt, 185-186, 209.

public drunkenness for example—now victimized entire communities. Furthermore, the very presence of litterers, derelicts, and other disorderly figures fostered a fear of crime that disrupted commerce and investment. This fear of crime was incompatible with the notion of southern hospitality that was essential to Atlanta's brand in the convention industry.

The black political class's embrace of the order maintenance idea stemmed from the commitment to order that undergirded the black liberal reform tradition. While order in the late nineteenth century served as a protection from white racial violence, by 1980, order had to ensure protection from working class and poor black people. The implications of the move toward order maintenance are significant. The practice would come to intensify police presence in poor and working class black neighborhoods, increasing contact between black citizens and the growing carceral state.

There is one aspect that is often overlooked broken windows approach: the role of social norms. Kelling and Wilson argued that the "untended behavior" that induced criminal behavior also led "to the breakdown of community controls."[409] In their article, they describe the ways in which the breakdown of social norms in communities fostered the conditions for criminal activity:

> A stable neighborhood of families who care for their homes, mind each other's children, and confidently frown on unwanted intruders can change, in a few years or even a few months, to an inhospitable and frightening jungle. A piece of property is abandoned, weeds grow up, a window is smashed. Adults stop scolding rowdy children; the children, emboldened, become more rowdy. Families move out, unattached adults move in. Teenagers gather in front of the corner store. The merchant asks them to move; they

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[409] James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, "Broken Windows."

> refuse. Fights occur. Litter accumulates. People start drinking in front of the grocery; in time, an inebriate slumps to the sidewalk and is allowed to sleep it off. Pedestrians are approached by panhandlers.

The broken windows theory necessitated the reconstruction and repair of degraded social norms in crime-ridden communities, a process that involved participatory action from the community.[410] As black business and political leaders sought to use expanded police power to reinstate order within black communities, they simultaneously engaged in a project to reform the black institutions—particularly black families and neighborhoods—that they contended once maintained order within black communities. Atlanta's black community, the black governing coalition contended, needed to the re-establish traditional values within their culture. The rectification of black values and community institutions would be at the heart of the black governing coalition's response to another crisis in the city: the episode of Atlanta's missing and murdered youth.

[410] Hanhardt, 61.

Chapter 4
Spare the Rod, Endanger the Child:
The Atlanta Youth Murders and the Crisis of the Black Family

In October 1978, city councilman Arthur Langford publically decried the state of Atlanta's youth. "I have traveled the streets of Atlanta late at night," he declared, "and have seen large groups of youngsters hanging around." The councilman, who was also an ordained pastor, lamented, "Many of these young people should be home studying or preparing themselves for the next day, but instead they are out in the streets."[411] The unsupervised children and teenagers drank beer and "smoked dope," and engaged in criminal activities, as demonstrated by the staggering rates of juvenile crime.[412] Langford, therefore, proposed a citywide curfew ordinance that would ban all youths under sixteen from the streets between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. on school nights, and after midnight on the weekends. Youths found out after the curfew would be taken to the family court's juvenile home where officers would determine if the youth should be allowed to return home—when their parents arrived to pick them up—or should be held for a hearing.[413]

Though Mayor Jackson had "no philosophical objections" to the ordinance, the proposal sparked strong debate both in and outside of city hall. At a hearing before the council's public safety committee vote, several residents voiced support for the measures, claiming, "Too many parents are forsaking their responsibility in child-rearing…government out to step in to legislate juvenile conduct."[414] Corine Brown of the Ninth Council District Youth Organization added,

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[411] "Curfew Shall Not Ring…" *The Atlanta Constitution,* October 17, 1978, 4A.

[412] In 1977, juveniles accounted for 23.55 percent of all people arrested in Atlanta. See Black on Black Crime, NAACP Atlanta Community Crime Prevention Grant Proposal, Box 51, Folder 4, NAACP Atlanta Branch Records, Auburn Avenue Research Library, Atlanta, Georgia.

[413] Steven Holmes, "Curfew Proposal Suffers Setback," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Nov 16, 1978, 4C.

[414] Ibid.

"We need the law to step up and do something because the parents won't."[415] However, representatives of the Georgia ACLU warned that such a proposal might alienate vulnerable youths and overburden the police department. The curfew proposal also sparked discussions in the public sphere, where opinions, predictably, divided along age lines. In a straw poll conducted by the *Atlanta Journal,* 143 Atlantans voted in favor the bill, while 212 opposed.[416] The teens surveyed vehemently complained, "No one has the right to make me come in at 11:00!" and "That's going to cramp my style if they pass that law."[417] Some older opponents defended the civil liberties of minors and warned against "legislating parental responsibility."[418] Indeed, the editors of the *Journal* opposed the bill, arguing, "Let's use curfews for crisis situations, not as an attempt to do what parents should be doing."[419] Ultimately, the kids got lucky—the measure was defeated in the public safety committee and later failed before the full council.

Arthur Langford was motivated by similar impulses that underlay the removal of "derelicts" from the streets of downtown Atlanta. Loitering teenagers were symbols of disorder whose capacity for criminal activity was even greater than the chronic drunks. However, by seeking to require that young teens be home "preparing themselves for the next day," Langford's ordinance sought to extend the logics of order maintenance beyond the business and convention districts and into the homes of unruly black homes, where careless parents allowed their children to be out at all hours of the night. As the members of the black political class moved to address

[415] Ibid.

[416] Joe Dolman, "Langford Curfew Proposal Loses in Tense Straw Poll as Youngsters Get Backing," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 29, 1978, 8B.

[417] Ibid.

[418] Ibid.

[419] "Curfew Shall Not Ring…" *The Atlanta Constitution.*

the crime issue beyond the central business district and convention areas downtown, they sought to re-establish what they perceived as a sense of orderliness and lawfulness that had been lost in black neighborhoods and families. This disorderliness in Black Atlanta, as illustrated by delinquent teenagers, unsupervised child street hustlers, and jobless loafers, perpetuated poverty and fostered crime, particularly the recently identified category of “black-on-black” crime.

In trying to impose order within black homes, black political leaders were also attempting to rebuild social and cultural institutions in the black whose dissolution manifested in the social problems affecting the black community. Primary among them was the black family. The family—a sacred institution in the black family since the era of slavery—was now plagued by broken marriages, lenient parenting, and disrespectful children. The black neighborhood had also declined from its days of glory, as desegregation tore apart black communities both physically and symbolically. Whereas black neighborhoods were once diverse across class lines, the predominantly black neighborhoods in downtown Atlanta were disproportionately poor by the 1980s. Both the youth and their children in these neighborhoods, middle class reformists believed, lacked suitable role models. The crime problem, they believed, would not be solved until the institutions that had sustained the black community through slavery and segregation—namely, the black family and the black neighborhood—were rehabilitated.

Led by Lee Brown in the Department of Public Safety, black reformist leaders in city government turned to community crime prevention programs to re-inscribe order within black households and to rebuild the institutions in the black community. These programs, which would later be described as community policing in criminological literature, implicated Atlanta’s black residents in the order maintenance mechanism. Public officials framed these crime control programs as pragmatic and cost effective, and as an important component in the fight against

crime and disorder. Black reformists hoped that these programs would teach poor and working class black people to take responsibility for the problems in their families and neighborhoods. Many believed that crime and violence existed in poor black neighborhoods at least in part because poor blacks allowed it to happen. By becoming involved in innovative community policing programs, poor and working-class black would no longer sanction destructive and criminal behavior. A culture of respect and lawfulness would be restored.

The black political class's advocacy of community policing and institution-building intensified as the black political class responded to the crisis of the missing and murdered youth. Between approximately the fall of 1979 and the early summer of 1981, twenty-nine predominantly low-income, black youths were kidnapped and murdered. The crisis put the national spotlight on crime in Atlanta once again. Several of the victims' parents used the moment to underscore the economic crises that plagued their communities and the growing gap between middle class and working-class black Atlantans. The black political leaders, in contrast, employed the crisis to buttress support for their community crime prevention programs and rail against the decline of traditional values in black family and community life. By the time Andrew Young assumed the mayor's office in January 1982, the black reformist leaders had come to pinpoint personal responsibility and the reconstruction of the black family and community as the cure for Black Atlanta's ills.

As a criminologist and public safety official, Lee Brown devoted much of his career to police-community relations. He had been a scholar of community crime control and a long-time advocate for improved "community-police relations" since the 1960s. Brown entered a doctoral program in criminology of the University of California, Berkeley, in 1965, a moment of

transition in the field. As urban centers erupted in rebellion in Watts, Detroit, Newark, and hundreds of other cities and towns around the country, often in response to police brutality or harassment, criminologists sought to understand the roots of the crises. A new generation of scholars, Brown included, contended that the professionalization of the police that undergirded policing reforms in the 1950s, isolated officers from the communities they served. Police no longer walked beats, and thus could not develop a rapport with neighborhood folk, as they had in the early twentieth century.[420] Therefore, police and communities, particular low-income communities of color, developed an antagonistic relationship based on police responding to incidents often brutally and with a lack of insight about the community. These insights were reflected in the 1967 Kerner Commission's report on civil disorders, which argued that police departments' neglect of community relations fostered resentment and racial tensions.[421]

In their research, progressive criminologists advocated the re-establishment of beat patrols and the creation of community relations bureaus within departments. In a 1968 article in *The Police Chief* magazine, Lee Brown argued "What we must do…is work toward bringing about a change in the relationship between the police and the public by fully integrating the police into the community."[422] Integration meant not only increased police presence in communities, but also the placement of police officers where they previously had no role. Brown contended that police needed to be dedicated to "attacking the *real* community problems, e.g.,

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[420] This form of policing had declined with the professionalization of police forces in the early twentieth. Prior to this, police officers often lived in the neighborhood were they walked beats and were ingrained in neighborhood politics. This often led to corruption within police departments. During the Progressive era, reformers argued that police departments should be rationalized and professionalized through intensive training and adherence to a code of conduct. See Hinton, 187-188.

[421] Garnett, 13.

[422] Lee P. Brown, "Dynamic Police-Community Relations At Work," *The Police Chief,* April 1968, 44-45, Box 1, Folder 54, Lee P. Brown Papers.

housing, employment, poverty, discrimination, etc." He continued, "This is, in essence the heart of a sincere police-community relations program, and until the police confront these problems, we are not really doing our job."[423] While a doctoral student, Brown developed the San Jose Police Department's first police-community relations unit, which he described as a "means by whereby the police and other agencies and individuals in the community can work together in finding solutions to the problems in the society."[424] Brown's concept of community-police relations reflected the state of progressive criminology as social scientists sought to understand the factors that fueled urban conflagrations and to determine how the state could act to address these issues.

By the late 1970s, however, Brown's tone concerning police-community relations had evolved. Rather than emphasizing the ways in which police could work with communities to address socioeconomic issues, Brown began to stress citizen responsibility in controlling crime. In 1979, Brown declared that the department would be adopting a new "Atlanta Premise" in its approach to crime control. Brown contended, "Police alone cannot solve, reduce, or prevent crime. Citizen involvement is essential if the war against crime is to be won."[425] As the Atlanta police department struggled to address the concerns of the convention and business leaders and internally over officer pay, promotion, and training, Brown suggested, people could no longer sit by idly and rely on law enforcement to address the crime issue. Instead, they "must be educated about their individual and collective responsibilities around crime prevention."[426] The citizens of

[423] Ibid., 44.

[424] Ibid., 48.

[425] Untitled Piece, undated, ca. 1979, Box 50, Folder 2, Series B, MJ Papers.

[426] Ibid.

Atlanta, Brown argued, “must be allowed to engage in ‘self-help’ programs designed to supplement legally mandated responsibilities of the policing agency.”[427] The people of Atlanta would have to work alongside law enforcement and take equal responsibility for preventing and controlling crimes in their own neighborhoods. This difference in Brown’s approach was slight but significant. Whereas in the 1960s, Brown called police to become involved in community life and claimed law enforcement had a responsibility to help communities to attack “the *real* community problems,” his indictment ten years later was directed to the communities themselves. A greater burden fell upon the citizens, who now had to take personal responsibility in aiding law enforcement by policing norms in their communities and preventing themselves and their families from becoming crime victims. With this logic, the Department of Public Safety emphasized self-help programs, which they hoped would inspire citizens to feel invested in controlling crime in their homes and neighborhoods.

In the late 1970s, a bevy of community crime control programs emerged in Atlanta. The most expansive and well touted was the Safer Atlanta For Everyone (SAFE) program. Funded by a $490,000 LEAA grant, SAFE was a community crime prevention program intended to function as an “ombudsman” for the Department of Public Safety. SAFE staff members coordinated crime prevention programs with different community organizations and created programs where they did not exist. They organized crime prevention workshops at Atlanta public housing facilities, held regular meetings with leaders of Neighborhood Planning Units, and coordinated police attendance at neighborhood and block meetings around the city. Nonetheless, the unit’s main thrust was public relations, with much of its activity geared toward educating the public about anti-crime measures. The group distributed over 200,000 posters and cards with crime prevention

[427] Ibid.

information and posted emergency phone numbers and anti-crime information on billboards, placards, and bulletin boards in churches, schools, businesses, civic centers, retirement homes, and other public spaces. [428] They also established a monthly crime prevention newsletter, which updated citizens about SAFE's activities and provided crime prevention tips. Though many neighborhood organizations in Atlanta were always doing this type of work, SAFE's program represented the city's attempt to coordinate and control anti-crime efforts.

SAFE organized neighborhood watch programs and block patrols in predominantly black areas through the city. By 1981, there were over three hundred active neighborhood watch programs. One of the most notable was the Crime Eradication Project organized by the YMCA of the Edgewood, Kirkwood, and East Lake communities. The YMCA that served the three neighborhoods hosted several anti-crime programs, several of which were initiated by an LEAA Community Anti-Crime Grant.[429] Staff members created mini-block clubs and organized a Foster Grandparent program, in which children provided escort services for senior citizens who were particularly vulnerable to robbery and assault. In this instance, the programs continued after funding expired in the spring 1980. Citizens were also kept up to date on the latest unsolved crimes through the Crime Stoppers rewards program. Unsolved crimes were publicized on television, radio, and print media, and people who gave information that led to the capture of criminals were rewarded. Through the program, the police department received over 900 calls in

[428] Metropolitan Atlanta Crime Commission. *Controlling Crime in Atlanta*. Atlanta, Ga: The Commission, 1980, 42.

[429]"SE Branch of 'Y' Forms New Anti-Crime Program," *Atlanta Daily World*, Feb 22, 1979, 6.

Martha G. Fleming, "Mayor Details Reasons for Suspending Eaves, " *Atlanta Daily World*, Mar 23, 1978, 1.

first few months of operations.[430] Nevertheless, only three led to the capture and conviction of a felon. People were also encouraged to report suspicious activity through the newly created 659-COPS hot line. In these initiatives, residents were encouraged to keep an eye for suspicious persons and criminal behavior in their neighborhoods. The programs sought to instill within black Atlantans a sense of constructive vigilance that fed on their existing anxieties.

SAFE workers were most noticeably active in Atlanta public schools. Many within the Department of Public Safety and the black community broadly believed that the relationship between black youth and the police was strained. Black children, they argued, were mistrustful of law enforcement and did not respect police authority. Consequently, black youth would respond insolently toward police officers, and their bad attitudes would get them into trouble.[431] Furthermore, black children were often hostile to aiding police officers as witnesses. More friendly contact with police, many believed, would teach black youths to respect police authority and, perhaps, even admire them. The SAFE team expanded the “Officer Friendly” school visitation program, the Police Athletic League, and other programs that would foster positive interactions between police and Atlanta youth. In one school, police officers served as tutors of reading, mathematics, and black history. The children, in turn, according to officers, became “little crime fighters.”[432] One trio of students chased a purse-snatcher into a building, kept a lookout until officers arrived, and later helped police identify the suspect. The principal noted that since the police began their tutoring program, the students “show more interest in school

[430] “Crime of the Week: Mendiola's Slaying," *Atlanta Daily World,* Oct 07, 1979, 4.

[431] Evelyn L. Newman, "Police Working With City’s Youth see Efforts Eventually Curbing Crime Rate," *Atlanta Daily World*, Apr 15, 1979, 1.

[432] Ibid.

work, more respect for authority, and a more positive attitude toward policemen."[433] SAFE also organized anti-shoplifting and anti-drug workshops, as well as bike registration "rodeos" and slogan, essay, and cartoon contests. The unit intended not only to provide Atlanta youth with safety tips to protect their property and persons, but also to involve them in the community fight against crime. In turn, they hoped, black youths' attitudes toward law enforcement and public safety would improve.

SAFE and other crime prevention programs were undergirded by a renewed uplift ethos among black public safety reformists. The SAFE staff intended their initiatives to address what they perceived as both apathy and ignorance concerning crime prevention in black neighborhoods. Based on the type of information SAFE promulgated, it seemed that SAFE staffers believed crime rates were high in poor black neighborhoods because the residents did not know how to protect themselves and thus made themselves to vulnerable to becoming victims. Or worse yet, they encouraged crime in their communities by protecting criminals by hiding information from law enforcement officers and teaching their kids to hate cops. Indeed, the community crime prevention reveal the ignorance and elitism existing among the reformists. Their crime prevention initiatives suggest that they did not speak with low-income people about the issues they perceived in their neighborhoods or the programs they had already organized. Rather, they made assumptions about the causes of crime in poor black communities.

Nonetheless, in addition to enlisting the support of students, teachers, and other community members, SAFE and the Department of Public Safety also sought the aid of municipal employees in one of its most inventive programs. The Citizen Alert was a "joint effort in reducing crime," enlisting police, public utility workers, postal employees, MARTA bus

[433] Ibid.

drivers, taxi drivers, and private sector employees with access to radio dispatch. As Lee Brown described, “The main thrust of this program is to train these employees to spot crime in progress and to report crimes giving good suspect [identification].”[434] City employees would provide extra eyes and ears for law enforcement, policing neighborhoods for burglars and car thieves while on duty. According to Fred First, SAFE’s public affairs director, there would be fewer opportunities to commit crime undetected, contending, “When you’re getting ready to slide in someone’s window, you no longer need to look only for the blue light, but also for Marta buses, postal workers, and all sorts of people who are out working.”[435] Municipal workers, however, were not allowed to engage in any kind of “citizen’s arrest” of suspected culprits, but rather were to call in the crime to the police department. The program’s coordinating officers were careful to clarify the initiative’s intentions, arguing, “In no way is this program to be construed as a private vigilante force. All we want from the concerned citizen is the information that aid in the arrest of the fleeing felon.”[436] The Citizen Alert program, like the other initiatives described, expanded the reach of the Department of Public Safety and involved additional communities in crime prevention.

SAFE also sought the help of another major sector of Atlanta society: the religious community. SAFE assisted in developing Jackson’s initiative, the Atlanta Religious Mobilization Against Crime, or ARMAC. Rev. Jim Bevis and Rev. Cameron Alexander of the Antioch Baptist Church headed the group and over 400 religious leaders from nearly every denomination joined.

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[434] Department of Public Safety Newsletter, August 1979, vol. 1., no. 3, Box 26, Folder 8, Series B, MJ Papers

[435] Anita Sharpe, “Local Businessmen sound about Atlanta crime problems,” *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, April 7, 1980. LOCATION

[436] Department of Public Safety Newsletter, August 1979, vol. 1., no. 3

"It took a crisis to bring the religious community together, but thank God it has," Rev. Bevis proclaimed.[437] ARMAC led the city in observing Crime Prevention Month in October 1979. During the month, ARMAC organized four weekly workshops focusing on the topics of domestic violence, unemployment, handgun control, and alcohol and drug abuse.

Their domestic violence program, based on a desire to heal broken black families, was the most developed. Each participant received sixteen hours of training in domestic crisis intervention from the Department of Public Safety's Domestic Crisis Intervention Program. Domestic crisis intervention was considered a particularly significant anti-crime program. Crime statistics revealed that the majority of homicides occurred between family members, friends, and acquaintances, and unlike the Tetalman and Barry murders, occurred in homes rather than in public.[438] Lee Brown had recently pushed his department toward treating domestic violence as a public safety issue rather than a private matter.[439] The department had been training police officers to take domestic violence as seriously as they did other violent crimes. City councilman Ira Jackson described domestic violence as one of the two "basic areas that are contributing to crime in Atlanta." He described a domestic situation in which, "the husband maybe comes home frustrated from a job that doesn't pay him enough to keep food on the table and pay all the bills, and one thing leads to another, there is fussing, then violence and someone gets killed." He claimed, "There isn't a whole lot that the city can do about the domestic issue," and therefore, it was necessary for other institutions such as the church to get involved. The ARMAC's crime prevention month concluded with anti-crime march, led by Reverends Bevis and Alexander as

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[437] Ibid.

[438] Oscar Spicer, "Curing Crime in Atlanta If Not in America," *The Atlanta Voice*, September 8, 1979.

[439] Newman, Evelyn L. "Pastors, Police Heads Joining Citizens in Anti-Crime March," *Atlanta Daily World,* Oct 28, 1979. 1,

well as Mayor Jackson, Lee Brown, and George Napper. The marchers walked from the Atlanta Stadium to the Central City Park, where they concluded with a rally. The march, according to Rev. Cameron Alexander, would "demonstrate to the citizens of Atlanta that the community of faith does care about Atlanta."[440] Indeed, through the ARMAC campaign, the black political class sought to incorporate the Black Church into the crime prevention apparatus by restoring it to its role as caretaker in black families and communities.

A central target of community-based anti-crime initiatives was the newly identified category of "black-on-black" crime. While intra-racial violence had always existed, the distinct concept of black-on-black crime and the panic that emerged around it was fairly new.[441] However, by time *Ebony* magazine published a special issue on the topic, the phrase was in full use in Atlanta and among middle class blacks around the country. In the August 1979 issue, *Ebony* publisher John H. Johnson argued the issue was most important special issue published in the last sixteen years. He declared, "It our belief, and it is the basic premise of this issue, that Black-on-Black crime has reached a critical level that threatens our existence as a people. It is a threat to our youths, to our women, to our senior citizens, to our institutions, to our values."[442]

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[440] Ibid. After the rally, the ARMAC faded from being a leading organization in the anti-crime campaign, until Maynard Jackson revived the group in 1991, see "ARMAC Kicks Off Weekend," *Atlanta Daily World,* Sep 26, 1991, 2.

[441] One of the first to employ the phrase "black-on-black crime," interestingly enough, was Jesse Jackson, who identified the phenomenon in a February 1970 "Country Preacher" column entitled, 'On Serious Crime," published in several black newspapers. Jackson warned, "Black-on-black crime must end in order for us to deal with the major issues of white on black crime. We must get off each other's back and 'onto the case' against those who seek to warp, corrode, and ultimately destroy our total community." The term was employed occasionally throughout the 1970s, primarily in guest columns and letters to the editor in the black press, though rarely used in Atlanta. The idea of "soul brother vs. soul brother," nonetheless, was popularized in the *Atlanta Inquirer* in the early 1970s. See Jesse Jackson, "On Serious Crime," *Chicago Defender,* February 2, 1970, 1; Ernest Pharr, "New Wave of Violence Against Blacks; Figures Startling," *Atlanta Inquirer,* July 29, 1972, 1; "Hands Up!—It's a Robbery," *Atlanta Inquirer*, September 9, 1972, 2.

[442] John H. Johnson, "Publisher's Statement," *Ebony,* August 1979, 33.

The issue featured articles that examined various facets of the black-on-black crime phenomenon. Articles highlighted the effects of crime on black neighborhoods which the writers argued included disinvestment, property loss, both black and white flight, and an all-encompassing climate of "rampant fear, the shattering of families, the rupturing of community solidarity."[443]

Atlantans figured prominently in the articles. Lee Brown was interviewed and quoted heavily in the articles on the causes and solutions to black on black crime. Police chief George Napper penned an article in which he highlighted the role of the racism and discrimination in fostering black criminality, particular domestic violence. "The kinds of frustrations that result from being unable to find a job will find an outlet in aggression against one's wife or husband or other loved one," he contended.[444] The frustration of being denied equal opportunity and access to the American Dream, Napper suggested, fostered a rage and resentment that could easily erupt into criminal behavior. Though programs that targeted economic conditions that bred poverty would be the most effective in curbing crime, Napper doubted that such a comprehensive program was possible. He argued, "There is little reason to believe that the unemployment picture will be getting better any time soon; or that meaningful social policies aimed at improving the quality of life in black communities are forthcoming." The pragmatic solution, he contended, was community involvement in policing.

Napper, like other contributors to the issue, argued that black people needed to overcome their "sense of frustration, apathy, and powerlessness," which he claimed led them to "retreat to

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[443] Ibid., 33.

[444] Racism and Oppression: Still the Bottom Line on Community Violence, *Ebony,* August 1979, 69-70.

[homes]" and "pull the shades down and add an extra lock."[445] Black citizens needed to "develop a sense of community" and recapture the culture of older black communities, characterized by concern from one's neighbors and one's neighbors' children. Many readers of the black-on-black crime special issue seemed to agree with analyses and recommendations put forth by Napper and the other contributors to the issue. For several months after the issue, the magazine published letters from readers praising the publication's insights, with one reader declaring it a "historic and profound testimony of the challenges confronting Black America."[446] The "black-on-black" concept, it seemed, struck a chord with many black Americans who sought to give a name to a phenomenon that had always existed but seemed particularly intensified in the late 1970s.

After the publication of the issue, the term black-on-black crime witnessed an increase in usage, as black politicians, journalists, and academics sought to describe the crime situation in their communities. Atlanta became central in the study of the issue shortly after the publication of the *Ebony* issue. In the fall of 1979, the Atlanta University Center made plans to conduct a study of "the black on black crime problem." The presidents of the institutions submitted a grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Justice for funding to examine black crime first in Atlanta and then nationwide. The study would, according to chancellor of the consortium Charles Meredith, delve into the relationship between race and crime and seek to understand the complex causes of crime in Atlanta. Meredith contended, "We are aware that certain policies such as deterrence, increased patrolling and more severe and certain punishment may help in the short run; but in the long run we need programs that will deal with preventing criminal behavior." He continued, arguing, "We believe that to reduce the crime rate in Atlanta, communities must begin

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[445] George Napper, "Community Involvement: Citizens Must Fight Back on Black Crime," *Ebony,* August 1979, 115.

[446] Letters to the Editor, *Ebony,* October 1979, 14.

to address the issues that relate to the causes of crime."[447] The LEAA awarded Atlanta University's Department of Public Administration $409,000 for an eighteen-month study of the causes of black-on-black crime in Atlanta under the direction of criminologist Julius Debro, head of the Atlanta University Criminal Justice Institute.[448]

The Atlanta branch of the NAACP also sought to study black-on-black crime. In 1981, the organization submitted a proposal to the LEAA for an anti-black on black crime program, budgeted at nearly a million dollars. They declared, "Currently the Atlanta Branch has taken an interest in the worst social disease known to mankind other than war; that is crime, particularly black-on-black crime."[449] The goal of the program, they described, was to "to develop a mechanism whereby the involvement of the total black community, business, other private sector groups and government is defined and organized for maximal results in a 'Atlanta Crime Prevention Program' so critical in Atlanta, GA."[450] The NAACP, they claimed, was in a unique position to coordinate various community organizations in a citywide battle against black-on-black crime. The causes of black crime, they attested, were "numerous and not well understood." They contended that some research pointed to socio-economic conditions, others suggested "behavioral or personality factors like low tolerance or high dependency needs," while others claimed "it is the fast pace of our society, lack of identification, pressure for jobs, or family, or

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[447] "AUC Reveals Plan to Research Black-on-Black Crime Problem," *Atlanta Daily World*, Nov 15, 1979, 1.

[448] "AU Gets $409,000 to Study Crime Causes in Black Communities," *Atlanta Daily World*, Nov 18, 1979, 1.

[449] Black on Black Crime, NAACP Atlanta Community Crime Prevention Grant Proposal, Box 51, Folder 4, NAACP Atlanta Branch Records, Auburn Avenue Research Library, Atlanta, Georgia.

[450] Ibid.

friends that results in an escape through chemicals and violence."[451] While understanding the complex causes of crime was necessary, more pressing was the need to help residents of high crime areas "employ a self-help method of eradicating bad conditions."[452]

The NAACP leaders outlined several different specific problems as well as a number of goals and objectives. They pointed to the issue of a lack of citizen input that made them feel less responsible for controlling crime in their neighborhoods. This lack consequently led residents to resist reporting crime to law enforcement. Another significant problem was the rising trend of juvenile crime. They pointed out that in 1977, almost a quarter of all persons arrested in Atlanta were juveniles, and over 95 percent were black.[453] Juvenile delinquency would be a special focus of the project. Other problems included rising instances of homicide, sexual assault, robbery, and residential burglary, as well as a lack of data and analysis capabilities on the part of anti-crime activists. The stated goals included making "the crime-ridden community aware of its problem" through workshops, training sessions, and community forums. Their initial program would focus on crime-ridden four public housing complexes: Carver Homes, Perry Homes, Capitol Homes, and the West End. The Atlanta NAACP also sought to serve as a "central base" of the broader anti-crime network, centralizing both physical and human resources. The unit planned to provide technical assistance to all involved organizations and to develop a mini-grant program, offering financial assistance to community organizations planning neighborhood anti-crime initiatives.

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[451] Ibid.

[452] Ibid.

[453] The exact percentage of juvenile arrests was 23.55 percent. Ibid.

The NAACP's proposal received support from a number of prominent Atlantans including Congressman Wyche Fowler, and Fulton County Commission Reginald Eaves.[454] In March 1980, branch president Julian Bond received word that the LEAA did not approve the request as the administration's budget "was substantially reduced" and they could only afford to fund existing projects.[455] Nonetheless, the NAACP's grant exemplifies the ways in which various segments of Black Atlanta society participated in the reification of the concept of black-on-black crime.

Georgia state representative David Scott was perhaps the most vocal critic of black-on-black crime in Atlanta. He spoke on the issue in the press and speaking engagements around the city. In one editorial, he declared, "Black-on-black murders are the number one cause of death in black men ages 20 to 35."[456] It was a phenomenon that could be excused neither by racism nor poverty. "We are going to have to stop making joblessness, frustration and racism the excuses for letting thugs walk our streets," he contended.[457] Scott asserted, "There is no excuse for black folks shooting black folks in the street as they are doing now. No amount of racism—in fact, nothing, nothing at all—can match the cruelty of taking another human life. That is something wrong in the psyche of the black community which whites cannot take credit or blame."[458]Scott's statements reflected a particular conceptualization of black on black crime. In Scott's estimation, the phenomenon was caused by corrupted values "in the black psyche."

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[454] Ibid.

[455] James Hagerty to Julian Bond, March 27, 1980, Box 51, Folder 4, NAACP Atlanta Branch Records.

[456] Rep. David Scott, "Fewer Guns, more jobs, equal justice could stop killings," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, November 11, 1979, 2.

[457] Ron Taylor, "Police Enlist Citizens' Help in Crime War," *Atlanta Journal*, August 9, 1979, 1.

[458] Ibid.

Continuing discrimination, unemployment, and poverty, Scott and others believed, could not excuse criminality. Scott contended black communities were too quick to point to socioeconomic issues and thus tended to be "overly tolerant" of black criminality. He furthermore argued, "Too many people believe black people tolerate crime more, and that's the message we have to send to the black community: they've got a responsibility to stand up for some law and order."[459] Black people had to root out the criminal element in their midst and make clear to criminals that "we are not going to let hoodlums and thugs run our city."[460] Like Brown and Napper, Scott advocated a turn (or return) to community policing. Through the programs of Department of Public Safety, such as the SAFE initiatives, black Atlantans could take responsibility for stemming the proliferation of black-on-black crime through their own actions.

Black folks have always hurt other black folks, just as white folks have harmed other whites. Yet, this rather straightforward, unsurprising fact was at the center of a panic, beginning in the late 1970s. The concept of black-on-black crime reveals that black reformist perceived a crisis of values, or corruption "in the black psyche," that affected not only particular black neighborhoods, but the Black American race as a whole. That they gave a name to this constant phenomenon shows how they perceived the crisis as distinct to their contemporary moment. Black-on-black crime was something new, a crisis that reflected the moral decline and failure of black institutions that had once supposed fostered unity rather than destruction.

This rhetoric of black-on-black crime had several implications that have shaped black liberal discourses about crime since the 1970s. First, it shifted the focus of policy critique and recommendations away from the structural roots of crime, which only worsened in the late 1970s

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[459] Rep. David Scott, "Fewer Guns, More Jobs, Equal Justice could Stop Killings."

[460] Ron Taylor, "Police Enlist Citizens' Help in Crime War."

and into the Reagan era. Instead, the term worked to position blame on degraded values and failure to adopt middle class norms within poor and working class black communities. Second, the phrase suggested that the problem of black criminality was internal to the black community, an issue that only black people themselves could solve. Therefore, it prioritized self-help initiatives, such as community crime prevention programs in Atlanta and in cities around the country. Lastly, in emphasizing values and self-help, the idea of black-on-black crime insinuated that black citizens would have to make personal changes within themselves and their communities in order to lower the rates of crime. Not only would they would they be responsible for following the many safety precautions that the Atlanta police department disseminated in ubiquitous public service announcements, but they would also need to work on re-establishing purportedly lost standards of behavior and rebuilding regulatory institutions in their communities. Thus, the onus of responsibility for addressing the complex issue of crime in the black community fell on the city's most vulnerable citizens. These dissonances would come to a head in the winter of 1980, when black leaders began to realize that the city's poor black children came under attack and attention once again turned to crime in Atlanta.

In July 1979, when the city's attention was turned to the murder of conventioneer Marc Tetalman, the bodies of two black teens were discovered in a wooded area near Niskey Lake on the western outskirts of the city. Thirteen-year-old Alfred Evans had been strangled, while fourteen-year-old Edward Hope Smith had been killed by a gunshot wound. The murders of the two boys from working-class black neighborhoods, known for harboring a "delinquent subculture" did not garner much attention. The only newspaper that initially covered the case was the *Atlanta Voice,* whose editor implored, "Who are these boys? We don't know where they

come from. We don't know why were they there. How did they get there? And why were they killed? We don't know the answers to any of these questions." He continued, "The overriding question is why don't we know any these answers?"[461] Six weeks after the bodies of Smith and Evans were found, another child disappeared. The body of fourteen-year-old Milton Harvey was found in November 1979, the cause of death unknown.

Just a few weeks before the discovery of Harvey's body, nine-year-old Yusef Bell vanished while on an errand for a neighbor. Bell was a gifted student from a working class but "good" home in Mechanicsville and his disappearance raised alarm among black Atlantans. Bell's mother, Camille Bell, made appeals for her son's safe return via newspaper and television appearances. Those hopes were dashed when Yusef's body was found in an abandoned school building nearly three weeks after his disappearance. The murder garnered the attention of many in Atlanta, including Maynard Jackson and the Atlanta City Council, who sent letters of condolences to Camille Bell.[462] Ms. Bell, however, demanded more. She insisted that the murders of her son and the three other boys were not isolated events. Rather a predator was about in Atlanta, preying on black children. The murders, she argued, should be treated as special cases. Nonetheless, Lee Brown contended that the cases were "nothing out of the ordinary," considering the elevated homicide rates in the city.[463] As the police investigated the unsolved crimes over the next several months, several more black children disappeared. By the summer of

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[461] As quoted in Bernard D. Headley, *The Atlanta Youth Murders and the Politics of Race* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998), 35.

[462] Ibid., 40.

[463] Ibid., 39-40.

1980, one year after the murders of Evans and Smith, nine black children, including two girls, had disappeared, six of them found dead.[464]

Dissatisfied with the tepid pace of the investigation, the mothers of three of the slain children organized the Committee to Stop Children's Murders (STOP). Headed by Camille Bell, the group appealed to Black Atlanta's working class and poor grassroots in their campaign to demand action from the Atlanta Department of Public Safety. Bell, and others in the black working class community, contended that the Brown, Napper, and Jackson and others among black political class had shown a "lack of interest" in investigating the murders of the poor black children. "Where were Q.V. Williamson, James Bond, Morris Finley, Marvin Arrington, and Billy McKinney? When they wanted votes, they knew where to find us." [465] Bell suggested that the city's black leaders were slow to respond to the crimes because the victims were black *and* poor. "I know it can't be because we're black," she explained, "Is it is because we're poor?" She reasoned, "Back when we had a white administration, every black person in this city would be calling out racism but it can't be racism because Maynard's supposed to be black, but if it's not racism, what is it?" Had the children been white or middle class—the "mayor's type of people" as Bell described them—the cases would garner attention far earlier.[466]

STOP's campaign combined with growing media attention, compelled the Department of Public Safety and City Hall to expend more resources on the investigation. In July 1980, Lee Brown established a task force of five, which was gradually expanded as more black youths were

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[464] Headley, 214-215.

[465] Deric Gilliard, "Black Leaders Lashed for "Lack of Interest" in Missing, Slain Youths," *Atlanta Daily World,* Aug 14, 1980, 1, 9.

[466] Ibid.

kidnapped and murdered.[467] Mayor Jackson called for assistance for the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and established an award fund for any information leading to the capture of the culprit or culprits responsible for the murders. The fund eventually grew to $150,000.[468] The photo of the mayor sitting behind the pile of reward money became one of the most enduring images during the ordeal.

The crisis provided an opportunity for the Department of Public Safety to expand their community crime prevention initiatives. New programs focused on educating parents and youths on ways they could protect themselves and children from becoming the next victims. The crime prevention unit of the police department organized community forums and personal safety workshops for children and adults. They also distributed trading cards with protection tips, created and funded by Coca-Cola and the Atlanta Falcons, to local children.[469] The SAFE program established a Block Parent program, in which particular homes became designated safe houses for youth. If any youth ever felt unsafe or uncomfortable, they could find refuge in a home with the welcoming sticker on the window. The Atlanta City Council, for their part, passed the previously controversial curfew ordinance, which banned youngsters from the streets between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.[470] As the disappearances and murders continued through 1981, the mayor lengthened the curfew, pushing back the start time to 9:00 p.m.[471] MARTA expanded the Citizens Alert program and also donated a building to the headquarters of the Task Force.

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[467] Evelyn Newman, "Brown Names Force," *Atlanta Daily World*, Jul 20, 1980, 1.

[468] Headley, 68.

[469] Missing and Murdered Children Community Response, November 12, 1980, Box 215, Folder 6, NAACP Atlanta Branch Records, Auburn Avenue Research Library, Atlanta, Georgia.

[470] Missing and Murdered Children Community Response, November 12, 1980.

[471] Elisha McDowell, "Another Teen Feared Kidnapped in S'West," *Atlanta Daily World*, Jan 29, 1981. 1,

The business community was also quick to get involved as the crisis reached international news. The newly formed Atlanta Business Coalition, which consisted of the CAP, the Chamber of Commerce, the Atlanta Business League, the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Georgia Hospitality Association, worked closely with mothers of STOP, helping them to fundraise for their cause.[472]

The crisis of the missing and murdered children also created occasion for black community members to call attention to the perceived deterioration among black youth, in black families, and in black neighborhoods. Both working class and elite blacks recognized a crisis among black youth. The working class-led STOP sought to bring attention to the vulnerability of the poor, black children who were being targeted by the murder or murderers. Camille Bell contended, "The tragedy in Atlanta is only the most prominent example of a sickness that plagues the entire nation. More than 4,000 children are murdered annually in the United States, with many of these crimes going unreported…These are children of different races and economic levels brought together by the cruel bond of murder, sexual assault, and neglect."[473] Atlanta University sociologist Bernard Headley argued that the mothers of STOP "stressed the bigger problem of children at risk—risk of neglect, drug abuse, parental and family abuse, homelessness, prostitution, illness, disappearance and untimely death."[474] For the grassroots organizers and volunteers, the missing and murdered children exemplified the broader tragedy of poverty and the lack of resources in Atlanta's poor black neighborhoods.

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[472] Missing and Murdered Children Community Response, November 12, 1980.

[473] Headley, 56.

[474] Ibid., 55.

Black reformist leaders and others in black middle class, however, focused their critique not only on the socioeconomic, structural problems that made these children vulnerable, but more emphatically on the failings within black families and community institutions that created such vulnerability. The programs they created in light of the crisis were intended to help fill these gaps. While the initiatives were necessary and welcomed by black community members, they served to further point the blame a corrupted black culture and thus direct responsibility for counteracting crime on working class black people themselves.

Outside of STOP, the NAACP's Atlanta branch was perhaps the organization most involved in crime prevention initiatives. The branch declared a new motto during the ordeal—NAACP now stood for, "Neighbors Alert Against Child Pick Ups." Their child safety initiatives, branch executive director Jondelle Johnson argued, "will hopefully prevent future crimes against children and calm the hysteria in the city over the existing fourteen cases."[475] The branch opened four youth recreation centers, one in each quadrant of the city. The centers were intended to provide safe spaces to keep children of the streets during the early evening hours as well as provide enrichments programs and much-needed fun for the children. The centers were staffed by volunteers from the city's Job Corps program, students from the AUC, volunteers from Alpha Kappa Alpha and Delta Sigma Theta, local professional athletes and volunteers from the community.[476] Groups of block parents were associated with each of the centers. Johnson contended that the centers were intended to bring back the neighborliness in black neighborhoods that had been lost in the 1970s. "We have been trying to get back to the old days," she explained, "when everybody in the neighborhood knew everyone else and everybody

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[475] Evelyn Newman, "NAACP, FOP Plan to 'Educate' Children," *Atlanta Daily World*, Oct 26, 1980. 1,

[476] Atlanta NAACP's Safety Center for Children, new Slogan: "NAACP Alert Against Child Pick Up"

looked after their neighbors' kids."[477] Though horrible, the crisis provided a chance for black community members to get to know one another again.

As children and young adults continued to disappear in the winter and spring of 1981, the NAACP planned a "Safe Summer" program for the youth in Atlanta. The branch organized day camps for youngsters who had no access to city and private recreation centers and planned for camping trips and outings to Six Flags and other sites.[478] One lucky group of kids got to vacation at a Club Med resort on the island of Guadeloupe.[479] The NAACP also worked with schools and neighborhood safety groups to provide children with whistles in their "Whistle Stop" program. Children received a whistle and were strictly instructed to use the whistles only when accosted by a stranger. They also received tips on what to do if they heard another whistle being blown.[480] The whistles, Johnson believed, provided a sense of reassurance to both parents and children. Youngsters, she felt, would feel more empowered and responsible with a whistle in hand. Throughout the ordeal, the NAACP assuaged children's mounting anxiety by telling them they were in control of their own safety. The NAACP also inundated the youngsters with safety tips, including a list entitled "Ten Commandments of Safety for Children." The commandments included rules such as "thou shalt travel in groups or pairs" and "thou shalt obey curfew laws."[481] By following the rules and being responsible for themselves, the NAACP's suggestions implied, children could avoid making themselves vulnerable to being victimized. Though they might have

[477] "NAACP Launches New Program to Protect Atlanta Children," *Atlanta Daily World*, Apr 02, 1981, 9.

[478] Safe Summer '81 Overview, Box 215, Folder 6, Atlanta NAACP Records.

[479] "No Youths Missing in 27 Days," *Atlanta Daily World*, Jun 23, 1981, 1.

[480] Important Things to Remember, Box 216, Folder 14, Atlanta NAACP Records.

[481] Ten Commandments of Safety For Children, Box 215, Folder 7, Atlanta NAACP Records.

intended to placate panicked youth, the NAACP also individualized notions of safety, placing the responsibility for self-protection upon each child.

However, children were not the only ones to get a set of commandments from the NAACP. The branch also distributed "Ten Commandments of Safety for Parents," that were even more patronizing than those distributed to students. These commandments included orders such as "Thou shalt be more committed to thy children!," "remember thy responsibility for the behavior of thy children in all places," and "thou shalt give thy children a number to call and to report suspicious persons."[482] The crisis became an opportunity to teach parents, particularly working class parents, who presumably lost control of their children. In a proposal entitled "A Strategy for Children and Youth Supervision and Safety," the leaders of the Atlanta Youth Development Division stated about the missing and murdered youth, "In most instances, the children and youth were 'alone,' without protection and engaged in various activities for their self-gratification; and oftentimes to support their families."[483] Children living in poverty were "compelled out of sheer necessity to form their own codes of conduct, which leads them away from their homes and communities to deal with the harsh realities of the 'street' and the many forms of life threatening circumstances to be found there."[484]

To some middle class black Atlantans, though some children were "compelled out sheer necessity," parents were still somewhat to blame for their children's vulnerability. Grace Davis, president of Atlanta Women Against Crime (AWAC), was a vocal critic of "parents so negligent and don't care [about their children]." Davis was on a January 1981 panel of "concerned" leaders

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[482] Ten Commandments of Safety for Parents, Box 216, Folder 14, Atlanta NAACP Records.

[483] "A Strategy for Children and Youth Supervision and Safety, February 198, Box 216, Folder 14, Atlanta NAACP Records.

[484] Ibid.

of community groups who believed the mayor's office needed to do more to ensure that parents were more responsible for their children. The group pushed Jackson to pass an executive order that pushed the curfew back to 7:00 p.m.[485] Davis made the local news in March 1981 when she was seen at the Omni Complex in downtown Atlanta "cleaning" the area of black youths hanging out after the curfew time. She argued, "When we heard Patrick Baltazar [one of the victims] was last seen at the Omni, we decided to monitor this and all places where kids hang out." She continued, claiming, "We want to get them off the streets, to know that we love them and care about what happens to them."[486] Davis claimed that parents had become "too sophisticated" and too lenient with their parenting and "forget that the old traditional way is the best." Davis was part of growing group of Black Atlantans that advocated a return to "traditional" practices, particularly corporal punishment in schools and homes.[487] "Until we get prayer and discipline back into the schools," she asserted, "we will have a problem with the kids." In addition to fundraising and lobbying for children's curfews, the AWAC devoted much of its resources to policing disorderly children and negligent parents, especially fathers. The group sent emissaries to bars, taverns, clubs, and liquor stores, to demand that the men return home to their families. In this, they were reminiscent of Lugenia Burns Hope's Neighborhood Union.

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[485] Rozell Clark, "Women Against Crime Get the Word Across," *Atlanta Daily World*, Mar 01, 1981, 1.

[486] Ibid.

[487] Perhaps unsurprisingly, the *Atlanta Daily World* published a number of editorials and letters to editor advocating the return of corporal punishment in school. Marcel Hopson argued, "Today, the children are 'running' the schools—not the delegated principals and classroom teachers. The hands of the principals and classroom teachers are shackled by the same 'handcuffs of society' that have many parents' hands shackled in their homes. When are thy going to put to rest that old ancient lie—'There are no bad children (boys and girls)?'" Adults, punishment supporters contended, needed to return to their roles as strict disciplinarians. When the Supreme Court defended the right of teachers to spank students In April 1977 when the Supreme Court defended the right of teachers to spank students, the *Daily World* deemed it "a timely and wise decision." They wrote, "We believe in the old adage: 'spare the rod and spoil the child." See Marcel Hopson, "Hits and Bits," *Atlanta Daily World*, Feb 01, 1977, 2; "A Timely and Wise Decision," *Atlanta Daily World,* Apr 22, 1977, 6.

The women intended to inspire "'a rebirth of family values among black men' and organize better training for parents on how to be better guardians of their young."[488] Davis argued that the women's campaign was only the beginning of a much-needed moral renewal of the black family in Black Atlanta. "What we're doing is a long-term thing," she claimed, "and even when the culprit is caught, we will continue to educate, organize, and encourage black families to work together."[489] The women of the AWAC, like those of the black political leadership and others in the black middle class, believed that some parents in the black community needed to be taught how to properly raise their children. These parents had strayed from traditional values and traditional institutions such as the church and the neighborhood. Middle class black sought inspire a return an older black communitarian ideal, in which the entire village raised the child but the ultimate responsibility lay within the individual household. Yet, in advocating for such a return, they ultimately blamed the victims of the crimes and their families and neighborhoods, rather than the broader forces that destroyed black communities.

While middle class and elite blacks pointed to bad parenting as the culprit in the crimes, conspiracies about the nature of the murders proliferated through working class and poor black communities. Many made sense of the crisis by contending that the murders were racially motivated and that members of the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi organizations were responsible for the crimes, as all of the victims were black children.[490] White supremacist organizations had

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[488] Rozell Clark, "Women Against Crime Announce New Plans," *Atlanta Daily World*, Mar 15, 1981, 5.

[489] Ibid.

[490] Panic about the increasing activities of the Klan was not limited to Atlanta. At the start of the 1980s, instances violence against African Americans across the country, such as the assassination attempt on NUL's Vernon Jordan, the violent murders of six black men in Buffalo, New York, and violent Klan activity in Tennessee and North Carolina provoked blacks to believe white supremacists were once again on the attack, this time in response to the gains of the civil rights movement. Jesse Jackson described the mood of Black America: "There is almost a hysteria in black communities because of the belief that there

reportedly revived their activity in Georgia and were training for race war right outside of Atlanta. Others believed in a broader conspiracy that involved the Klan, neo-Nazis, and the Atlanta police, with one man declaring "the police are snatching our children of the street and killing them."[491] One woman who signed her letter "Concerned, Scared, and Black!!!!" wrote to Jackson, Brown, Napper, and the Atlanta NAACP claiming, "This is no psychopath or schizophrenic or mad person who is brutally slaying our black children. This is a well-organized conspiracy with inside help."[492] Panic turned to frenzy in October 1980 when a blast in the Bowen Homes public housing complex destroyed the Gate City Day Care Center, killing four black young children and one adult.[493] Rumors abounded that a bomb planted under the daycare caused the explosion.[494] While Maynard Jackson and the Department of Public Safety contended that a broken furnace caused the blast, several believed that the blast was further proof that some evil force was seeking to annihilate black children.

The rumors of a white supremacist genocidal plot targeting black children were troubling to Jackson and the black Atlanta leadership. Jackson declared that any intimation that the Klan or any other white supremacist organization "was pure rumor."[495] Mayoral candidate Andrew

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is a conspiracy...Racism has become fashionable again and feeling of guilt toward blacks have turned to feelings of hostility." As quoted in Renfro, 52. See also Brenda Mooney Constitution, Staff Writer. "Violence has Spread Alarm through Black Communities," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 16, 1980, 2.

[491] Ken Willis and George Rodrigues, "Bat Patrol' on Job without Guns." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 21, 1981, 2.

[492] "Black Areas on Edge Over Child Murders," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 22, 1981, 2.

[493] King, Barry and T L Wells Constitution, Staff Writers. "Four Children, Teacher Die in Explosion at Day Nursery." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 14, 1980.

[494] Mooney, Brenda and Charlene P Smith-Williams Constitution, Staff Writer. "Bomb Threats Follow Blast; Other Centers Evacuated and Closed," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 14, 1980, 1.

[495] Paul Mokrzycki Renfro, "“The City Too Busy to Care”: The Atlanta Youth Murders and the Southern Past, 1979–81". *Southern Cultures.* 21, no. 4: 43-66.

Young contended that framing the missing and murdered children case in racial terms was a "disgraceful oversimplification" and argued the murders should "never divide this city racially."[496] The Atlanta Urban League in tandem with the regional Anti-Defamation League, released a statement deploring the dangerous rumors that were circulating among black Atlantans. They implored Atlantans to "resist acts and words that would divide us or set one group against another." They encourage readers to take a "rumor test," to determine whether or not a piece of information was worth sharing with another.[497] In March 1981 a group of concerned black reformist leaders—including John Lewis, Julian Bond, Hosea Williams, and Alveda King Beal—met in a closed door meeting at Paschal's to discuss how blacks could be more "responsible" in the anti-crime activism. They argued that blacks who "theorize about white racist conspiracies in connection with the children's cases are inviting unrest and possible violence." "If we're going to be responsible," Georgia representative Tyrone Brooks contended, "we have to take the lead in establishing exactly what the issue is. Hell, we don't know if it (the killer or killers) is the (Ku Klux) Klan—or some black organization."[498] Nonetheless, the Black Leadership Forum, which consisted of sixteen major black organizations, stated "there seems to be no reason to conclude that there is a racist plot" motivating the kidnappings and murders.

In order to get a hold of the circulating rumors, Lee Brown established a Rumor Control Center in April 1981. The center provided an Atlantans with a resource to verify rumors they

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[496]Carole Ashkinaze and Frederick Allen, "Young, Marcus Battle Down to the Wire," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 27, 1981.

[497] "Urban League, Anti-Defamation League Call upon Atlantans to Stop "Rumors" in Child Deaths," *Atlanta Daily World,* Apr 30, 1981, 1.

[498] Linda Field and Frederick Allen, "Restraint is Urged by Black Leaders." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 25, 1981, 2.

heard on the street as the bodies of older victims were beginning to surface.[499] Through controlling rumors and denying the plausibility of conspiracy sought to demonstrate that the authorities in full control of the situation and would be able to crack the case with superior policing and investigation.[500] The black leadership further sought to suppress the potential for hysteria among Atlanta's working class black community by claiming that the murders were not motivated by race, despite the stark fact that every single victim was black.

Nonetheless, working class blacks resisted black leaders' attempts to speak for the rank-and-file of the community. Tensions between the political class and the working class peaked in March 1981 at the Techwood-Clark Howell Homes. A group from the public housing project organized a neighborhood patrol, employing young men between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one. The young patrollers carried baseball bats—painted in the black liberation colors of red, black, and green—and were ordered to stop and question suspicious people.[501] Several of the organizers believed the circulating white supremacist conspiracy theories and sought to use the patrol as a measure of armed self-defense against "crazed racist killers." Israel Green, president of the Techwood tenants' association, contended that residents had "lost confidence in the ability

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[499] Deric Gilliard, "Brown Announces Rumor Control Center," *Atlanta Daily World,* Apr 05, 1981, 1.

[500] Despite their denunciation of the conspiracy theories, the Atlanta police department was not above employing questionable tactics in their investigation. In October 1980, the investigative team brought in New Jersey-based psychic Dorothy Allison to assist in the case. Allison declared upon her arrival, "As long as I'm in Atlanta he won't be killing any more children." Needless to say, that was not the case. Indeed following the hiring of Allison, the department according to George Napper, was "flooded with worthless tips from would-be psychics." One black person from Chicago suggested that the Atlanta team return blacks' "religious and moral heritage" and hire instead a "Vodum (voodoo) priest, from Africa, Haiti, or the South—and let him do his work." See Newman, Evelyn L. Newman, "'He Won't be Killing Anymore Children,' Psychic Says Here," *Atlanta Daily World,* Oct 23, 1980, 1; D. Perry. "Letter to the Editor: Wants to Hire Voodoo Priest," *Atlanta Daily World*, Mar 03, 1981, 6.

[501] "Bat Patrol Criticized," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 17, 1981, 1.

of the police to protect the 2,000 children who live in the project."[502] A group at the Capitol Holmes project announced a similar plan. Public Safety authorities immediately decried the patrols. Lee Brown declared in response, "There is only one police department in this city, and we do not condone any group that will be performing police activities."[503] George Napper argued that organized neighborhood watches were fine but armed patrol would be "taking it to the point beyond what is necessary."[504] However, one resident of Capitol Homes, where another patrol had been formed, argued, "We're not out to kill anybody, but they (the police) can't be around to protect us every minute. We have to protect ourselves."[505] Nonetheless, the Atlanta police arrested four of the "bat patrollers" from Techwood on charges of carrying unlicensed weapons and disorderly conduct. The following day, fifty residents of the project marched to the police station to protest the arrests, with George Napper unconvincingly insisting that the bat patrollers and the protesters "don't represent the sentiments of the Techwood Homes residents."[506] Several of the organizers, he claimed, did not even live in the complex but were "outsiders" who "forced themselves into the position of using Techwood Homes for their own selfish purposes."[507] Such vigilante groups, Napper made clear, would not be tolerated.

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[502] Ken Willis and Linda Field, "Police to Monitor Techwood 'Bat Patrol,'" *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 20, 1981, 2.

[503] Ibid.

[504] Ibid.

[505] Ibid.

[506] Joe Brown and Brenda Mooney, "Demonstrators Protest Bat Patroller Jailing," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 23, 1981, 2.

[507] Ibid. The two had been arrested several times in political protests; see Ken Willis, "Residents Leery of Techwood Bat Patrol," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 25, 1981, 1.

In response to the neighborhood armed patrol movements, the Atlanta Police Department sponsored an unarmed patrol organized by the United Youth Adult Conference. Police officers trained the volunteers and charged them with patrolling neighborhoods between the curfew hours.[508] The debates over rumor and the clash between Napper and the Techwood bat patrol illustrated the ways in which Atlanta's black leaders determined legitimate and illegitimate responses to the crisis. Self-help was necessary in the fight against black criminality, but disorderly behavior would not be tolerated. Furthermore, they contended that the murders, were as SCLC's Joseph Lowery explained, were "not a racist thing."[509] While working class blacks sought to emphasize the racial and class-based realities of the crisis, black political leaders attempted to limit the range of responses from Atlanta's black community by repudiating such assertions. Attempts to evoke the history of racial violence in the South or the persisting racism in Atlanta were not acceptable. Rather, black leaders contended that the crisis, like the crime issue in Atlanta broadly, was the responsibility of the black community, not that of whites.

Joseph Lowery's contentions that the crimes against Atlanta's children were not a "racist thing" seemed to ring true when Wayne Williams, a 23-year-old black aspiring talent scout, was arrested in late June 1981 for the murders of Jimmy Ray Payne and Nathaniel Cater, two victims whose bodies were found in the Chattahoochee River. Williams became a suspect in May after police pulled him over upon hearing a "loud splash" from a bridge over the Chattahoochee. After watching, questioning, and searching Williams' car and property, FBI and Fulton County detectives claimed to have evidence—microscopic fibers from Williams' bedspread and carpet, as well as dog hairs from his family's German Shepherd—linking Williams to several of the

[508] Deric Gilliard, ""Watch Patrol" Will Hit Streets Monday," *Atlanta Daily World,* Apr 19, 1981, 1.

[509] Dallas Lee, "Atlanta," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 22, 1981. 2,

victims. The evidence was strong to try Williams for the murders of two victims, though police assumed that Williams was responsible for the other murders as well. Though he maintained his innocence throughout the trial, in February 1982, Williams was convicted of two counts of murder and sentenced to two life sentences.[510] Maynard Jackson announced after the verdict, "Our long nightmare is over."[511] The new mayor, former congressman Andrew Young, praised the judge and juror for conducting an "eminently fair trial."[512] Shortly thereafter, twenty-three of the twenty-eight missing and murdered children's cases were closed.[513] City council president Marvin Arrington spoke for much of Atlanta's black political class when he declared, "Now we can get back to being the number one city in the world. Now we can direct our energies to that."[514]

However, many among Black Atlanta's working class refused to accept that the ordeal was truly over. A number of the believed Williams was innocent. One of Williams' most loyal supporters was Camille Bell. After the conviction, Bell stated, "With this conviction, Wayne Williams, at twenty-three, became the thirtieth victim of the Atlanta slayings."[515] "Wayne Williams is in jail and a killer is on the streets," Bell asserted.[516] Indeed, many, including Bell

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[510] Though Williams was tried for the murders of Nathaniel Cater and Jimmy Ray Payne Prosecutors could link Williams to ten of the twenty-eight victims through hair and carpet fibers. After Williams was convicted of the murders of Cater and Payne, however, the police department closed the cases of the other victims. See Headley, 196-197.

[511] Ethel Payne, "Behind the Scenes," *Afro-American,* Mar 13, 1982, 5.

[512] "Young Praises Judge for Fair Trial." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Feb 28, 1982. 1

[513] Charles Madigan, "Many in Atlanta Not at all Comforted by Guilty Verdict," *Chicago Tribune*, Mar 07, 1982, 1

[514]Ibid.

[515] Reginald Stuart, "Atlantans' Feelings Mixed on Verdict," *New York Times,* Mar 01, 1982, 1.

[516] "Reaction to the Verdict," *Afro-American*, Mar 06, 1982, 1.

and Williams himself, argued the murders of black people did not stop when Williams arrested. At the same time children were kidnapped and murdered, several black women in Atlanta were stabbed to death. After Williams' arrest, the crimes against black women, they claimed, continued.[517] Nonetheless other Atlantans believed Williams was guilty but contended that he did not receive a fair trial. A month after the verdict a group of Atlantans started a petition to demand a new trial. "We're not saying Williams is innocent," local defender of Williams John H. Lewis contended, "All we're saying is he didn't get a fair trial."[518] The group received several letters from Williams in which he continued to declare his evidence and pointed out what he perceived were inconsistencies in the prosecution's case.[519] Despite the presence of a black judge and a predominantly black jury, many believed that Williams, like generations of black men, had discriminatorily accused and judged.

Several Atlantans believed that the judge, Clarence Cooper, and much of the jury had decided that Williams was guilty before the trial even began. Williams' lawyer, black Atlantan Mary Welcome contended that Cooper lacked the experience to handle such a complex trial and that he was too close to the prosecution to be fair. Others believed that there simply was not enough evidence to convict Williams beyond a reasonable doubt. The microscopic fibers and dog hairs seemed too precarious for many observers to be convinced. "The verdict was wrong," one resident of the Thomasville neighborhood where three victims had lived, declared, "You don't just sentence a man to the chain gang for fibers."[520] Others doubted that Williams was capable

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[517] "Maynard Jackson Denies 38 Black Female Slayings." *New Pittsburgh Courier*, Aug 08, 1981, 2; "Tass: Williams Trial A 'Farce'." *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 02, 1982. 1

[518] Ibid.

[519] Reginald Stuart, "Atlantans' Feelings Mixed on Verdict," *New York Times,* Mar 01, 1982.

[520] Ibid.

of committing such extreme crimes on his own. Stevie Rogers, sister of victim Patrick Rogers argued, “I don’t believe he’s guilty, not from what they showed. I always felt it was more than one person that got my brother.”[521] Linda Wyche, mother of ten-year-old Aaron Wyche, contended, “I don’t think he did as much as they think he did. He couldn’t have done all that by himself.”[522] Several other relatives of victims agreed, declaring that the investigation was not over. Thus, parents of the victims protested when Brown hastily closed the remaining cases and disbanded the task force. The SCLC’s Joseph Lowery led a group of pro-parent ministers in a march to demand that Lee P. Brown maintain the task force and continue investigating the murders. Lowery personally agreed with Andrew Young that the trial was fair and Williams was guilty of the crimes. However, he and the other ministers also sought to amplify the concerns of the many in the black community who did not share the black middle class’s sense of closure. One member of his church, Lowery described, cried out, “’Lord, there ain’t justice. How could they say, ‘beyond a reasonable doubt?’”[523] The church replied in agreement with adamant amens, forcing Lowery to realize that for many in Atlanta’s black community, justice had not been served.

Nonetheless, the case of the missing and murdered youth in Atlanta confirmed what middle class black leaders had contended about crime over the previous decade. In insisting that Williams, and not the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, or other diabolical white groups, was responsible for the murders, the crisis became yet another case of black-on-black crime. Williams’ crimes were the result of damaged psyche, caused not by structural factors such as

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[521] Ibid.

[522] Ibid.

[523] Ibid.

poverty or poor education, but by poor parenting. Whereas working class blacks sought to use the crisis to call attention to the vulnerability of black children living in poverty, black leaders such as Mayor Young employed the case of Williams to speak to the cultural and spiritual deficiencies in black communities. Shortly after the verdict, Young warned black parents to take note of the Williams case and "beware of the kind of sickness that is getting into our children."[524] Shifting the focus away from the working class and poor victims and toward the middle class Williams family, Young blamed Williams' parents and the permissiveness and lack of moral training in their parenting. "His parents may have given him too much, too many material things...He began to think of himself as God."[525] In the aftermath of the conviction, Lee Brown argued that the black family needed to return to the Black Church. "In the midst of economic and political instability, the Black Family and Black Church must reaffirm their commitment of oneness," he proclaimed in a March 1982 speech before an Atlanta Baptist church, "The Black Family and the Black Church must regenerate love and trust and expel apathetic tendencies." Echoing Young's admonition of the Williams family, Brown contended, "The black family and the black church must avoid being sidelined or upstaged by values and morals of the larger society. The black family and the black church must rekindle the fire and determination of that ole time religion."[526]

AWAC's Grace Davis also framed the ordeal as a moment that imparted a much-needed moral reckoning in Atlanta's black community. The crisis provided an opportunity for the

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[524] Juan Williams, "Mayor Young Warns Blacks of Wayne Williams-Like 'Sickness,'" *The Washington Post*, Mar 06, 1982, 1.

[525] Ibid.

[526] Lee Brown, "The Black Family and Church Together Making a Better World," March 7, 1982, Box 15, Folder 70, Lee Brown Papers.

rebuilding of black families that Davis sought to extend beyond the conviction. In September 1982, the Women Against Crime petitioned the mayor to extend the curfew. Davis claimed, “I would love for it to be permanent for about two years. It has brought families together and that’s beautiful.”[527] Though Mayor Young denied their request to extend the curfew, the pro-family sentiment that underlay Davis’ request did not fade after Williams’ conviction.

The 1980s witnessed a flurry of conferences, symposia, and institutions concerning the state of the black family, and in particular, the poor black family, in Atlanta and other cities around the country. In 1980, SCLC/W.O.M.E.N, a women’s auxiliary founded by Evelyn Lowery, wife of SCLC director Joseph Lowery, hosted its first “Survival of the Black Family in the 80s” conference.[528] The conference featured panels with local figures and experts from the local universities and government agencies who discussed topics such as unemployment, education, and male/female relationships.[529] Later meeting covered topics such as the black teenager, parenting, the abused child, black boys and men, drug abuse and teenage pregnancy among other issues.

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[527] “Curfew Ends, WAC Seeks Extension," *Atlanta Daily World*, Sep 09, 1982, 1; Young argued, “It is clearly in the best interest of children and of the city for children to be off the streets and studying at 9 o’clock. I think in a crisis time, in the kind of emergency we’ve had the last few years that had to be endorsed by the city ordinance but now we have to rely on the parents.” "Young Will Not Extend Curfew," *Atlanta Daily World*, Sep 10, 1982, 1.

[528] Lowery founded the SCLC/WOMEN, an acronym for Women’s Organizational Movement for Equality Now, to involve women “in endeavors to improve human conditions for all mankind.” Their chief concerns, according to organization literature, covered a wide range of issues including “women’s issues, children’s needs and enrichment, heritage pride, documentation of the SCLC through a pictorial exhibit, legislative affairs, health and welfare, education participation in international affairs, economic justice, media and peace issues.” The Survival of the Black Family workshops were their most prominent initiatives. See SCLC/WOMEN, Box 23, Folder 9, SCLC/WOMEN Records, Stuart Rose Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.

[529] Program 1980 Survival of the Black Family in the 80s, Box 49, Folder 20, SCLC/WOMEN Records.

In 1982, a group of civil rights leaders and members of the Congressional Black Caucus gathered in Washington D.C. to form the National Black Leadership Round Table. Together they produced the "Black Leadership Family Plan for the Unity, Survival, and Progress of Black People." They distributed the plan in a pamphlet that included twelve principles for black families to follow. They prefaced the rules with a lament, "When [we] look at the state of the Black family—the fatherless children and the husbandless mothers—the hearts of the Back Leadership Family cry out…The Black Leadership Family pleads today: 'Black father, be husbands; Black mothers, be wives; Black families, be family; *save the children!*'"[530] The rules included support for the Black Church, protection of elderly and youth, support for the black family and community life, and the challenging of negative images in the media, among other economic and political prescriptions.[531]

Other civil rights groups also organized forums focused on perceived problems among black families. The National Urban League and the NAACP sponsored the Black Family Summit to address "the black family crisis" and to discuss "strategies for strengthening and preserving the black family."[532] NAACP executive director Benjamin Hooks contended, "In recent years, we have been bombarded with frightening facts and figures regarding the rapid deterioration of the black family. It is my contention that finding ways to end the precipitous slide of the Black family is one of the most important items on the civil rights agenda today."[533] Furthermore, Hooks argued, the gains of the civil rights movement would be meaningless unless "work ethic is

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[530] *The Black Leadership Family Plan for the Unity, Survival, and Progress of Black People,* viii.

[531] Ibid., viii-ix.

[532] "Black Family Summit Opens at Fisk Univ." *Atlanta Daily World,* May 03, 1984, 1.

[533] Simon Anekwe, "Hooks promises: Family crisis next target," *New York Amsterdam News,* September 17, 1983, 1.

taught in the households."[534] Like those who spoke of black-on-black crime, those who decried the "decline of the black family" implied that black people needed to be saved from themselves. Black single mothers, deadbeat fathers, and delinquent children, leaders in summits, conferences, and symposia indicated, were broken and needed to be fixed before poverty, unemployment, and crime rates climbed to unprecedented heights.

These fervent discussions about the status of the black family occurred within the broader discourse in both scholarly and popular communities concerning the so-called underclass. The underclass was usually described as an urban population, most often living below the poverty line though not necessarily. What characterized the underclass was not their poverty, their housing conditions, or education. Rather it was their behavior. As Henry Mayhew wrote, "The underclass usually operates outside the generally accepted boundaries of society. They are often set apart by their 'deviant' or antisocial behavior, by their bad habits, not just their poverty."[535] The deviant behavior described mirrors that targeted by black Atlantans. They included single motherhood, out-of-wedlock pregnancy, and other non-normative family arrangements, the use of certain kinds of narcotics, unemployment and welfare dependency, disruptive behaviors in public places, non-cooperation with authority including police officers and teachers, and lack of respect for "mainstream" American values such as "hard work, education, and respect for family."[536] Adolph Reed argued the underclass discourse appealed to both liberals and conservatives in the Reagan era because it "conferred privileged status on constructions that

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[534] "NAACP to Hold Meet on 'Crisis' of Black Family," *Atlanta Daily World,* September 20, 1983, 1.

[535] As quoted in Adolph Reed, "The 'Underclass' as Myth and Symbol: The Poverty of Discourse about Poverty

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depoliticized the frame for examining social problems."[537] Therefore, the underclass existed as a population created not by the political and economic decisions of particular state actors but by their own cultural deficiencies. Therefore, the problems of the underclass could not be addressed in the difficult realm of politics.

Furthermore, Reed argued, the underclass rhetoric resonated with members of the black middle class because "it flatters their success by comparison, and through the insipid role model rhetoric, allows fawning over the allegedly special role of the middle class."[538] Middle class black Atlantans may have been gained a sense of self-righteous superiority in their descriptions of the cultural failures of working class and poor blacks. Their critics certainly believed so.

However, it is also likely that the black reformist leaders adopted the rhetoric though not the term of the underclass because the concept of an underclass had long existed within the black liberal reform tradition. The notions that underlay the underclass rhetoric were not new—middle class and elite blacks had chastised the behavior of their poor and working-class brethren in their uplift since the nineteenth century. Critiques of the black working class were particularly prevalent during the first post-civil rights era, when broader social and economic forces motivated black Americans to look inward for social development. Some of the most dedicated civil rights activists and reformers of the early twentieth century were uncompromisingly elitist. Critiques of the black working class and poor emerged with new vigor in the second post-civil rights era, another era of social and economic crisis. This economic decline had disastrous effects on black communities. The return to self-help and the strengthening of traditional institutions perhaps appeared as the best option that would allow for black survival. After all, Black Atlanta,

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[537] Reed, 189

[538] Ibid., 189

they believed, had thrived at a time when the state couldn't care less about conditions in black communities and began its decline with urban renewal, highway construction, and other forms of state intrusion.

As the 1980s went on, black reformist leaders in both politics and in the community continued to advocate for the return of institutions that would foster appropriate social norms in Atlanta's black communities. They argued that it was time to restore not only old-time family values and neighborliness but also the vaunted black business districts, particularly the famed Sweet Auburn. Like the black family, black enterprise became a site of contestation over development, security, and the meanings of Black Atlanta's past and future.

Chapter 5
Restoring the Spirit of Sweet Auburn: Black Enterprise, Economic Development, and the Contradictions of the Black Liberal Reform Tradition

The Auburn Avenue Rib Shack was not the most elegant restaurant in Black Atlanta. The restaurant was tiny, with only three booths and a few booths at the counter. Most people ordered takeout, which the restaurant prepared quickly.[539] Yet on a December morning in 1988, several Atlanta's most prominent political luminaries, including state senator David Scott, city council president Marvin Arrington, city councilman Bill Campbell, and Ralph David Abernathy gathered at the restaurant to celebrate its revitalization. Its proprietor, Dorothy Clements, smiled brightly as Marvin Arrington cut the ribbon to mark the restaurant's rebirth and, they hoped, the revitalization of Sweet Auburn.[540]

Clements' father, Allen J. Taylor, had opened the restaurant in 1965. It had stayed afloat during the construction of the downtown connector in the 1960s, rising rates of inflation and unemployment in the 1970s, and increasing instances of crime in the 1980s. Yet, by the late 1980s, the Rib Shack was struggling. In 1986, the Department of Transportation cut off access to the restaurant during the widening of the connector and its number of customers plummeted. As cash flow shrank, Clements was struggling to pay the bills and the employees. The restaurant was on the verge on closing when it garnered the attention of business leaders at the Atlanta Economic Development Corporation (AEDC). Established by Maynard Jackson in 1978, the AEDC sought to partner public and private entities in financing and facilitating new enterprises and ventures. In the 1980s, the AEDC turned its attention toward, "the revitalization of small

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[539] Susan Hamilton, "The Sweet Auburn Community Confronts the National Park Service," master's thesis, Georgia State University, 1983, 32.

[540] "AEDC Helps Revitalize Auburn Ave. Rib Shack," Atlanta Daily World, Dec 01, 1988, 1.

businesses and inner-city neighborhoods."[541] Auburn Avenue was a key target of revitalization. The AEDC facilitated a $60,000 loan from the First Union Bank to the rib shack, at no cost to the restaurant. Ben Maffit, vice present at the bank and present at the ribbon cutting, claimed that the bank was "very pleased to be a part of the re-opening of the Rib Shack." The type of loan that funded the re-opening was quite unprecedented. "The Auburn Avenue Rib Shack is probably the most unusual loan I have seen approved," Earl Peck, manager of loan programs for the AEDC described. He continued, "The business had been inoperative for several months, the loan criteria was stretched beyond normal guidelines, and the bank had not traditionally placed loans on Auburn Avenue."[542] Walter Huntley, president of the AEDC and also present at the ceremony, contended, "AEDC's involvement in Auburn Avenue Rib Shack re-opening establishes a precedent in which we would like to continue in this area. It's a good example of the public and private sectors working together on behalf of a small business to revitalize one of Atlanta's oldest inner-city commercial districts."[543] After representatives from the public and private sectors cut the ceremonial ribbon, Ms. Clements announced, "Let's eat!" [544]

The loan was not the last of the bit of support the Rib Shack received. The next summer, in 1989, the Auburn Avenue Rib Shack obtained support from the city's Historic Façade Program. The program, sponsored by the AEDC and the Urban Design Commission and funded through a Community Development Block Grant, offered interest free loans of up to $30,000 and free architectural assistance to selected sites. The purpose of the façade program was "to

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[541] "AEDC Helps Revitalize Auburn Ave. Rib Shack," Atlanta Daily World, Dec 01, 1988, 1.

[542] Ibid.

[543] Ibid.

[544] Ibid.

encourage the economic revitalization through restoration of building facades in three historic commercial districts: Sweet Auburn, Terminus, and Castleberry Hill."[545] By the summer of 1989, eleven buildings had undergone façade renovation. The Rib Shack's renovation would include a roof replacement, the installation of new awnings, repair of its neon sign, and a new paint job. Dorothy Clements, who was also looking for funds to renovate the restaurant's interior, stated, "I'm committed to Auburn Avenue and definitely to the Rib Shack because there not many black family businesses that have been passed down. I want to continue the tradition of the Rib Shack on Auburn Avenue."[546] Katherine Pringle, like those at the AEDC, believed the restoration of the Rib Shack and the Historic Façade Program broadly would "[play] a major role in Sweet Auburn's rebirth."[547] Neither Pringle nor others involved in the reopening and restoration of the Rib Shack explained precisely how the restaurant's updates would aid in the redevelopment of one the city's most impoverished neighborhoods. But nonetheless, they joined in a decades-long tradition of Atlantans, primarily black business owners and political leaders, to make Sweet Auburn economically viable again.

Black civic leaders had been attempting to revitalize Sweet Auburn, once the pride and joy of Black Atlanta, since the onset of its decline in 1960s. Neighborhood civic leaders sought, mostly unsuccessfully, to include the Auburn area in the city's downtown development plans. Yet, their efforts did not gain serious traction, even as black political officials routinely campaigned on a promise to restore Auburn Avenue to its former glory. However, when the National Park Service designated the neighborhood as the Martin Luther King, Jr. National

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[545] "Ceremony for facade renovation at auburn rib shack Monday," Atlanta Daily World, Jul 21, 1989, 1.

[546] Ibid.

[547] Ibid.

Historic Site in 1980, Sweet Auburn's revitalization became a greater concern to the city's civic and business leaders, much to the relief of the area's residents and business owners. However, conflicting views of the neighborhood's future quickly emerged. The neighborhood's business owners and proprietors initially welcomed the federal and local attention on the area, and hoped that the attention would bring much-needed funds for small business improvement and infrastructure repair. The neighborhood's residents anticipated funding for neighborhood services, low and moderate-income housing, and new, affordable retail options. The city's black political class, however, envisioned a different Auburn Avenue. They sought to tap into the neighborhood's potential to become a part of the convention and tourism industry, seeking to expand the King Site into a national tourist destination. They also sought to capitalize on the development potential of the area and worked to make the area available for maximum profit, preferably for black developers. While neighborhood shops that supported the Sweet Auburn brand as a black historical center and could ultimately serve tourists—such as the Auburn Avenue Rib Shack—were welcomed and supported, establishments that stood in the way of development received less enthusiasm.

These competing visions of the future of Sweet Auburn illustrate conflicting conceptualizations of the meaning of black enterprise, a central institution in the black liberal reform tradition. Auburn Avenue's residents and small business owners understood black businesses as institutions in service to the black community. They envisioned an Auburn Avenue where businesses that served neighborhood residents thrived once again. They wanted support for small entrepreneurs, the owners of beauty salons, barbershops, hole-in-the wall restaurants, and other businesses with exclusively black clientele. Though these establishments would likely not be extraordinarily profitable, if they managed a profit at all, they would serve the community

and serve to maintain Auburn Avenue's history as a center of black enterprise. In contrast, black reformers in the black political class, now headed by Mayor Andrew Young and city council president Marvin Arrington, sought to develop black enterprise with the highest potential for profitably. They contended that though on a small number of people would prosper in the short term, the prosperity of such developments would eventually trickle down into benefits for the neighborhood as a whole. If securing that prosperous future meant destroying small shops or symbolically significant properties, then so be it. Yet, business proprietors and neighborhood residents proved to be a formidable force in stymying the black political class's development imperatives.

The battle of the future of Sweet Auburn also reveals tensions at the heart of the black liberal reform tradition that concern the primacy of the collective against that of the individual. Black liberal reformers often appealed to notions of a black collective, bound up together by the shared history of slavery and experience of discrimination. They emphasized a need for black communal unity and uniformity and often sought band black Atlantans together behind a united front. Yet, notions of collectivity existed in tension with other individualistic principles within the liberal reform tradition, such as capitalism and personal responsibility. In discussing community development, black reformers attempt to couch black enterprise in both individualism and communitarianism. Disagreements arose when working class black Atlantans, who accepted the collectivist ethos of the liberal reform tradition, challenged the individualistic notions of black capitalism that characterized the black reformist leaders' development plans. While this tension had long existed, it emerged most dramatically in debates about the development of Auburn Avenue.

On the night before Andrew Young's inauguration as Atlanta's second black mayor in January 1982, a destructive storm tore through northern Georgia. Flash floods swept away a four-year-old boy in the town of Chickamunga and tornado destroyed a sizeable pecan field in Peach County. Atlanta was torn through with powerful winds and torrential rains. By the next morning, the clouds had cleared and the inauguration began on schedule. Andrew Young and indeed the city at large hoped that the new administration would bring the sunlight into a city that seemed to have a heavy cloud hanging over for several years. Though the murders of Atlanta's black children had seemingly ceased, a cloud remained over the city as an economic recession, rising unemployment rates, and federal cuts to social services troubled Atlanta and cities around the country.

Two years before Ronald Reagan declared it was "morning again in America," Mayor Young announced in his inaugural speech, "We can make the sun shine again."[548] He contended that his administration would represent a break in the storm as he vowed to strengthen Atlanta and its citizens through economic development. "The challenge of the 80s," he claimed, "is economic—jobs—and Atlanta must once again point the way in the economic arena just as we have in the social and political sphere."[549]

Young then outlined what would become the modus operandi of his administration: "If Atlanta is to point the way in the 80s, there must be a very close working relationship between City Hall and the business community. We must find ways to encourage business experience and new business starts involving neighborhood opportunities, downtown housing and entertainment,

[548] "Young's Inaugural Speech: 'we can make the Sun Shine,'" *The Atlanta Constitution*, Jan 05, 1982. 1,

[549] Ibid.

and a new consciousness of Atlanta as a regional center international finance and trade."[550] Such growth, however, as Young argued, was "contingent upon a climate of domestic tranquility…and security for all who are vulnerable in our city." He contended, "Atlanta must be a city which respects and protects our own citizens, as well as the millions of tourists and convention visitors who make the hospitality industry our largest employer. We must have a police force which respects and protects everybody."[551] With this, Andy Young signaled the highest priorities of his administration: continuous economic growth and failsafe security.

Young's embrace of a development agenda and the city's business elite initially surprised many observers. Young had a reputation as a "radical" from his days in the S.C.L.C, as the country's first black congressman since Reconstruction, and Jimmy Carter's ambassador to the United Nations, a position from which forced to resign due to his backdoor conversations with the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Thus, when Maynard Jackson selected Young as his handpicked successor, the business community rallied around Sidney Marcus, nicknamed "the great white hope."[552] With the support of the black community and many white liberals, Young defeated Marcus in a run-off election and became the second black mayor of Atlanta.[553] Though he had not been the business community's preferred candidate in the 1981 mayoral election, Young quickly made amends. He contended, "I didn't get elected with your help, but I can't

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[550] Ibid.

[551] Ibid.

[552] Allen, 214.

[553] For more details about the 1981 mayoral campaign, see Clarence Stone, *Regime Politics,* 109-111.

govern without you."[554] Indeed, Young and the business community worked in tandem to court corporations and developers to the city's central business district.

The Young administration and the city council under the leadership of councilman Marvin Arrington sought to Atlanta into a competitive "entrepreneurial city" by first instituting what amounted to an "open-door policy" for businesses to incentivize investment in the city.[555] They established what Young described as an "enterprise zone" in the central business district and cut property tax rates for new investments. He explained, "We will float bonds to get below-market interest rates whenever possible…we're doing some creative financing."[556] The city lowered property taxes so that the city could "compete" with northern suburbs and other cities in the region. They also passed several regressive sales taxes, intended to shift some of the "burden" from Atlanta property owners to those who used city services but did not pay property taxes. He claimed that this meant people who lived outside of the city but commuted to work in the city, but the burden also fell on the city's residents. Through these measures, the Young administration hoped to foster the development of mixed and upper-income housing in the downtown area, as well as the growth of new enterprises that would provide services and entertainment for conventioneers and tourists in the nearby convention district. They imagined downtown Atlanta as a 24-hour district, akin to Bourbon Street in New Orleans and Beale Street in Memphis.

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[554] Allen, 219.

[555] Tim Hall and Phil Hubbard define urban entrepreneurialism through descriptions of two major characteristics; "firstly, a political prioritization of pro-growth local economic development, and secondly, an associated organizational and institutional shift from urban government to urban governance." Atlanta, governed first by boosterism and then through urban regime, arguably exemplified urban entrepreneurialism for much of the twentieth century. See Tim Hall and Phil Hubbard, *The Entrepreneurial City: Geographies of Politics, Regime, and Representation*. (Chichester: Wiley, 1998), 4.

[556] Address by Mayor Andrew Young, The Hungry Club Forum, October 2, 1985, Box 300, Folder 4, Andrew Young Papers, Auburn Avenue Research Library, Atlanta, Georgia.

Just a few blocks from the central business district, another group of Atlantans were working to revitalize another section of downtown: Auburn Avenue. Since the early 1960s, Sweet Auburn was a neighborhood in decline and disarray. Observers were quick to point to desegregation as the primary cause of Sweet Auburn's decline. Rev. Williams Holmes Borders of Wheat Street Baptist Church claimed that integration "took the life out many of those places," referring to the area's prominent enterprises.[557] Segregation had been profitable for black entrepreneurs who had a captive consumer base. However, as Atlanta's economy gradually desegregated, black firms had to compete with white owned firms with larger economies of scale and thus less expensive products and services. Furthermore, as white Atlantans migrated to the suburbs in the 1960s, moderate and middle-income housing stock became available to black Atlantans eager to leave overcrowded black neighborhoods, including Sweet Auburn. As owners of older businesses retired and closed their enterprises, younger black entrepreneurs also chose to open their businesses in more profitable parts of the city. Consequently, between 1960 and 1980, the area's population declined by almost fifty percent.[558] Those who stayed behind on Auburn Avenue tended to be the elderly and those who could not afford to move. Thus, the total income of the area's residents decreased between 1970 and 1980.

However, the most destructive forces on Auburn Avenue were that of urban renewal and highway construction. Urban renewal began in the Auburn area in 1956 with the Butler Street Renewal Program. Between 1956 and 1971, when the program officially ended, large areas of

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[557] Sweet Auburn Neighborhood Chronicle, Vol. 1, No. 1, Box 1, Folder 6, Sweet Auburn Neighborhood Project Records.

[558] Auburn Area Revitalization Program First Phase Report, National Urban Development Services Corporation, 1979, Box 2, Folder 10, Arnall T. Connell Papers.

the Auburn Avenue residential area were cleared.[559] While the Atlanta Housing Association (AHA) promised to erect moderate-income single-family dwellings in the area, they instead worked with Rev. Williams Holmes Borders to build Wheat Street Garden, a 550-unit set of apartment complexes.[560] The apartments, like much of the housing erected in the wake of urban renewal, were poorly built and their condition quickly deteriorated soon after they opened in 1969.

The construction of the downtown connector—the section of the connected I-75 and I-85 that runs through the city—was even more devastating that urban renewal. Since the publication of the 1946 Lochner Report, the downtown commercial elite had been planning the expansion of highways into the city's center. The report suggested the creation of a network of freeways to connect the northern suburbs to the central business district.[561] Beginning in the 1950s and into the late 1960s, city planners used federal urban renewal funds to clear sections of predominantly low-income black neighborhoods such as Buttermilk Bottom, Summerhill, and Mechanicsville. They then employed federal highway construction funds to build the north-south expressway around the central business district. The multi-lane downtown connector, completed in 1965, split Auburn Avenue, bifurcating the street into a western end and an eastern end.[562] Construction displaced an estimated 30,000 residents and forced several businesses to close

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[559]John Britton, "Butler St. Plan Approved with some Cautions." *Atlanta Daily World,* Jun 13, 1959, 1; Sanders, *Convention Center Follies,* 277.

[560] Eugene Patterson, "Atlanta is Plowed and Replanted," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Mar 11, 1966, 4.

[561] Larry Keating, *Atlanta: Race, Class, and Urban Expansion* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2010),91.

[562] Keating, 92.

while others suffered low traffic during the years of construction.[563] Furthermore, there was no entrance or exit off the connector onto Auburn Avenue. Traffic was diverted around the district completely.[564] According to area residents, the connector devastated the Auburn Avenue community. Restaurant owner Mable Hawk described it as a "death blow."[565]

Auburn Avenue's decay mirrored the decline of urban centers including downtown Atlanta around the country beginning in the 1950s. As previously discussed, suburbanization and capital flight decreased downtown's tax base and weakened the area's economic structure. However, Auburn Avenue's decline was more acute than that of Atlanta's central business district. While many of the area's most prominent business leaders worked within CAP and the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce to maintain downtown Atlanta's economic viability, Auburn Avenue had lacked such powerful advocates in the governing structure until the 1970s. Thus, when the downtown business elite sought to restructure downtown to increase access to the central business district at the expense of Sweet Auburn, they did not consult the business and property owners of downtown Atlanta.

In the early 1970s, Auburn Avenue business owners became increasingly concerned about the status of Sweet Auburn as CAP made plans to improve the central business district. While some property owners were concerned that downtown business elites would try "steal" parts of Auburn and Butler Street to expand the district, others worried that Auburn Avenue was

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[563] Yvonne Shinhoster, "Mabel Hawk: Working to Redevelop Auburn." *Atlanta Daily World*, Jun 18, 1976, 13.

[564] Eddie Williams, "Auburn "Avenuer" Watches Overhead Expressway Evolve." *Atlanta Daily World*, May 30, 1957.

[565] Transcript of interview with Mable Hawk, Box 2, Folder 12, Sweet Auburn Neighborhood Project Records.

being left out of the downtown revitalization efforts.[566] In response to these concerns, a group of Auburn Avenue business and property owners re-organized a defunct group called the Auburn Avenue Development Association (AADA). The group intended to represent the Auburn community in planning decisions. In the group's membership were business owners and political operators—civic leader John H. Calhoun, president of Mutual Federal Savings and Loan Association, Fletcher Coombs, Atlanta Life's Jesse Hill, and several other prominent business owners.

The AADA was most visible in the summer of 1972, when they led a protest against city plans to extend Auburn and Edgewood Avenues northwest into the central business district. Under the proposal, Auburn and Edgewood would be made into one-way streets, a plan that sparked controversy among black business owners. Fletcher Coombs, then president of the ADAA, contended in a public hearing before the public works committee, "A one-way street renders business dead" because it would create a "fast traffic thoroughfare."[567] Coombs also took the opportunity to make recommendation that would facilitate more traffic into the Auburn Area. He suggested that the traffic plan instead facilitate easier vehicular traffic from Auburn Avenue to Hunter Street on the west side. The ADAA was successful in delaying the plans and members hoped that their protest meant, "that the city government will not continue to circumvent us on issues vitally affecting this business area."[568]

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[566] George Coleman, Atlanta To Sponsor Project to Bolster 'Sweet Auburn,'" *Atlanta Daily World,* March 20, 1975, 1.

[567] Fletcher Coombs, Atlanta City Council Public Works Committee, Box 24, Folder 1, John H. Calhoun Papers

[568] Fletcher Coombs to Members and Friends of the AADA, July 3, 1972, Box 24, Folder 2, John H. Calhoun Papers; Douglass Wells, "Black Citizens Win First to Round to Save 'Sweet' Auburn," *Atlanta Daily World,* Jul 02, 1972, 1.

The AADA also sought to create development plans that would "complement the plans for the city of CAP."[569] In 1972, the Office of Minority Business Enterprise awarded the group a $121,930 grant for the purpose of conducting a study of the Auburn Avenue area as well as the Hunter Street business district.[570] The AADA created a subgroup, the Inner City Development Corporation (ICDC), which described as its primary purpose, "the identification of investment opportunities for black opportunities."[571]

In January 1974, the City of Atlanta, on behalf the ICDC, submitted a proposal to the National Endowment for the Arts, requesting $48,400 to fund another analysis of the area that would "study the historical, economic and physical development potential of the Avenue and produce plans, designs, and strategies to save it."[572] This study would be planned and executed by a research team composed of historians, urban planners, architects, and graduate students. The city was awarded the grant and the project commenced in September 1974. The team worked to "involve Auburn Avenue property owners and residents in the project as fully as possible at all levels."[573] The project team worked primarily with the ICDC and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change in research teams that focused on historic preservation, urban design, and implementation. The group involved area residents by presenting preliminary

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[569] Minutes of a Meeting of the Auburn Avenue Development Association, March 12, 1972. Box 23, Folder 10, John H. Calhoun Papers.

[570] Fletcher Coombs (then president of the Auburn Avenue Development Association) to Property owners and business operators, AA Section, April 7, 1972, Box 24, Folder 1, John H. Calhoun Papers

[571] Auburn Avenue Hunter Street Development Strategy, December 1973, Box 2, Folder 8, Arnall T. Connell Papers.

[572] "Sweet Auburn:" A Proposal to Prepare Urban Design Plans For An Historic and Nationally Significant Black Community in Atlanta, National Endowment of the Arts proposal," January 15, 1974, Box 20, Folder 12, ATC Papers

[573] Andrew Steiner to Collier B. Gladin, March 28, 1975, Box 21, Folder 2, ATC Papers.

plans at a series of public meetings at the Butler Street YMCA.[574] Though it is not clear how many Atlantans attended these meetings, they do demonstrate an effort to at least consider the concerns of residents, something planners had failed to do in the past.

In August 1975, they presented their report to Mayor Jackson, the city's Department of Planning and Urban Design, as well as the ICDC. The report detailed a number of circulation and land use proposals, all intended to restore viable housing stock, attract new businesses, and increase commercial traffic in the area. These included making the area more pedestrian-friendly, by renovating streets and sidewalks, installing new lights, landscaping, and street furniture. The project team's long-range recommendations also included the improvement of public services for the area's residents, such as the establishment of a community multi-service center, a heath care center, child-care centers, and a branch library.

The report also suggested preservation and enhancement of "selected historical elements," the development of office, commercial and other CBD-related uses, and the development of a "distinct, complete, functional residential community. Historic preservation was at the crux of the team's urban design place, as several of the recommendations emphasized utilizing the area's historic character. The team contended that the area's "unique identity [would] encourage a flow of resources into the area (tourists, investment and it can affect eligibility for certain federal grants and aids for enhancement."[575] Development that restored or maintained historic features were eligible for a variety of federal and state funding programs and

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[574] Sweet Auburn review meeting notes, March 12, 1975, Box 22, Folder 2, ATC Papers; Quarterly Status Report for Sweet Auburn Project, Box 22, Folder 6, ATC

[575] Sweet Auburn: A Comprehensive Urban Design Plan for Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia, December, 1975, Box 22, Folder 8, ATC Papers.

tax relief measures. Ultimately, few of the recommendations were implemented, though historic preservation would continue to be a central strategy for Auburn Avenue's redevelopers.

As the team was compiling their plan, Maynard Jackson announced the creation of yet another plan. Since he assumed office in January 1974, Jackson had been committed, at least rhetorically, to the redevelopment of Sweet Auburn. He often evoked his grandfather, John Wesley Dobbs, in his statements, linking himself to the old Sweet Auburn that many were trying to restore. Speaking on a rainy day at the entrance of the historic Odd Fellows Building, Jackson announced the "Sweet Auburn Project." He contended, "The purpose of this important project is to development a comprehensive plan for the historically significant community defined as the 'Sweet Auburn' area. This plan, which will incorporate also input from the Auburn Avenue community at every level, will be recommended for incorporation n the city's comprehensive development program."[576] The City Bureau of Planning was slated to coordinate the project, which would be based on the preliminary design recommendations from a report authored by Drs. Clarence Bacote, Gloria Blackwell, and Elizabeth Lyon of Atlanta University. The trio insisted, "the preeminent goal of many who are presently deeply involved in Sweet Auburn's business and social institutions, is not to re-create or 'put back' Sweet Auburn as it was at its height in the 1920s through the 1950s." Rather, they contended, "The hope is that future plans will preserve the vitality and the richness of the commercial and social milieu that were distinguishing characteristics, and 'pull back' circulation of visitors and occupants."[577] The team recommended fostering a more unified district, connected by the Atlanta Life Insurance Building on the west and the King Center on the east. While they argued that "retaining the spirit" was

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[576] Sweet Auburn History Culture Study: Recommendations to the Design Team, Feb. 15, 1975, Box 20, Folder 7, ATC Papers.

[577] Ibid.

more important than retaining the infrastructure, they suggested creating a marker program to indicate where demolished buildings and extinct institutions once were. Nevertheless, the plans the mayor adopted were rather unspecific and lacked the detail of other proposals for the area's development.

Embedded within each of the many plans for the revitalization of Sweet Auburn was a critique of Auburn Avenue's uninviting environment, which stood as the biggest hurdle to potential investment. The business and property owners acknowledged that the area's deteriorating building facades, overcrowded and dilapidated housing, trash-strewn streets, and rubbish-filled deserted lots marked Auburn Avenue as a "slum." Many of the business owners blamed the area's residents, who had seemingly lost a sense of pride in the area. Fletcher Coombs argued, "Tenants don't maintain their properties as well as they did twenty years ago and we have move vandalism than we had them and have people who seemingly by design just tear up property."[578] Indeed, the demographics of the Auburn Avenue residential population had changed since the area's golden age. Much of the area's middle-class residents, including the majority of those at the helm of the revitalization initiatives, moved out of the area.

By 1974, about 45 percent of the area's 9,000 residents lived below the poverty.[579] Many survived on public assistance and lived in public housing complexes such as Wheat Street Gardens, Grady Homes, and Graves Homes. Others rented houses from absentee landlords who did little to maintain the properties.[580] Many of the business establishments were also in poor

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[578] Transcript of Interview with Fletcher Coombs, Box 1, Folder 38, Sweet Auburn Neighborhood Project Records.

[579] Sweet Auburn: A Comprehensive Urban Design Plan for Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia, December, 1975, Box 22, Folder 8, ATC Papers.

[580] Ibid.

physical condition, as the owners, particularly the older ones, were reluctant or unable to undertake debt to make improvements.[581] Furthermore, “unsavory” groups populated the area. Prostitutes, homeless people, loitering teens, and other unwanted people were constant fixtures on Auburn, both day and night. Like in the central business district a half-mile away, the streets were noisy and congested with people looking for work or just hanging out. The presence of such populations, the studies suggested and the business owners understood, were not conducive to investment.

After several years of planning and little action, the Sweet Auburn revitalization movement picked up steam once again in 1978 with the founding of the Auburn Avenue Revitalization Committee (AARC). The group had much of the same membership as the ICDC and the AADA, but notably included more small proprietors and residents of the Auburn Avenue area.[582] The first interest meeting drew in more than 100 people.[583] According to Mable Hawk, who owned a small restaurant and served in several positions on the executive committee of the AARC, the goal of the AARC was “to clean up, to take out that that does not add to a profitable area, to develop the type of businesses that are useful and needed…to build and restructure.”[584]

Perhaps due in part to the persistence of the AARC, the city of Atlanta made its first major moves toward actually beginning the revitalization process during Maynard Jackson’s second term. In 1978, the city allocated $1.29 million of the city’s Community Development

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[581] Vicki Graham to Jason Benning, January 11, 1978, Box 91, Folder 9, CAP Records

[582] Transcript of interview with Mable Hawk, Box 2, Folder 12, Sweet Auburn Neighborhood Project Records.

[583] Emma Edmonds, "Auburn Avenue may be 'Sweet' One More Time," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 05, 1978, 2.

[584] Ibid.

Block Grant to the Auburn Avenue. The money would go to the Atlanta Life Insurance Company for the construction of a new headquarters on Auburn Avenue and Courtland.[585] Developer Richard Dagenhart argued, "The Atlanta Life building is one of the keys for starting the process of revitalization."[586] Alyse Baier, director of the Mayor's Office of Economic Development, expanded on how the public officials connected the new building with future economic development. She contended, "The capital, jobs, and entrepreneurship this building injects into this area represent a major undergirding of its cultural and financial strength and will be a catalyst for the revitalization of Sweet Auburn."[587] Not only was the building symbolically significant—its imposing tall glass structure representing the expansion black entrepreneurship into the post-Jim Crow era—Baier argued was financially essential as well. Nonetheless, its economic impact was perhaps limited by the choice of the firm itself. The city awarded the grant to one of the most financially secure black enterprises in the state; the firm could have probably raised the necessary capital and obtained loans for the new construction without the addition of public support. Nonetheless, many members of the small business proprietors in the AARC celebrated the grant as a sign of future funds to come.

But Atlanta Life's move from its old location—a group of historic buildings—to the modern new one was unexpectedly controversial. In 1980, Jesse Hill announced plans to demolish the old Atlanta Life buildings and build a parking lot and plaza to serve the new

[585] It is unsurprising that a major grant would go first to Atlanta Life. The enterprise was perhaps the dominant business on Auburn Avenue as the firm's president, Jesse Hill, served as the head of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce from 1977 to 1984. Emma Edmonds, "Auburn Avenue may be 'Sweet' One More Time," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 05, 1978, 2.

[586] Jerry Schwartz, "Sweetening the Future of Old Auburn Avenue," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Jun 09, 1980, 2.

[587] Statement by Alyse Baier, Director, Mayor's Office of Economic Development on the occasion of the groundbreaking of Atlanta Life Insurance Company Building, June 26, 1978, Box 91, Folder 9, CAP Records.

construction. The old complex housed several historic buildings including the John Smith Home and the Henry Rucker House, the homes of two of Atlanta's earliest black professionals. The structures, both built in 1870, were among the oldest on Auburn Avenue. The Atlanta Life complex also included the Rucker Office Building, which was the black-owned office space on Auburn Avenue.[588] The buildings were in rather poor condition, as the city had condemned the Smith house and the Rucker Building. The buildings had to be restored or torn down. Hill concluded that demolition of the buildings was necessary for the firm to revitalize the area.[589] Shortly after the announcement, members of the AARC as well as city's growing group of neighborhood preservationists quickly began a protest of the decision. They wrote letters and circulated petitions demanding that someone step into preserve the buildings. The protestors threatened to picket Atlanta Life and Jesse Hill as well.

Hill responded that the company had considered "every proposal for saving [them]."[590] Nonetheless, as he argued, "up until now, neither the mayor, nor the private or public sector has come forward with any serious commitment to saving those buildings—from an economic point of view."[591] While there was a great deal of sentiment and "a lot of rhetoric from a lot of people," there was no one to put forth the necessary funds to purchase the buildings from the company.[592] Demolition, Hill believed, would be far more economically beneficial than

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[588] Brian O'Shea, "Halt Sought to Proposed Auburn Ave. Demolition," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Jul 10, 1980, 2.

[589] Ibid.

[590] Emma Edmunds, "Atlanta's Preservation Blues," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Sep 18, 1980, 2.

[591] Ibid.

[592] Ibid.

preservation.[593] Neighborhood preservationists continued to petition the mayor to ban the destruction of the buildings. Jackson, known for his commitment to the preservation of Atlanta's historic buildings, did not have the legal power to stop the destruction. He did, however, assign the Urban Design Commission to seek alternatives to demolition, any of which would require the commitment of a private developer.[594] Nonetheless, no developer came forward to purchase the structures for restoration. Ultimately, rhetoric alone could not save the Rucker House and the Smith Home, which were torn down in October 1980.[595]

Six years later, Hill applied for a permit to demolish the last standing structuring, the Rucker building. This time the mayor, Andrew Young, denied Hill's request. Though Young was not known to agree with preservationists, he told Hill that the building was "important to the history of the area and important for maintaining the physical character of the area."[596] CAP head, Dan Sweat concurred, writing to Young, "If this building can be saved and used effectively, it will be a signal to the residents of the area, business people, and preservationists that the city is targeting Auburn Avenue for special efforts."[597] Sweat suggested that Hill lease the building to a developer for $1 annually. The developer would use federal grants, primarily UDAG funds, to renovate the structure and in exchange receive investment tax credits for the project, which would amount to about 20 percent of the renovation costs. The city would then lease the building from the developer who would repurpose it as an office space for new black-

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[593] Emma Edmunds, "Historic Buildings Face Wrecking Ball," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Aug 08, 1980, 2.

[594] Brian O'Shea, "Save Buildings, Officials Urged," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Jul 11, 1980, 1.

[595] Emma Edmunds, "Walls Come Tumbling Down," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 24, 1980, 1.

[596] Jesse Hill from Andy Young to Jesse Hill, February 12, 1986, Box 92, Folder 9, CAP Records.

[597] Letter to Andy Young, from Dan Sweat, May 8, 1986, Box 92, Folder 9, CAP Records.

owned enterprises.[598] Shortly thereafter, a black-owned realty firm offered to purchase and restore the building with financing from UDAG funding as well as city-sponsored improvement loans.

Another restoration crisis occurred in 1983, this time concerning the Odd Fellows building. The building was a multi-story office building that had once housed many businesses and professional offices of Auburn Avenue's most prominent citizens. Built in 1912, it featured a rooftop garden where black Atlantans, prohibited from the city's other fine dining establishments, held elegant ladies' club lunches and fraternal organization parties.[599] The building also housed a 1,200-person auditorium, where jazz legends like Duke Ellington and Ma Rainey performed. The building, perhaps more so than the Atlanta Life buildings, stood as a symbol of the economic and cultural achievements of Sweet Auburn in its golden age. By the 1970s, however, the building was an empty and deteriorated structure. Several of the revitalization plans proposed throughout the 1970s recommended that the building be renovated and its façade restored. Though federal grants were used to restore part of the building's façade in 1982, the building's interior remained neglected until the following year.[600]

In 1983, Dan Thorpe, a black real estate broker, purchased the Odd Fellows auditorium, one section of the six-floor tower. Thorpe hoped to build the theater into a performing arts center and attract other investors to renovate other floors with shopping areas, business offices, and entertainment venues. Soon after he purchased the theater, Thorpe organized the Odd Fellows

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[598] Ibid.

[599] Michael Szymanski, "70 Year Old Monument to Black Business," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Nov. 11, 1983, 8E.

[600] Yvonne Swain, "City of Atlanta Takes Steps to Support Auburn Revitalization, Atlanta *Daily World*, Jun 20, 1982, 1,

Restoration Inc., a non-profit group that shared much of its membership with the AARC, of which Dan Thorpe became president in 1984.[601] Thorpe argued that the purpose of the group was to develop a "preservation plan" that would "encourage revitalization through private capital investment and private enterprise with limited government assistance."[602] Furthermore, they sought to make the building a "safe, pleasant and viable commercial and retail center that will encourage business, entertainment, and shopping."[603] The restoration of the Odd Fellows building, Thorpe contended, had potential to be the catalyzing force that led to the broader redevelopment of the area. Nonetheless, Thorpe struggled to attract investors and by 1984, the Odd Fellows Restoration group was struggling to stay financially afloat.[604] Ultimately, Thorpe sold the auditorium in September 1985, only two years after he initially purchased it.[605]

These narratives of Sweet Auburn's restoration illustrate a core question concerning the meaning of revitalization and enterprise: for whose benefit? Critics of the various revitalization projects argued that redevelopment served those who needed the funds least, e.g. Jesse Hill and, as described shortly, Coretta Scott King. Others were critical of how the development agenda focused on capital improvement and property investment rather than prioritizing investment in people and services. However, Mayor Young and others in the black political class understood these projects as one and the same. Young contended that private investment and corporate industry brought jobs to the city. Because unemployment was at the heart of the city's social

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[601] Dan Thorpe, President of Odd Fellows Restoration, Inc. Odd Fellows Restoration Project, Box 2, Folder 9, ATC Papers.

[602] Ibid.

[603] Ibid.

[604] Clarence Mitchell to Odd Fellows Restoration Board of Directors and Board of Advisors, September 4, 1984, Box 2, Folder 9, ATC Papers.

[605] Ad from Realty Dynamics, Box 2, Folder 9, ATC Papers.

issues, he claimed, providing low-income people with jobs would address some of those issues. He argued in his January 1985 State of the City address, "I insist that the primary responsibility of the mayor is to bring jobs to our city and to the region; and in order to bring jobs, one must attract business." He claimed that he created over 15,000 jobs in his first three years in office through in his international travels to foreign corporations. Indeed, by 1984, foreign corporations, primarily from Japan, Germany, the Netherlands, and Canada had invested over $3 billion in metro-Atlanta operations.[606] Nonetheless, in order to attract new industries and private investment, the Young administration had "to development an environment in our city that encourages and attracts businesses."[607] This included not only particular public safety provisions and changes in commercial zoning ordinances, but also "maintaining a competitive tax ratio."[608] Thus, taxable property in downtown Atlanta remained insufficient for providing services to the area's low-income residents.

Young also claimed that the investment in minority business enterprises also created jobs for the city's black citizens. In his first term, Young expanded the minimum percentage of minority involvement in public contracts from the 25 percent established by Jackson to 35 percent. By 1985, the city had worked with 380 minority contractors in both joint ventures and as main contractors, which Young contended, "translates directly into jobs to families that might now be unemployed."[609] He also increased funding for minority enterprises by expanding the city's Minority Enterprise Small Business Investment Company (MESBIC). The company

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[606] Rutheiser, 181-182.

[607] Address by Mayor Andrew Young, The Hungry Club Forum, October 2, 1985, Box 300, Folder 4, Andrew Young papers.

[608] Ibid.

[609] Andrew Young, State of the City 1985, Box 300, Folder 4, Andrew Young Papers.

helped “new small minority businesses to gain funds—start-up funds and capital so we can continue the generation of small businesses that will enable us to share in the development and growth of our city.”[610] Young’s critics, such as city councilmember Hosea Williams, doubted that these initiatives created jobs for the city’s neediest residents.[611] Indeed, the majority of the minority business owners who won concessions contracts for the expansion of Hartsfield Airport in 1985, for instance, were people who had financial and personal connections to the Young administration and the Atlanta City Council.[612] According to historian Alton Hornsby, “[Young] always claimed that the fruits of a healthy business community would ‘trickle down’ in the form of jobs to even most the disadvantaged.”[613] Yet, by the end of Young’s first term, this had to yet to occur for most of Black Atlanta’s residents.

The majority of Auburn Avenue business owners did not have the political power to truly transform Sweet Auburn. The area’s residents held even less. They had to rely on those in the black political leadership, who promised to represent the collective interest of Black Atlanta. Yet, the history of neighborhood redevelopment had shown that black political leaders often privileged the needs of capital of the needs of working class people. As the revitalization efforts continued into the mid-1980s, Auburn Avenue’s working-class proprietors and poor residents began to demand recognition and participation in the process. In negotiating the creation of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site, area residents, and their self-appointed representative Hosea Williams, sought to guide the redevelopment process on their terms. Their demands,

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[610] State of the City, 1984, Box 301, Folder 4, Andrew Young papers.

[611] Stone, 146; Hornsby, 288.

[612] "Airport Vendors and their Ties to City Leaders," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Nov 23, 1984, 1.

[613] Hornsby, 297.

however, would conflict with the imperatives of the area's major property owners as well as the city's broader economic agenda.

For much of the 1980s, revitalization groups centered their agendas on the development of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site (hereafter, the King Historic Site) as a downtown tourist destination. The site had been in development in a piecemeal fashion for several years. Coretta Scott King began building the site shortly after her husband's death in April 1968. In 1969, she established the Martin Luther Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change and, using money she fundraised, purchased a plot of property at the eastern end of Auburn Avenue near Ebenezer Baptist Church and the home where King was born. The center would contain a library and a set of King's papers, as well as a gravesite and small chapel. In December 1969, King received a $100,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to process King's papers and make them available to the public. From there, the King Center continued to receive sizeable grants for the expansion of the King Center, including $1 million grant from Coca-Cola's Robert Woodruff. In 1974, the King Center began work on a $10 million facility, named Freedom Hall, to house the archives, as well as a gift shop, and auditorium, using the $2.8 million Scott had received to that point. Scott co-chaired a fundraising campaign with Herman Russell to raise the remainder of the money for the Freedom Hall. Two years later, Henry Ford II pledged to raise the remaining $8 million to complete the construction. By the construction was complete in 1984, donations had from Disney, Xerox, Southern Bell, as well as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, in addition to thousands of private donations and $50,000 from the Bee Gees. [614] A sizable percentage—about 40

[614] Glenn T. Eskew, "Exploring Civil Rights Heritage Tourism and Historic Preservation as Revitalization Tools, in ed. David L. Sjoquist, *Past Trends and Future Prospects of the American City: The Dynamics of Atlanta,* 314-316.

percent—of the funds for developing the King Center and the surrounding area came from federal funding.[615]

In October 1980, Congress passed legislation to designate the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site and Preservation District, which included much of the Sweet Auburn district. With this, the National Park Service (NPS) became involved in the preservation of particular structures and development of the area. The service was tasked with, "[protecting] and [interpreting] for the benefit, inspiration, and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Jr. was born, where he lived, worked, and worshipped, and where he is buried."[616] The law also established an advisory commission that would oversee the creation of a development plan and the execution of the preservation and restoration projects. By October 1982, several rehabilitation projects had begun, including restoration of King's birth home, which along with the gravesite would serve as the main tourist attractions in the area. The advisory committee also commissioned a series of plans to examine various preservation options.

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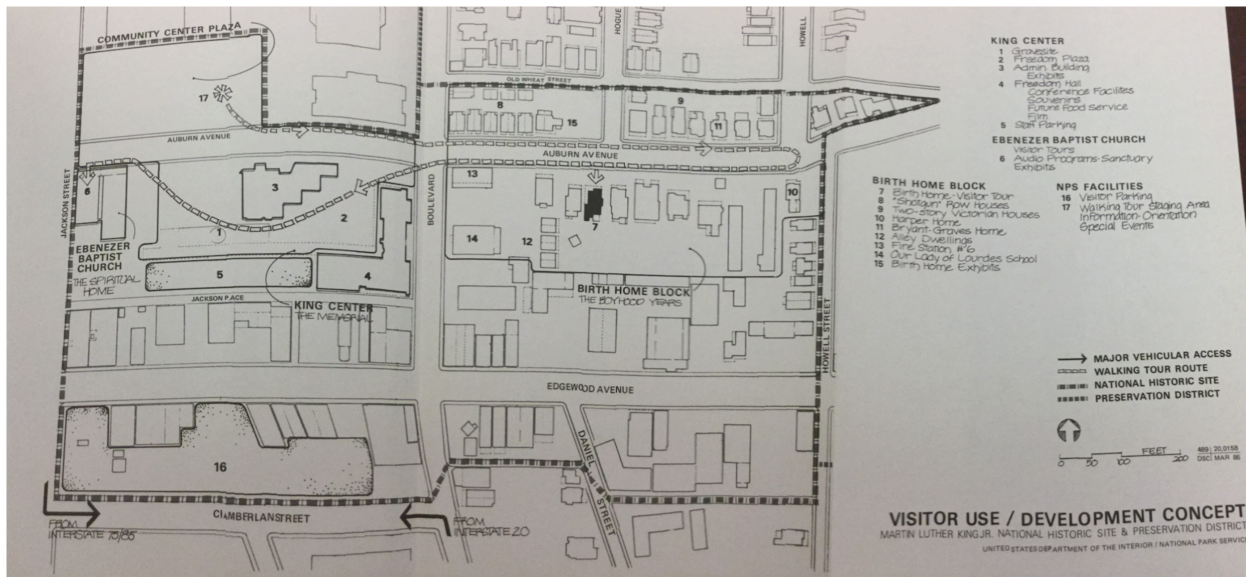
[615] Eskew, 315.

[616] Eskew, 316.



King Center Visitor Use/Development Concept, 1985[617]

Within these plans, the committee members debated the extent to which Auburn Avenue area should become a tourist destination. Some on the committee argued that the NPS should preserve as many of the historic residential and commercial sites in the Sweet Auburn area as possible, while others feared that NPS could potentially encroach into neighborhood autonomy. Still others believed that the NPS's presence with interfere with private investment in the area. There were also debates about the site would be managed, with representatives from the King Center and the NPS vying for control over the birth home, the gravesite, and the future tourist center.[618] *Atlanta Constitution* staff writer Michael Szymanski described the plans as ranging "from turning the neighborhood into a roped off museum to restoring its claim as the home of the most successful black businesses in the world."[619]

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[617] General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan, Box 96, Folder 1 CAP Records.

[618] Hamilton, 67-69.

[619] Michael Szymanski, "The Sweet Auburn Blues," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Oct 16, 1983, 2.

In these disputes about the development of the King Historic Site and the revitalization of the Sweet Auburn district, several factions emerged, illustrating competing visions of economic development in the area. These factions also had varying amounts of access to political power in the city. In her 1983 master's thesis written as a participant-observer in the King Historic development project, Susan Hamilton described several of the groups.[620] At the top of the pyramid in terms of power were the developers and their associates. Their primary concerns were to increase tourism, which they argued would increase employment opportunities in the area. They were less interested in preservation, and only nominally concerned about the area's residents. Though some of them, such as CAP's Dan Sweat, attended AARC and other neighborhood meetings, they were not willing to support ventures that did not appear to promise financial benefits.[621] Though the white developers generally had greater resources, they relied on black developers and investors to initiate the projects as to avoid appearing predatory.[622]

The King Center and the NPS formed the next most powerful institutions. The King Center was the largest landholder in the area and received millions of dollars in grants. Coretta Scott King was an influential figure in both local and national politics, and was a personal friend of Andrew Young and several other black and white political power brokers. The King Center was most interested in increasing tourism in the area but wanted to limit the role of the NPS in interpreting the King narrative. Their relationship with the NPS was symbiotic but strained from the very beginning. The King Center was also less concerned about preservation and displacement, though they claimed a commitment to uplift of the whole "beloved community" of

[620] Hamilton, 73-95.

[621] Ibid., 85.

[622] Michael Szymanski, "The Sweet Auburn Blues."

the Sweet Auburn area.[623] Likewise the NPS asserted their commitment to the residents of the community, yet were foremost concerned with preservation and expansion of the King Historic Site and the Sweet Auburn district. Vested with the power of the federal government and the historic preservation legislation, the NPS had "the power to buy any piece of property it needs or veto any [property] improvement."[624] Though they were careful acting on this power, the NPS was often at odds with both the King Center and the residents of the area.

Black business owners formed another interest group. The faction was diverse and had competing interests themselves. Prominent entrepreneurs such as Atlanta Life's Jesse Hill and Mutual Savings and Loans' Owen Funderburg shared many of the same goals and concerns as those among the developer group. These figures also served as the leadership in the AARC and thus the group often organized around their interests. The majority of business owners in the area owned small enterprises. This group was most concerned with ensuring that the support of black owned businesses remained at the center of redevelopment plans. Local businessman Bob Wright, argued, "We must be assured that every inch of Sweet Auburn will be run and owned by blacks, even if it means picketing Andy Young."[625] They were members of the AARC but were most active in the leadership of groups such as the Auburn Avenue Professionals and Merchants Association. Many of these individuals did not live in the Auburn Avenue area but had strong ties through other institutions such as the churches and their own establishments. The majority of proprietors did not own their buildings—70 percent rented their spaces.[626] They were concerned

[623] Ibid.; Hamilton, 81.

[624] Michael Szymanski, "The Sweet Auburn Blues."

[625] Ibid.

[626] MLK Redevelopment Program Merchants Survey, Box 91, Folder 11, CAP Records.

that the NPS would seek to buy out their businesses, which would have been a tempting offer for some of the older business owners. They were wary of the growing tourist presence in the area that the NPS sought to foster. Many of the businesses served an exclusively black, local clientele and likely would not appeal to tourists. Almost half of the small business owners operated hair salons, barbershops, and other personal service enterprises.[627] While the small business owners wanted the area to be cleaned up and revitalized, they believed that this meant supporting black business owners through special business improvement loans and other support programs.[628] They wanted to see the revival of the old Sweet Auburn even if that meant rejecting potentially lucrative redevelopment plans that would threaten their ownership.

Residents of the area formed the final major interest group. The residents within the Sweet Auburn district were predominantly low income and about 65 percent rented properties that were often in serious disrepair. Residents were generally not invited to assist in the previous revitalization planning and their interests were rarely reflected in the proposals. The NPS sought include citizen input by organizing several neighborhood meetings that often only business and property owners attended. But by 1983, many had organized to resist the agendas of both the NPS and the King Center. Hosea Williams, by now a state legislator, led the “grassroots” community-based coalition.[629] Williams began to organize neighborhood meetings to organize the Sweet Auburn community against the potential white takeover over the area.[630] Williams charged that “the grassroots people have had no input” in the planning of King Historic Site or

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[627] Ibid.

[628] Hamilton, 90-92.

[629] Hamilton employs pseudonyms in her study. She refers to Williams as Jeremiah Drover, Hamilton 83-84.

[630] Hamilton, 82-83.

Auburn Avenue's revitalization.[631] His taskforce would serve as "a custodian of sorts for all of the other existing groups."[632] It would seek to ensure that each of the development plans considered the needs and wants of the district's residents. It also would to seek to protect poor blacks from being manipulated by white investors, though of course not all of the investors were white. Like the storeowners, Williams was committed to preserving the legacy of black ownership on Auburn Avenue. He argued, "It would be an absolute crime to lose the street—that was famous because it was once completely black owned—to a bunch of white folks. It's the rich whites abusing poor blacks all over again."[633]

Another group of Atlantans calling themselves "Black Atlantans Demanding Economic Justice" also protested the exclusion of poor and working-class blacks from the revitalization process. They deemed the two-decade failure to redevelop Auburn Avenue an example of economic injustice. In a July 1983 press release, they argued, "The paradox of this economic injustice is that while Atlanta's black population and political power continue to increase, its economic wealth decreases. Yet, true freedom is mainly a matter of economic justice."[634] They contended that the "black masses" must be included in the city's economic growth through the inclusion of their input into the planning process and redistribution of resources to low-income communities.

Residents who rented their homes and establishments were perhaps most concerned about displacement that might occur if NPS sought to buy homes for preservation, if private

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[631] Vincent McCrew, "Hosea Williams Joins in Auburn Redevelopment," *Atlanta Daily*, Aug 23, 1983, 1.

[632] Ibid.

[633] Michael Szymanski, "The Sweet Auburn Blues."

[634] Press Release for Black Atlantans Demanding Economic Justice, July 29, 1983, Box 92, Folder 1, CAP Records.

developers swiftly moved in the increasingly valuable area, or if rents increased as the area developed. By 1983, a real estate group purportedly representing over fifty investors had approached several owners and occupants about the possibility of sale.[635] Several organized the Concerned Citizens of the Old Fourth Ward, a group that demanded that the federal government amend the historic preservation law to give control of the area to the residents. They also sought to restrict the NPS's right to use eminent domain to condemn private properties and purchase them for restoration.[636] The NPS did their best to assuage the residents' concerns though their promises could only go so far. The NPS assured residents that they would offer temporary relocation for those whose homes were being renovated but they did not specify a nearby location.[637] Though they would also try to stabilize rents in the area, they asserted they could not protect residents from free enterprise. The NPS argued, "While the National Park Service will not force anyone out of the residences it acquires, it can do nothing to prevent displacement of residents from privately owned homes or apartments. If the area does revive economically, people could be involuntarily displaced from their homes and places of business."[638] Thus, residents, both owners and renters, developed a mistrust of the NPS that never really subsided.

Sweet Auburn residents were also rather critical of the King Center. Many residents also resented the increased tourism that the King Center sought to foster in the area. One renter quipped, "I'm not prejudiced but white people take pictures of us on our porches and we feel like

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[635] Hamilton, 92.

[636] Cheryl Lauer, "King Historic Area Spurs Fear of Ousters, High Rent, *The Atlanta Constitution*, Aug 20, 1983, 2.

[637] Hamilton, 92-93.

[638] Eskew, 317.

we're in a zoo."[639]Others charged that the King Center did little to help low-income residents with the millions of dollars of grant money they received and the revenue they earned from increasing tourism. Though the King Center had a community center and daycare open to residents, Coretta Scott remarked, "We're not setting up soup lines."[640] When the King Center opened five restored houses for handpicked community members in January 1984, the Concerned Citizens organized a picket at the dedication. [641] They carried signs that read, "Displacement IS happening in the name of M.L. King!" and "Stop stealing our neighborhood!"[642] The Concerned Citizens believed that the King Center, the NPS, business owners, and developers were all aligned against the residents, each group seeking to exclude the neighborhood residents from the planning process and, more nefariously, to remove the poor and working class from the area.

Unsurprisingly, City Hall under Andrew Young's business-oriented leadership worked closely with developers and the King Center to build the Sweet Auburn district into a site that would support the city's convention and tourism economy. In 1983, Mayor Young organized an Auburn Avenue development group comprised of representatives from the city government, the NPS, the AARC, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Development Corporation (a group headed by representatives from the King Center).[643] The group commissioned the Urban Development Consortium to create yet another development program. This plan, like the many that preceded

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[639] Michael Szymanski, "The Sweet Auburn Blues."

[640] Michael Szymanski, "The Sweet Auburn Blues."

[641] Cheryl Lauer, "King Historic Area Spurs Fear of Ousters, High Rent."

[642] Michael Szymanski, "Housing Project Organized by King Center is Dedicated," *The Atlanta Constitution,* Jan 11, 1984, 1.

[643] Andrew Young to John Leak, VP at CAP, October 10, 1983, Box 91, Folder 10, CAP Records.

it, was ambitious. Its goals tried to please the various groups, except for the residents, by including plans to:

> Create a secure, vibrant retail environment in which small business can grow and prosper, preserve as many historic structures as is economically possible and preserve the distinct historic character of the area, mitigate commercial displacement while pursuing a goal economic growth, develop the most appropriate, economically feasible mix of tourist attractions, complimentary visitor services and neighborhood revitalization efforts for the purpose of stimulating private investment.[644]

The program sought to restore the "spirit" of Sweet Auburn by creating more space for pedestrian activity; the "coherence" of the district by restoring the "presence of compatible uses and activities…unique to the Sweet Auburn district;" and the "vitality" of Sweet Auburn through the fostering of viable business operations.[645] The program created three site areas that divided the Sweet Auburn district into an eastern district, a central "heart of Sweet Auburn" district, and the King Historic Site district. It proposed a series of restoration, commercial development, and landscaping projects for each district to be completed in three phases over a period of ten years. Security was essential to Sweet Auburn's development, as the authors contended that the success of any sort of development was contingent upon an ability to "create an environment that is safe, clean, and well maintained. This must involve the elimination of derelict activity and behavior patterns so that a pleasant atmosphere exists for business operators and consumers."[646] The plan estimated the total cost of the program to be over $105 million dollars, with 91 percent coming

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[644] Final report for the Auburn Avenue Development Program, October 24, 1985, Box 91, Folder 10, CAP Records.

[645] Ibid.

[646] Ibid.

from private funds. They estimated that in return, the developments would create over 3,000 new permanent jobs and over a million man-hours of construction activity. As lofty as the plan was, the Atlanta City Council accepted it in April 1986.

[maybe include a drawing from the plan]

Neighborhood residents immediately expressed concerns about the plan. Neighborhood leaders, Noran Moffett and Inez Lindsay of Neighborhood Planning Unit-M, which contained the Auburn Avenue area, presented a report at a meeting of the city's council's urban development committee. The report was damning of the Urban Development Consortium's plan and articulated Auburn Avenue residents' concerns about the purported goals of revitalization. They charged first charged that poor and working-class residents had been largely excluded from the planning process, arguing, "There is no real evidence that they even talked to any community-based group about their work."[647] This was not surprising because the mayor's Auburn Avenue development commission did not include people from the community. City Hall, they argued, should create a preservation commission, tasked with ensuring that residents and community institutions were not displaced or dislocated. The commission would also be responsible for, "monitoring all public money properly and placing the process of revitalization and rehabilitation in the hands of the people where it properly belongs."[648]

Moffet and Lindsay also raised concerns that challenged the premise of the revitalization as described by City Hall, CAP, and the AARC. They argued, "Despite its anti-displacement rhetoric and the commitment to preserve some neighborhood institutions, the UDC emphasis on

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[647] Noran Moffett NPU M-Chairperson and Inez Lindsay, Secretary, Comments on MLK Jr. Historic Site Auburn Avenue and Adjacent Areas Development Program, July 2, 1986.

[648] Ibid.

90% private funding is extremely problematic."[649] They continued, contending, "No black community that we are aware of has ever ended its underdevelopment and associate problems through a private enterprise approach. Indeed, it has been historically demonstrated that free enterprise [has] contributed to the problems of our communities."[650] They also outlined a clear distinction between development and revitalization. What the plan proposed was development, a process that had "no real commitment (because there are no real dollars) to the population that is presently there."[651] Development entailed creating businesses and institutions that were not created with the "condition and status of present community folk and businesses" in mind. It further necessitated created an environment that would draw middle and upper middle income back to the inner city. "The UDC plan," they concluded, "is just a problem for re-gentrification, plain and simple."[652]

A revitalization plan, in contrast, would ensure that community residents benefited from economic development in concrete ways. The plan would include housing rehabilitation program and "a more serious commitment to job creation in our area beyond assumed indirect processes and trickle-down promises." It would consider the youth in the area, which the UDC's plan failed to mention at all. "A revitalization plan for the Sweet Auburn area," Moffet and Lindsay wrote, "must include the youth of the area in order to build a new generation of Black Atlantans well rooted in community values."[653] They also made rather specific demands from revitalization

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[649] Ibid.

[650] Noran Moffett NPU M-Chairperson and Inez Lindsay, Secretary, Comments on MLK Jr. Historic Site Auburn Avenue and Adjacent Areas Development Program, July 2, 1986.

[651] Ibid.

[652] Ibid.

[653] Ibid.

plan that included: a drug store, a teen club that was non-alcoholic and drug-free," a movie theater, and a restaurant that would "entice those of middle income in the area to come and join the new solidarity movement that is being created."[654] They also called for the renovation of the Herndon Building, as well as the Odd Fellows Auditorium and the Rucker Building for the purpose of community usage. The auditorium, they contended, "could become a major black cultural institution for the entire region."[655] Moffet and Lindsay boldly concluded, "We can survive without tourism and regentrification."[656] However, true revitalization, they contended, would depend on the commitment of the city and the black middle class.

A year after UDC proposal, the city had yet to show the commitment to Auburn Avenue's economic development that its residents and business owners had anticipated. While Marvin Arrington declared that the revitalization of Auburn was one his "top priorities," Andrew Young and the city's economic and political leadership had shifted their focus to other projects, most notably redeveloping Underground Atlanta. Young hoped the revitalization of the subterranean entertainment plaza would finally turn Atlanta into the twenty-four-hour nightlife center Young dreamed it could be.[657] The city and private investors invested close to a $100

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[654] Ibid.

[655] Noran Moffett NPU M-Chairperson and Inez Lindsay, Secretary, Comments on MLK Jr. Historic Site Auburn Avenue and Adjacent Areas Development Program, July 2, 1986.

[656] Ibid.

[657] Young initially struggled to get funding for the project, but eventually funded the venture with a $10 million HUD grant and $85 million in municipal bonds purchased by the cities four largest banks. The project divided the black political class. Marvin Arrington contended the new Underground would be "the economic piece that revitalizes downtown." Ira Jackson, finance chair on the city council, argued that the project was doomed to fail. The renovation was very unpopular among residents, particularly black residents. The renovated complex opened in 1989. Despite the enthusiasm of Young and many in the black political class, Underground Atlanta continued to be a financial failure. See Katheryn Hayes, "City to Sell Bonds to Finance Underground," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 5, 1984, 2; [657] "City Approves $130 Million for Underground," *Atlanta Daily*, Aug 08, 1985, 1; Katheryn Hayes, "Ira Jackson blasts Underground project," *Atlanta Constitution*, February 3, 1984, 17-A; "85 Million Dollar Bond Closed for

million in the complex, much to the disapproval of the city's residents and, more surprisingly many within the black political class. Mayor Young had a great deal on the line in securing the economic success of Underground Atlanta, so unsurprisingly Auburn Avenue largely fell off his radar.

Nonetheless, several other members of the black political class, including city council president Marvin Arrington, newly elected congressman John Lewis, and rising political stars Bill Campbell and Michael Lomax, continued efforts redevelop Sweet Auburn. Upon his re-election of city council president in the fall of 1986, Arrington stated, "I promise to you as president of the City Council . . . that by June 1, 1987, we're going to have something started on Auburn Avenue."[658] By the summer of 1987, Arrington and Campbell had initiated a campaign to secure Auburn Avenue's designation as a historic main street in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Project. But the project could not go forward without the support of the neighborhood's residents. Campbell, who represented Sweet Auburn on the city council, contended, "I support the Main Street program. But I'm not going to do anything until we have the merchants and the residents properly informed, and I plan to do that immediately."[659] The Main Street Project proposal that would eventually be presented before the city council included specific stipulations for citizen involvement in the planning process.

While Auburn Avenue residents supported the Main Street Project, they were more resistant to other development plans. In 1988, a proposal to expand the historic preservation area

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Underground," *Atlanta Daily World,* Aug 17, 1986, 1; "Public Cites Disapproval of Underground Project." *Atlanta Daily World,* Apr 08, 1986. 1

[658] Donna Williams, "Arrington Urges Black Leaders to Back Sweet Auburn Project," *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution,* November 6, 1986, D1.

[659]Maria Saporta, "Main Street' Takes Look At Auburn," *The Atlanta Journal and the Atlanta Constitution,* May 9, 1987, B1.

from 52.5 acres to 127 acres sparked intense debates. The proposal had the support of black political leaders and small business owners. Arrington explained, “By expanding the area considered for historic preservation, the number of businesses which will be eligible for federal assistance will increased and those of us who remember the areas at their best may be assured the original character will be retained.”[660] Bill Campbell framed the bill as a matter of survival for the area’s small businesses. He contended, “If we don't do something fairly soon, the small businesses will be driven out of Auburn Avenue by land speculators, and this ordinance is an attempt to halt that practice."[661] Local business leader Benny Smith endorsed the proposal, conceding, “The proposed change would help the little man.”[662] Neighborhood residents held rather different views about the proposal. They foresaw the expansion of the King Historic Site as a harbinger of displacement and dislocation of the area’s residents. The president of the Neighborhood Planning Unit contended, “Our experience and our understanding indicate that historic conservation and preservation will not stop displacement of area residents and businesses.”[663] Yet, before the controversy over the expansion of the preservation district could be resolved, a much more contentious dispute broke out of over the demolition of a black-owned motel.

In January 1988, Fulton County Commissioner Michael Lomax announced plans to construct a library and black history research center on the site of the Palamont Motor Lodge. Fulton County had applied for almost $3 million in state funding for the demolition of the motel

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[660] Peter Scott Editor. "Reaction mixed over expanded King historical district," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution,* June 25, 1987, E/4.

[661] Ibid.

[662] Ibid.

[663] Ibid.

and the construction of the library. The motel, located at the intersection of Auburn and Piedmont Avenues, was rundown and had a reputation as a hideout for crack cocaine users and dealers as well as pimps and prostitutes. Between 1984 and 1987, it was also the site of at least one homicide, one rape, five assaults, ten robberies, and numerous burglaries, drug transactions, and other smaller crimes. Lomax argued in defense of tearing down the structure, “That piece of real estate is a seedy, crime-infested motel which is not of any historic significance.”[664] He contended that its demolition in favor of library would benefit the revitalization process by removing a blight on the area and replacing it with a site that would be utilized by students, residents, and researchers from around the country.

However, the hotel owners, Alice Bell and her son J.H. Bell, defended their motel and challenged Fulton County’s attempts to acquire the property. Bell argued that the lodge was indeed historic and claimed that they wanted to develop the motel into a “historic reminder of times when it served traveling blacks who could not find accommodations elsewhere.”[665] The Bells quickly garnered the support of the Auburn Avenue Merchants Association, Hosea Williams, and state representatives Billy McKinney and Nan Orrock, who threatened to “kill” the $2.9 million in funding in the Georgia Assembly. They claimed that the research library would threaten twelve black businesses in the area and would cost its residents fifty jobs.[666] They further argued that the library represented yet another initiative in which its proponent did not even try to gain approval from the Auburn Avenue community. As Lomax struggled to purchase

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[664] Gary Hendricks, "Lomax's plan for `Sweet Auburn' library spurs opposition from property - owners," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, January 28, 1988, B/4.

[665] Gary Hendricks, "Fulton pressing for Auburn library plan," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, February 03, 1988, C/1.

[666] Gary Hendricks, "Lomax to ask that two more library sites be considered," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, February 18, 1988, C/8.

the land, the Bells launched a campaign to recall Lomax from his commissioner position. J.H. Bell contended that Lomax was "out of control, and he needs to be corralled."[667] By mid-February Hosea Williams led a march of about thirty people from the motel to the Fulton County Court. Protestors held signs reading, "Save Black Economy, We Only Have Sweet Auburn Avenue," and "Fulton County Commission Destroying Sweet Auburn Avenue."[668] The march and the recall campaign, state representative Nan Orrock argued, sent a message "that people live and do business here, they are not going to have this rammed down their throats."[669] Lomax quickly gave into the pressure and agreed to find an alternative site for the library. The county settled on a site one block down, on the corner of Auburn Avenue and Courtland Street, where the Auburn Avenue Research Library stands today.

Observers thought the Sweet Auburn business owners were irrational—after all, what kind of person protests a library to save a veritable crack house? Furthermore, many thought residents were sabotaging the area's revival. *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* editor Jeff Dickerson claimed that they passed up a "gleaming new library in the place of seedy motel."[670] Dickerson pointed to the tension undergirded Auburn Avenue's revitalization efforts for over the previous two decades. While Auburn Avenue's business owners wanted to protect black businesses by any means necessary, the city's black governing coalition sought to encourage property development even if that meant displacing residents and businesses. "What'll it be?"

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[667] Michelle Hiskey, "Auburn Avenue residents seek recall of Lomax over proposed library site," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, February 16, 1988, C/6.

[668] "Photo Standalone 1 – Protestors March Against Auburn Library," *Atlanta Daily World*, Feb 21, 1988, 1.

[669] Ibid.

[670] Jeff Dickerson, "Those unwilling to change could veto Auburn project," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, May 11, 1988, A/14.

Dickerson inquired in an editorial, “A new and improved Auburn that $20 million in loan support would likely bring about? Or an Auburn half new with $20 million in investments, and half old with mom-and-pop storefronts remaining? Or, an Auburn Avenue that builds from the ground up—giving current merchants a chance to "gentrify" along with the rest of the avenue?”[671] The last option, he surmised, would be best. At some point, Dickerson and other observers suggested, Sweet Auburn’s merchants could no longer stand in the way of development; the city’s black leadership would have to make the tough decisions for them.

Dickerson’s depiction of the Palamont supporters seemed to confirm many observers’ suspicions about why, after almost twenty-five years of planning for its revitalization, Auburn Avenue was still plagued by poverty, crime, and disrepair. The residents not only fostered a culture that encouraged delinquency, drug use, and broken families, among other disorders, they seemingly refused to take the steps needed to facilitate positive change. Those protesting the construction of the Auburn Avenue library, it appeared, did not want development, even when given the opportunity by other black Atlantans. The residents, then, were ostensibly to blame for Auburn Avenue’s failure to revitalize. The Palamont protest thus fight neatly into narratives about the supposed lack of personal responsibility that characterized poor, minority neighborhoods. Members of the black political class did little to challenge such depictions.

Yet, what Dickerson missed in his analysis was the fight over the Palamont and other controversial revitalization initiatives that had preceded it were not about whether Sweet Auburn should be redeveloped or not. Rather the dispute illustrated the competing conceptions concerning economic development and indeed black capitalism that existed among black Atlantans. On its surface, the rift between Lomax and the Sweet Auburn merchants appears to be

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[671] Jeff Dickerson, "Those unwilling to change could veto Auburn project."

a contest between the encroaching power of the state and local owners seeking to defend private enterprise. And it was partly so. However, Lomax and the public government that he represented were not simply seeking to expand the reach of the public sector by building a library. Rather than they were making a public investment in a cultural institution that would serve as an inducement for future investment by private developers. Furthermore, by ridding the area of a den of crime and disorder and replacing it with a respectable library, they could foster the type of environment necessary for capital development. Development, then, necessitated the erasure of black enterprises that did not support the conditions needed for development. While the Palamont Motor Lodge was a rather clear example of a site that detracted from development potential, Lomax's action suggested any seemingly unprofitable or undesirable enterprise could possibly be condemned, using eminent domain or other financial mechanisms used to swindle black folks out of their properties. Thus, the merchants of Sweet Auburn stood together to defend the Palamont and their own enterprises from the destructive imperatives of capital development. In doing so, they suggest a vision of development that incorporated and built upon existing black institutions rather than erasing them.

Lomax and the business owners also had competing conceptions of black enterprise. Sweet Auburn's business owners wanted to maintain an older idea of black enterprise that was community-based and steeped in conceptions of racial pride, self-help, and autonomy. They desired a return of Auburn Avenue in its golden age, a Sweet Auburn that black Atlantans owned. The members of the black governing coalition conceived of enterprise as a venture that privileged competition over community control and pragmatic efficiency over racial pride. While they believed in providing opportunities for black Atlantans to enter the game, they also felt people were responsible for themselves once in. They had reimagined black capitalism and thus

fostered another understanding of development and black enterprise that reflected the imperatives of their political and economic positions at the dawn of the 1990s.

The case of the Palamont Motor Lodge, however, obscures one thing that bound together members of the black political class and the small entrepreneurs: a commitment to their investments from criminal elements. In his defense of the Palamont despite its reputation, J.H. Bell explained, “Crime intrudes on property.”[672] He could do nothing more than join other Auburn Avenue merchants in demanding more police protection and stricter enforcement of laws against prostitution, the sale of drugs, and other ubiquitous crimes in the area. Auburn Avenue business owners had been calling for a mini-precinct in the area since the early 1980s. When Councilman Bill Campbell announced that the sub precinct would finally be opened in the Butler Street YMCA, the merchants, true to form, protested the decision as it would displace a couple of shop owners. Bennie Smith contended, “we support having a precinct in the area 100 percent but we did not want to displace any merchants who did want to give up their businesses, as president of the Merchants Association, I think that is important.”[673] He added, “I also think there are many other prime sites located directly on Auburn Avenue that should be considered and would be a better deterrent to crime.”[674] Portia Scott, chairwoman of the King Historic Site Advisory Commission, claimed that putting the precinct on Auburn would Campbell “put the police “right on top of the vice that influences some of the activity on Auburn.”[675] Ultimately, Campbell agreed to the alternative location suggested by the merchants’ association, the corner

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[672] Gary Hendricks "Lomax's plan for `Sweet Auburn' library spurs opposition from property - owners," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, January 28, 1988, B/4.

[673] "Council Committee Approves YMCA Property for Auburn Ave. Area Police Precinct," *Atlanta Daily World,* Jun 28, 1988, 1.

[674] Ibid.

[675] Ibid.

of Auburn and Bell. In April 1992, the mini-precinct finally opened, with the merchants and governing coalition representatives cutting the ribbon together. "It means the beginning of new life," said A. Moses White, who replaced Bennie Smith as the president of the Auburn Avenue Merchants Association. "People will see the avenue is not the dim, dingy, crime-infested area they've heard about."[676]

Despite their diverging understandings of black enterprise and economic development, the black governing coalition and Auburn Avenue merchants agreed that more order and more police were essential for the benefit of better Auburn. The consequences of their collusion were devastating. Together, they legitimated the hyper-policing of the Sweet Auburn district and other parts of the city were capital was under threat. Notions of security, capital, and development converged to create a regime that sought discipline disorderly black population and ultimately furthered the criminalization of those most vulnerable to the changing economy.

[676] Kathy Scruggs, "Auburn Avenue precinct reopening - Brings back memories of '48," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, April 10, 1992, D/2.

Epilogue
The First New Democrats

In February 1987, Atlanta began preparing for one of the largest and most prominent events in the city's history. That month, the Democratic National Convention site selection committee chose Atlanta to host the 1988 meeting. Soon after the pronouncement, city leaders began the work to bring Atlanta, and in particular its downtown tourism district, to the standards expected of a great international city. While the city's crime issue had once been its source of international attention, the Democratic National Convention would provide an opportunity to show the world an Atlanta redeemed from its reputation as a crime capital.

Securing the convention was a feat in itself. Talk of the possibility of hosting one of the 1988 conventions began in early 1985, more than three years before the election year. State Democratic Party leaders broached the idea with leaders in City Hall and the Chamber of Commerce, who began to organize an official bid for the convention.[677] A year later, three Atlantans, including Valerie Jackson, the wife of Maynard Jackson, were appointed to the DNC's site selection committee. With that, the fight for the convention truly commenced, with cities such as Houston, Dallas, New Orleans, New York, and Philadelphia vying for the opportunity to host.[678]

In July 1986, a group of city representatives delivered their carefully constructed pitch to the selection committee. Leslie Breelan, a representative from the Chamber of Commerce, boasted of Atlanta's strength as a convention capital, pointing to the number of hotels, the ease of access to and from the airport via the rail system, and the convenience of the three major

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[677] Monte Plott, "Atlanta is campaigning for political conventions; It's early, but leaders are serious about," The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution, February 17, 1985, C/1.

[678] Billy Mallard, "3 Georgians on convention committee; Will help choose site for '88 Democratic gathering," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, March 5, 1986, A/10.

interstates that connected Atlanta to other major Southern cities. [679] While the city's largest auditorium, located in the Omni, did not hold 20,000 people, as requested by the DNC, the city agreed to expand the auditorium to fit nearly that amount.[680] The representatives also sought to pitch Atlanta as the city most representative of the party's glorious past and bright future. They balanced Georgia's strong Democratic tradition with appeals to Atlanta's Sunbelt modernity. Thus, rather than alluding to segregationist icons Richard Russell and Herman Talmadge, they spoke of Franklin Roosevelt's "Little White House" in Warm Springs and the nation's first triple-loop rollercoaster located at Six Flags Over Georgia.[681] Atlanta, they argued, represented the modern Democratic Party—diverse and forward thinking. Bill Shipp of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* concurred, arguing, "Georgia's Democratic Party is a microcosm of what the national party ought to be, if it hopes to win another presidential election. Democrats in Georgia range from Gov. Joe Frank Harris, House Speaker Tom Murphy and Sen. Sam Nunn to Mayor Andrew Young and State Sen. Julian Bond. That model of diversity ought to make a positive impression on the convention-site seekers."[682]

By 1987 the fight to host the 1988 Democratic National Convention was between two Sunbelt capitals—Atlanta and Houston. Each city lobbied the committee, with city leaders such as Maynard Jackson and Representative Tom Murphy making frequent calls to friends on the selection committee. Atlanta continued to sell its distinct Southernness, with Georgia state

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[679] Greg McDonald, "Atlantans make 'very impressive' pitch for convention; Democrats say city may be in top 5 contenders," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, July 19, 1986, B/2.

[680] Scott Shepard, "Democrats warming up to Atlanta; Omni changes boost city's convention bid," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, December 12, 1986, A/1.

[681] Greg McDonald, "Atlantans make `very impressive' pitch for convention; Democrats say city may be in top 5 contenders."

[682] Ibid.

representative Lindsay Thomas arguing, "I've been telling people that Houston is not the South like Atlanta is the South."[683] If the party did want to shift its focus away from the Northern liberals of the previous two elections and back to the moderate Southern Democrats, then Atlanta, home to a biracial Democratic Party establishment, would be the most obvious choice. To sweeten the deal, Georgia Governor Joe Frank Harris, Fulton County Commissioner Michael Lomax, and Atlanta mayor Andrew Young each committed to spending up to $15 million to host the event.[684] The commitment from the city, county, and state was enough to sway the vote in favor of Atlanta. On February 10, 1987, the Democratic National Convention selection committee approved unanimously to grant the convention to Atlanta over Houston.[685] The city began planning for the big event the following day.

The first area of concern for the convention planners was the state of downtown. While Atlanta had hosted many large national and international meetings before, the Democratic National Convention would put the city's convention and tourism economy in the international spotlight. The convention provided the city's business leaders with an opportunity to once again "clean up" the downtown district to present Atlanta's best face to the world. Most of their improvements were cosmetic. In the year leading up to the convention, the city fixed cracked sidewalks and potholes, planted flowers, and groomed parks in the downtown area.[686] They also worked to prepare those in the hotel and service industries for the influx of visitors. Everybody

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[683] Kevin Sack, "Atlanta-Houston convention race still wide open, poll says," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, February 1, 1987, B/3.

[684] Kevin Sack, "Convention tab as high as $15 million," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, February 7, 1987, A/20

[685] Kevin Sack Staff Writer. "DEMOCRATS PICK ATLANTA, Convention site panel selects city over Houston in 44-13 vote," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, February 10, 1987, A/1.

[686] Jim Galloway, "International Boulevard facelift an urgent pre-convention project," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, March 2, 1987, E/1.

from the hotel maids to city bus drivers were advised to present southern hospitality to its extreme. The city's taxi fleet, a source of complaint among both residents and visitors, were upgraded and ready to guide delegates and journalists around the city.[687]

Nonetheless, downtown business leaders failed in their most aggressive and controversial downtown clean up strategy: the removal of the homeless. In the aftermath of Reagan era cuts to mental health services, drug rehabilitation centers, and other social services, the numbers of homeless people living on the streets of Atlanta rapidly increased.[688] CAP and others in the downtown business coalition had long tried to remove the homeless and other "street people" from the central business and convention district by criminalizing public urination, loitering, and sleeping on sidewalks. Yet, in preparing for the convention, they escalated their efforts. In 1986, the year Atlanta won the convention bid, CAP launched Central Atlanta Study II (CASII). Unlike the previous study from 1971, CASII focused primarily on the downtown environment and improving so-called "quality of life" in the center of the city. The homeless were a primary target. Categorizing homelessness as a public safety issue, the group's Public Safety Task Force proposed the creation of a downtown policing zone where laws against panhandling, public urination, loitering and disorderly conduct would be strictly enforced.[689] While the initial area included only the central business district, other areas such as the downtown hotel district, Sweet Auburn, Midtown, and the Piedmont Park area were also included as possible zones of zero-

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[687] Durwood Calister, "Convention of 1988 can teach important lessons," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, March 12, 1987, A/18.

[688] See Charles G. Steffen, "The Corporate Campaign against Homelessness: Class Power and Urban Governance in Neoliberal Atlanta, 1973–1988," *Journal of Social History* 46, no. 1 (2012): 170-196.

[689] Steffen, 185

tolerance policing.[690] Soon, rumors about the proposed "vagrant-free zone" became publicized. Homelessness organizations and civil liberties advocates immediately criticized the proposal. CAP quickly dropped the idea and no such "vagrant-free" or "safeguard" zones were established.[691] At least, not officially.

Though city leaders failed to expand police power before the convention, they were able to increase the number of law enforcement that would be present during the convention. In their original bid, the Atlanta committee promised a minimum of 1,400 Atlanta police officers, 850 state troopers, and 10,000 members of the Georgia National guard, a force much larger than the DNC required.[692] Atlanta police chief, Morris Redding, assured that the police department would be completely re-organized during the convention. He contended that two-thirds of the Atlanta police force would be reserved for 24-hour protection of the convention area. These officers would be joined by private security guards, Secret Service agents, and officers from Cobb, DeKalb, and Fulton counties.[693] As the convention approached, three 18-man prison riot squads were also added to the mix. Redding appointed Deputy Police Chief Willie J. Taylor to head convention security. Taylor, who graduated from Morehouse two years after Maynard Jackson, had previously served on the THOR team and headed the city's SWAT team in addition to

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[690] Fran Hesser, "Expanded `safeguard zone'; proposed to include Midtown, MLK Center area," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, March 25, 1987, A/9.

[691] Ibid.

[692] Jim Galloway, "City pledged the maximum in convention security," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, February 15, 1987, B/1.

[693] Ibid.

assisting on the missing and murdered children task force.[694] The experienced officer was entrusted to ensure that the city avoided any reprise of the 1968 Chicago convention.[695]

After months of beefing up security and sprucing up downtown, the Democratic National Convention kicked off on July 18, 1988. In addition to the thousands of journalists, delegates, and leading Democratic Party figures, a veritable "who's who" of black political leaders descended on Atlanta. In attendance were Rosa Parks, Virginia lieutenant governor Douglas Wilder, Newark mayor Sharpe James, former congresswoman Barbara Jordan, Chicago mayor Eugene Sawyer, and a host of other black political and civil rights leaders from around the country. Tennessee congressman Harold E. Ford surmised, "Where else can you find this many top black elected officials and other leaders all convened in one place? At least 80 percent of black power is in Atlanta this week."[696] The city's black political leadership treated the guests to lunches, brunches, cocktail hours, banquets, and galas throughout the weekend. Maynard Jackson kicked off his campaign for a third mayoral term with a luxury "Midnight Train to Georgia" fundraiser which featured celebrity conductors Hank Aaron and Peabo Bryson on a 20-car passenger train.[697]

The most anticipated black politician at the convention, however, was Jesse Jackson. Though most of the other contenders for the nomination had dropped out by the convention, Jackson remained as the main challenger to frontrunner Massachusetts governor Michael

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[694] Larry Copeland, "Lawman `on guard' for convention; Deputy police chief to head security when Demos arrive in '88." *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, March 28, 1987, B/1

[695] Jim Galloway, "Prison riot teams to be on hand for convention," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, April 20, 1988, A/16.

[696] "Democratic National Convention Highlights," *Ebony,* October 1988, 160.

[697] Ibid.

Dukakis. Jackson had matured politically since his 1984 campaign and was able to fashion a multi-ethnic "Rainbow Coalition" with his populist vision. Jackson provided a clear progressive alternative to the liberal Dukakis platform. He advocated universal healthcare, an end to the war on drugs, free community college, reparations for descendants of enslaved people, and an end to the Reagan-era tax cuts. Jackson's success during the primary season surprised many observers. He ultimately won seven primaries and four caucuses, including several Deep South states on the newly-created Super Tuesday. By July, he had garnered 6.6 million votes, nearly one-third from white voters.[698] Though many called for Jackson to cede the nomination to Dukakis by the start of the convention, Jackson and his many supporters showed up in full force in Atlanta.

By the time Jackson arrived at the convention, he had gained endorsements from a number of prominent black political officials. However, these endorsements were not inevitable. Urban political officials such as Coleman Young in Detroit and Atlantans, John Lewis, Michael Lomax, Maynard Jackson, and Andrew Young were initially hesitant to endorse Jackson. Several had refused to endorse Jackson during his 1984 campaign. Indeed, hundreds of Jackson supporters had booed Andrew Young as he gave a speech endorsing Walter Mondale at the 1984 Democratic National Convention in San Francisco. Reportedly, Young's wife, Jean, fled the convention hall in tears and his press aide passed out from the second-hand humiliation.[699] Young played coy as Atlanta prepared for the convention, claiming he had a duty to stay neutral as mayor of the convention city. However, insiders noted that he secretly supported Dukakis.[700]

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[698] E.J. Dionne, Jr., "Jackson Share of Votes by Whites Triples in '88," *The New York Times,* June, 13, 1988.

[699] Ibid.

[700] Priscilla Painton, "THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN, Most blacks in Congress back Jackson, but mayors hold off," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, September 26, 1987, A/10

Yet, after Jackson won the Georgia primary and proved himself to be a viable candidate on Super Tuesday, Young, as well as Lewis and Lomax, came around to endorsing Jackson, when they had little to lose politically.[701] They doubted that Jackson would actually win the nomination and ultimately, they were right.

Though Jesse Jackson lost the nomination, he gave one of the most memorable speeches of the convention. Often called the "Common Ground" speech, Jackson wove together personal narrative, the history of the civil right struggle, and blistering critiques of the Reagan administration in his call for unity across the lines of race, gender, sexuality, ability, and nationality. He demanded that the Democratic Party be the party of radical inclusivity, contending, "Common good is finding commitment to new priorities to expansion and inclusion. A commitment to expanded participation in the Democratic Party at every level. A commitment to a shared national campaign strategy and involvement at every level."[702] Calling for affordable health care, expanded welfare, divestment from apartheid South Africa, funding for AIDS research, equal rights for women, and fairer wages, Jackson posited a vision of the New Democratic Party that was committed to economic justice, human rights, and equity for all citizens. As Jackson's supporters watched him leave the stage with his family, they perhaps hoped that the speech was not the end of Jackson's progressive vision but rather the beginning of a transformation of the Democratic Party.

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[701] Priscilla Painton, "DECISION '88, Jackson's Unlikely Odyssey; His Campaign Stunned Politicians, Transformed America's Attitudes About Race and Justice," *The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution*, July 19, 1988, C/1

[702] Jesse Jackson, Address at 1988 Democratic National Convention, July 20, 1988, www.amistadresource.org/documents/document_09_02_020_jackson.pdf.

Lost of the melee of Jackson's historic campaign and celebrated address was the dreadful speech of Arkansas governor Bill Clinton. Clinton was handpicked by Dukakis to give the nominating speech, a spot often reserved for rising stars in the party. From the moment Clinton began his turgidly long 33-minute speech, he was interrupted by boos and chants from Jackson supporters in the crowd. When he closed up the speech by stating "in conclusion," many in the crowd began to cheer. Observers speculated that the speech spelled the end of Clinton's shot at the big league. Even an Arkansas-based newspaper contended, "Gov. Bill Clinton's big national moment his prime-time speech Wednesday night in nomination of Michael Dukakis was an unmitigated disaster."[703] It is perhaps surprising then that Clinton's star continued to rise while Jackson's was on the decline. Ultimately, it was not Jackson's Rainbow Coalition or Dukakis's New Deal liberalism, but rather Bill Clinton and his New Democrat politics that represented the future of the party.

The battle between Dukakis and Jackson—between the party's New Deal and New Politics traditions—at the 1988 Democratic National Convention belied a third sector gaining prominence in the party.[704] The New Democrats, as many among their number identified themselves, began to coalesce as a constituency within the national party apparatus shortly after the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. A group of moderate House Democrats formed the

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[703] Steve Kornacki, "When Bill Clinton Died on Stage," *Salon,* July 30, 2012, https,//www.salon.com/2012/07/30/when_bill_clinton_died_on_stage.

[704] Michael Dukakis, then governor of Massachusetts, represented New Deal liberalism in the 1988 primaries. This tradition "advocated the power of the national state to extend pluralism to previously marginalized groups and integrate them into the national economy and society." New Politics, which emerged from a loose coalition of New Left, civil rights, women's rights, and other progressive organizations in the late 1960s, "directly [challenged] the tenets of New Deal liberalism by fully accepting new and alternative lifestyles and values" and "[questioned] the merits of economic growth on the ground that it threatened the quality of life." Kenneth Baer argues that these were the two primary constituencies within the Democratic National Committee in the 1970s and 1980s. See Kenneth S. Baer, 12-19.

Committee on Party Effectiveness in 1982 and worked on a platform that would push the Democratic Party back to the center. In a pamphlet called *Rebuilding the Road to Opportunity,* they wrote, "In these papers, we renew our commitment to the fundamental principles of the Democratic Party—to equal opportunity, to economic growth and full employment, and to strong national defense."[705] They contended that elected officials needed to re-enter party affairs because they, more so than party officials, had a finger on the pulse of the American electorate. Congressmen, senators, governors, and mayors, they argued, would create party platforms that were "more mainstream" and "more attractive" to the general electorate."[706]

Following Walter Mondale's historic defeat in 1984, several moderate Democrats, including Southerners Al Gore, Jr. of Tennessee, Gillis Long of Louisiana, and Sam Nunn of Georgia, formed the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC). The purpose of the DLC was to advocate for a moderate agenda in national, state, and local party apparatuses as well as to support moderate candidates at all levels of government. Like the Committee on Party Effectiveness, the DLC argued that the Democratic Party had lost touch with the needs of Middle America. They sought to re-center what they identified as the core values of the Democratic Party. Bill Clinton later contended that the five central beliefs of the DLC were:

> Andrew Jackson's credo of opportunity for all and special privileges for none; the basic American values of work, family, freedom and responsibility, faith, tolerance; John Kennedy's ethic of mutual responsibility, asking citizens to give something back to their country; the advancement of democratic and humanitarian values around the world, and prosperity and upward mobility at home; and Franklin Roosevelt's commitment to

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[705] As quoted in Kenneth S. Baer, *Reinventing Democrats: The Politics of Liberalism from Reagan to Clinton* (Lawrence, KS University Press of Kansas, 2000), 43.

[706] As quoted in Baer, 47.

innovation, to modernizing government for the information age and encouraging people by giving them the tools to make the most of their own lives.[707]

They worked to shift the party's focus away from hot button issues such as abortion rights, affirmative action, and other policies of "special interest groups" and back toward policies that benefited the "average American." Principally, the DLC sought to recapture the party's public philosophy from the New Politics liberals, represented most prominently by Jesse Jackson and his Rainbow Coalition.

In his 1992 presidential campaign, Bill Clinton made the clearest articulation of the New Democrat agenda to date. In *Putting People First: How We Can All Change America,* Clinton laid out the three guiding themes of New Democrat policies: opportunity, community, and responsibility. These concepts shaped how Clinton articulated his proposed policies concerning a number of issues including civil rights, welfare, the environment, foreign policy, health care, and education. In a section on cities, for example, Clinton structured his proposals around the three themes and contended, "We can't rebuild our urban communities with handouts alone—we need a massive expansion of *opportunity*" and "To restore our cities, we must create a new partnership committed to excellence and *community* service." [708] He further argued, "We must recognize that no matter how hard we work to make the federal/municipal partnership a success, we will make no progress unless individuals take *responsibility* for their own lives, working tirelessly to overcome challenges and solve problems in their families and communities [emphasis added]."[709] Accepting the party's nomination at the 1992 Democratic National Convention in

[707] As quoted in Daryl A. Carter, *Brother Bill: President Clinton and the Politics of Race and Class* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2016), 27-28.

[708] Bill Clinton and Albert Gore. *Putting People First: How We Can All Change America*, 54.

[709] Clinton, 54

New York City, Clinton promised a “new covenant,” which he described as “a new choice based on old values.” He argued, “We offer opportunity. We demand responsibility. We will rebuild an American community again. The choice we offer is not conservative or liberal. In many ways it’s not even Republican or Democratic. It’s different. It’s new. And it will work.”[710]

Many from the New Politics tradition, particularly African Americans were suspicious of Clinton and the New Democrats’ evocation of so-called traditional American values. Unsurprisingly, Jesse Jackson was one of the most vocal critics of the New Democrat message. He derided the DLC as “Democrats for the Leadership Class” and argued, “the shadow of Ronald Reagan hovers over the Democratic Party.”[711] He criticized the DLC for its lack of diversity, remarking that they were “sending a clear signal by traveling around the country as a group of all-whites.”[712] But the DLC indeed had attracted black members including Virginia governor Douglas Wilder, Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, Texas congresswomen Barbara Jordan, and Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke. Atlantans John Lewis, Andrew Young, Michael Lomax, Vernon Jordan, and Maynard Jackson were among the most active black members of the council.[713] Through their association with DLC leader Sam Nunn, Georgia’s black Democrats developed close professional and personal relationships with the DLC leadership, especially Bill Clinton.

Scholars such as Daryl A. Carter have argued that the black Democrats who supported the New Democrat agenda were members of a “new civil rights leadership” who were

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[710] Bill Clinton, “New Covenant,” Democratic National Convention, July 16, 1992, in *Putting People First: How We Can All Change America.*

[711] Carter, 44.

[712] Ibid., 45.

[713] Ibid., 40.

supposedly more "pragmatic and concerned with the issues of the new middle and upper class blacks, such as higher educational access, higher property values, occupational achievement, and social mobility."[714] Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor describes black Democrats' adoption of the New Democrat agenda as "complicity," which, she argues, "is the price of admission into the ranks of the political establishment."[715] In both critiques, the principles of the New Democrat agenda were portrayed as inorganic to the black political tradition, which according to Carter concerned the issues of the black working class and poor, and according to Taylor challenged the political mainstream. Yet, as the governing of urban black Democrats in Atlanta reveals, the New Democrat agenda was not unprecedented in black politics. In fact, the example of Atlanta illustrates quite the opposite.

The history of black politics in 1970s and 1980s Atlanta illustrates that what would come to be called New Democrat politics was already practiced among urban black Democrats. Many of the principal tenets of the New Democrat politics were central in the black liberal reform tradition. The principles of equal opportunity, personal responsibility, and community had been integral to the black liberal tradition since the late nineteenth century, as were free enterprise and family values. These were the very principles driving the black urban governing agenda.

These principles were particularly significant in shaping how black urban Democrats governed around the issue of crime. For instance, a commitment to equal protection, the flipside to equal opportunity, undergirded the procedural reforms of the criminal justice system during Maynard Jackson's first term. These reforms were intended to expunge discriminatory aspects of the criminal code in an attempt to create a colorblind though still expansive criminal justice

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[714] Ibid., 108.

[715] Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *From #Blacklivesmatter to Black Liberation* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016), 103.

system. The idea of personal responsibility informed community crime prevention programs, as black Atlantans were charged with taking responsibility for the security of their own property and person. Notions of community shaped how the black governing class responded to the crisis of the missing and murdered youth. Black leaders advocated the rebuilding of black community institutions, such as the black neighborhood and the black family. Figures like Lee Brown promoted the practice of community policing, which was informed by notions of responsibility and community building. And commitments to entrepreneurship and free enterprise informed how black political leaders understood the mechanisms of black collective advancement.

Unsurprisingly then, Bill Clinton's 1992 crime platform looked as though it could have been written by Maynard Jackson or Lee Brown. Clinton intended to "fight crime by putting 100,000 new police officers on the streets." He also sought to expand community policing and to "empower" public housing residents "to organize themselves to eliminate drugs and weapons from public housing."[716] During his campaign announcement speech on the steps of the Little Rock courthouse, he framed crime control in the language of opportunity, contending, "Opportunity for all means make our cities and streets safe from crime and drugs. Across America, cities are banding together to take their streets and neighborhoods back. In a Clinton administration, we'll be on their side—with new initiatives like community policing, drug treatment for those who need it, and 'boot camps' for first-time offenders."[717] Gun control was also central to Clinton's war on crime and black Democrats such as Maynard Jackson continued to be among the most prominent advocates of stricter gun laws. While critics have since connected Clinton's policies to the intensification of mass incarceration and the expansion of the

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[716] Clinton, 73.

[717] Clinton, Campaign Announcement speech, in *Putting People First: How We Can All Change America*, 193.

carceral state, the story of crime control in Atlanta suggests that Clinton's policies were perhaps only the nationalization of policies already instated by black Democrats in cities and informed, in part, by the black liberal reform tradition. The history of the 1970s and 1980s urban black political class broadly challenges the common narrative of the New Democrats that have rooted this rightward shift in the Democratic Party either in the policies of Jimmy Carter or the aftermath of the election of Ronald Reagan. This history suggests that urban black Democrats like Maynard Jackson in Atlanta, Tom Bradley in Los Angeles, and Coleman Young were among the first New Democrats.[718]

Like the New Democrats who sought to "offer our people a new choice based on old values," black urban leaders suggested that black Americans respond to the problems of the post-civil rights era by drawing on the traditions and values forged in the crucible of Jim Crow.[719] These traditions had sustained Black America through the worst of times in their history and would maintain them in new moments of crisis. They called for black Americans to revive black enterprise and to restore the tradition of black capitalism. They called for the rebuilding of black social institutions like the Black Church, the black neighborhood, and most significantly, the black family. And they called for the restoration of order in black homes and communities.

As the country entered a new era of financial and social crisis following the 2007-2008 economic recession, black political leaders have once again turned to the black liberal reform tradition. With the interracial wealth gap in the United States continuing to widen, calls for black capitalism and black entrepreneurship have emerged anew. In the Buy Black Movement, which

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[718] Wilbur C. Rich, *Coleman Young and Detroit Politics: From Social Activist to Power Broker* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999); Raphael Sonenshein, *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press), 1993.

[719] Bill Clinton, "A New Covenant," Democratic National Convention, 226

arose alongside the Movement for Black Lives around 2014, activists have called for African Americans to support black economic independence by patronizing only black-owned businesses. Buy Black advocate Dr. Boyce T. Watkins argued, "The racial wealth gap will close when we commit to building. The Black unemployment problem will not be solved until we solve the Black entrepreneurship problem."[720] These activists suggest that African Americans should invest their $1 trillion of "buying power" within the black community rather than allow their money to "leave" the community. Such investment, these activists believe, will expand black economic independence and ultimately increase black political power. These activists, like the advocates of black enterprise in Atlanta in the 1970s, have modernized Booker T. Washington's message to fit the current political and economic landscape.

Likewise, black activists have urged black Americans to mobilize against police brutality and racial inequality by moving their money to black-owned banks. The Bank Black movement began when Atlanta-based rapper and political activist Killer Mike called for black Americans to reinvest in black-owned banks and credit unions. The rapper argued, "We can't go out in the street and start bombing, shooting, and killing. I encourage none of us to engage in acts of violence. I encourage us to take our warfare to financial institutions."[721] During a radio interview on a popular Atlanta hip-hop station, Killer Mike called for one million African Americans to invest $100 in a black-owned bank. He then contended, "Let $100 million move into that. Take

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[720] Denisha McKnight, "Economic Activists Support 'Buy Black' Movement, *The Dallas Examiner,* January 16, 2017, http://dallasexaminer.com/news/2017/jan/16/economic-activists-support-buy-black-movement/

[721] Kyle Hodge, "This Major Star Agrees With Killer Mike's Economic Solution," *VH1 News,* July 9, 2016, http://www.vh1.com/news/271547/killer-mikes-economic-solution/

that $100 million and promise $15,000 to $18,000 loans for black businesses or small homes."[722] Following Killer Mike's invitation, black-owned banks such as Atlanta Citizens Trust and OneUnited Bank, the largest black bank in the country witnessed their numbers of accounts sharply rise.

OneUnited capitalized on the moment by partnering with Killer Mike to create the #bankblack movement on social media. In February 2017, OneUnited debuted a Black Lives Matter debit card intended to symbolize the movement. Though the bank provides no financial contribution to black political organizations through distribution of the cards, OneUnited president Teri Williams stated, "[We hope that] every time everyone pulls out their card, they think about how they're spending their money, how purposefully we can spend our money, and also ... when I hand [the card] to someone, I'm saying to them that black lives *do* matter, that black money *does* matter and that we are an important consumer" [emphasis in original].[723] While critics of the black banking movement such as Mehrsa Baradaran have questioned the efficacy of black banking in the contemporary political economy, the Bank Black and Buy Black movement illustrate that many African Americans continue to turn to black enterprise as a pathway to collective racial advancement.[724]

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[722] Yuki Noguchi, "For Some African Americans Efforts to #BuyBlack Presents Challenges," *NPR: Code Switch,* August 30, 2016, https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2016/08/30/491933320/for-some-african-americans-efforts-to-buyblack-present-challenges

[723] Breanna Edwards, "OneUnited, Black Lives Matter Team Up to Organize Black Spending Power," *The Root,* February 8, 2017, https://www.theroot.com/oneunited-bank-black-lives-matter-team-up-to-organize-

[724] Mehrsa Baradaran argues that though black banks provided important financial services in black communities, they have historically struggled because they were segregated from the larger government-backed banking system. Thus, black banks will not be able to grow into economically viable institutions if they are disconnected from the broader federal banking system. Black communities, she contends, will not be able to grow wealth without significant government intervention akin to the New Deal federal housing programs. See Mehrsa Barandaran, *The Color of Money: Black Banks and the Racial Wealth Gap* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017).

There has also been a renewed focus on the black family, particularly the black father. Throughout his presidency, Barack Obama notably targeted the black father in his critiques of black social and economic issues, often couching his admonitions in the rhetoric of "responsible fatherhood." In a Father's Day speech during his 2008 campaign, Obama asserted, "Too many fathers are AWOL, missing from too many lives and too many homes. They have abandoned their responsibilities. They are acting like boys instead of men. And the foundations of our families are weaker because of it."[725] During his first term, Obama introduced a responsible fatherhood initiative called the Fatherhood, Marriage, and Family Innovation Fund, which intended to "scale up effective fatherhood and family strengthening programs across the country."[726] The fund appropriated $500 million in federal funds to support non-profit and faith-based institutions that provide job training, parenting classes, and marriage strengthening initiatives. Obama contended in a 2010 Father's Day speech, "Now, I can't legislate fatherhood—I can't force anybody to love a child. But what we can do is send a clear message to our fathers that there is no excuse for failing to meet their obligations. What we can do is make it easier for fathers who make responsible choices and harder for those who avoid those choices."[727]

Similarly Obama's My Brothers' Keeper initiative also intended to address the "crisis of fatherlessness" in black communities. Introduced during his second term, the program provides federal and private funds to local businesses, non-profits, and faith-based organizations that

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[725] Julie Bosman, "Obama Sharply Assails Absent Black Fathers," *The New York Times,* June 16, 2008.

[726] Jacquelyn Boggess, "Analysis of the President's Fatherhood, Marriage, and Innovation Fund, *The Center for Family Policy and Practice,* June 7, 2010, 1.

[727] "A Town Hall on Fatherhood," White House, June 19, 2009, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2009/06/19/a-town-hall-fatherhood

connect black and Latino “boys and young men to mentoring, support networks, and skills they need to find a good job or go to college and work their way up into the middle class.”[728] The program also created a network of mentors for young boys of color, who presumably, lack effective male role models at home. Obama stated that he conceived of the initiative in the aftermath of the murder of Trayvon Martin. He announced the program at a press conference with Martin’s parents, Sabrina Fulton and Tracy Martin in attendance. Notably, however, Obama framed the program not in the language of social justice that Black Lives Matter activists were using, but rather in the language of opportunity. In the speech in which he introduced the program, Obama noted disparities between whites and non-whites on measures of wealth, education, employment, and crime rates. Yet, he suggested that these disparities illustrate a lack of opportunity for black and brown boys to advance. Thus, My Brother’s Keeper aimed to “build ladders of opportunity” to give minority youth a “shot at opportunity.”[729] The initiative illustrates that black liberal reformers, a tradition from Barack Obama emerged, continue to advocate for personal responsibility and the strengthening of social and cultural institutions, most notably the family, in the face of deepening structural inequalities.

Lastly, the black liberal commitment to order also remains. In July 2016, Atlanta mayor Kasim Reed shut down a protest that had attempted to block the downtown connector, the heart of Atlanta’s interstate highway system. The demonstrators joined thousands around the country

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[728] “Opportunity for all: President Obama Launches My Brother’s Keeper Initiative to Build Ladders of Opportunity For Boys and Young Men of Color,” The White House, February 27, 2014, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/02/27/fact-sheet-opportunity-all-president-obama-launches-my-brother-s-keeper-

[729] Transcript: Obama announces 'My Brother's Keeper,’ CNN, February 27, 2014, https://www.cnn.com/2014/02/27/politics/obama-brothers-keeper-transcript/index.html

in protesting the murders of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile at the hands of police. In blocking the circulation of people, goods, and services in Atlanta, they sought to force Atlantans to reckon with the reality of racial injustice. Reed, who was flanked by a phalanx of Atlanta police officers, approached the crowd and asserted, "We hear this generation's concern, and the protest tonight, but we're going to have to do it in a King-ian fashion. We're going to have to make sure that people remain safe, and I simply ask that people don't get on the expressways."[730] He then ordered the police to disperse the crowd and restore business as usual in Atlanta.

Reed's statement was remarkable for two reasons. The first, and most obvious, was his revisionist history of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s protest strategies. King, who supported the Children's Crusade in Birmingham during which children were met with fire hoses and police dogs, privileged justice over safety and order. Furthermore, the disruption of traffic, circulation, and commerce was a tactic that King employed in several of his most notable campaigns, including the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Selma to Montgomery marches. The second striking thing about the statement was the inherent irony of the situation of which Reed himself seemed completely unaware. Reed claimed to "hear" the protestors concerns but in his use of police to disperse the crowd and instate order, he sustained the very policing practices that Atlantans and thousands around the country were protesting that night.[731] But, Reed's response to the protest is not surprising when placed in the black liberal reform tradition. Indeed, it was

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[730] Jenelle Taylor, "Mayor Reed Meets with 'Black Lives Matter' Protestors," *Vibe,* July 12, 2016, https://www.vibe.com/2016/07/mayor-kasim-reed-meets-with-black-lives-matter-leaders/

[731] It is also not surprising that Reed's statement was met with praise from conservative Republicans throughout the state of Georgia. See Greg Bluestein, "Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed's protest performance draws praise," *Atlanta Journal Constitution,* July 9, 2016, https://politics.myajc.com/blog/politics/atlanta-mayor-kasim-reed-protest-performance-draws-praise/it81cIEc8NoStZ7wmzFLVL/

his black mayoral predecessors who presided over the expansion of the city's police force's size and power. Reed is part of a lineage of black political leadership in Atlanta that has privileged opportunity over redistribution, order over justice, and the protection of capital above all else.

Yet, working class black Atlantans continue to resist the ideologies and policies of the city's black liberal leadership. Like the students in SNCC, the activists in People United for Freedom, and the mothers in STOP, they continue to challenge the orthodoxies of black liberal reformism. Organizations like the Housing Justice League and Black Lives Matter Atlanta demand greater democratic participation and that Atlanta's city leaders govern according to the interests of working class and poor residents rather than property developers and middle class urban consumers. There are signs that this organizing among the urban working class is bearing fruit. A new group of progressive black urban Democrats, who call for participatory democracy and working class economic empowerment, has been on the rise on the local level. In Atlanta, state senator Vincent Fort ran for mayor on a populist platform, advocating expanded healthcare, a $15-hour minimum wage, and free community college tuition for Atlanta Public School Students.[732] He eventually scored endorsements from Vermont senator Bernie Sanders, former Georgia governor Roy Barnes, and Killer Mike as well as number of progressive organizations.[733] Fort came in a respectable fifth in a crowded mayoral field of thirteen candidates and has been gearing up to launch a campaign for Georgia lieutenant governor.[734]

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[732] "About Vincent," *Vincent for Mayor,* https://vincentfort.com/meet-vincent

[733] "Endorsements," *Vincent for Mayor,* https://vincentfort.com/endorsements

[734] Daniel Marans, "Progressive Firebrand Vincent Fort Falls Short in Atlanta Mayoral Race," *The Huffington Post,* November 8, 2017, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/vincent-fort-atlanta-mayor-fails-to-make-runoff_us; Greg Bluestein, "Vincent Fort Eyes Bid for Georgia Lt. Governor, *Atlanta-Journal Constitution,* January 24, 2018, https://politics.myajc.com/blog/politics-blog/vincent-fort-eyes-bid-for-georgia-lieutenant-governor/sksX13gyHAbdIpq7ZApLcO/

Progressive black Democrats have found more success in other southern cities. In 2017, Jackson, Mississippi elected Chokwe Atar Lumumba, who vowed to make Jackson "the most radical city in the nation" by supporting local cooperatives and community control.[735] That same year, Randall Woodfin won the mayoral election in Birmingham on a platform that advocated early childhood learning centers and a $15-per-hour minimum wage.[736]

If the urban black Democrats of the 1970s and 1980s were a canary in a coalmine for a new sort of Democratic Party politics in the 1990s, then perhaps this new group of urban Democrats presages a progressive shift in the party. As the Democratic Party seeks to regroup in the Age of Trump, party leaders might look to cities, which now even more so than states serve as laboratories of democracy, and to progressive African American politics in particular, which from the nation's origins, has stretched the American political imagination.

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[735] Jamiles Lartey, "A revolutionary, not a liberal: can a radical black mayor bring change to Mississippi?" *The Guardian,* September 11, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/sep/11/revolutionary-not-a-liberal-radical-black-mayor-mississippi-chokwe-lumumba

[736] Daniel Marans, "Progressive Challenger Elected Mayor of Birmingham, Alabama," *The Huffington Post,* October 3, 2017, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/randall-woodfin-elected-mayor-of-birmingham-alabama_us_59d416bfe4b04b9f9205eb9a

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Andrew Young Papers

Atlanta NAACP Records

Jean Childs Young Papers

Sweet Auburn Neighborhood Project Records

Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center, Atlanta, Georgia

Arnall T. Connell Papers

Central Atlanta Progress Records

Research Atlanta Records

Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center, Atlanta, Georgia

Atlanta Urban League Records, 1920-1990

General Mills-Kroger oral history collection

John H. Calhoun Papers

Maynard Jackson Papers

Stuart Rose Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia

Atlanta Political Oral History Collection

Gary M. Pomerantz Papers, 1991-2005

Marvin S. Arrington Papers, 1980-2004

Michael Lomax Papers

Newsweek Atlanta Bureau records, 1953-1979

SCLC Records

SCLC/WOMEN Records

Woodson Research Center, Rice University, Houston, Texas.

Lee P. Brown Papers

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