A Renewed Sense of Purpose

Olatunde C.A. Johnson

We woke up on Wednesday November 9 to a world that seemed profoundly changed. Like many of you, the results shook my core belief that a campaign reliant on the rhetoric of exclusion and resentment could not prevail. The devastation extends further than a lost election or a change in policy direction. Rather the deeper fear is that we are facing an existential threat to values such as human dignity and fairness, and to the very foundations of our constitutional democracy.

That morning, I faced my students, future lawyers. The majority of them were in total despair. I was tempted to say something immediately uplifting. But that would have belied my own emotions. I was not feeling particularly hopeful. And I could have only given false assurances. Even in New York City where I live, we are in the midst of an apparent spike in bias crimes, the effects, I believe, of recklessly un-bottling hate. I could only urge my students to bravely build out from the love and values that define them.

As individuals and leaders of organizations, we ultimately cannot allow ourselves the luxury of hope or despair. Our fear has been stoked, and we have to stay vigilant. And yet, there is a

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new urgency to our work of building racial, social and economic inclusion; a new imperative for integration, which has always been central to PRRAC's mission. We are pushed to rethink how we do our work. We have understood integration as necessary to provide equality in access to resources, a key step towards full participation and social inclusion. More than ever, we must also emphasize the collective societal benefits, including the critical role of racial and economic integration to building the empathy and understanding vital to sustaining our democracy. In this new uncertain world, I believe we'll need to be

nimble and creative. We have to strengthen old partnerships, find new allies, and build up from state and local successes.

As we renew our purpose, we all have our favorite quotes. We speak of an arc that bends towards justice. We remind ourselves to organize, not mourn. My favorite is from James Baldwin, writing in *The Fire Next Time*. At "the center of this dreadful storm, this vast confusion," Baldwin imagines a different future. He writes: "I know that what I am asking is impossible. But in our time, as in every time, the impossible is the least that one can demand." ❑

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Recycled Paper

Book Excerpt: *Coming of Age in the Other America*

Stefanie DeLuca, Susan Clampet-Lundquist & Kathryn Edin

The events of April 2015 catapulted Baltimore onto the national (and international) stage. The story is now well known. On April 12, 2015, Freddie Gray, a young African American, was taken into police custody after making eye contact with officers patrolling near the Gilmor Homes. Gray died a week later from the injuries he sustained during his subsequent ride in a police transport van. In the days that followed, controversy over the cause of Gray's death reached a boiling point. On the afternoon of April 27, police clashed with Black high school students at the Mondawmin Mall, setting off a chain reaction that spilled over into the surrounding neighborhood as some residents began looting, destroying property, and setting fire to cars. The media labeled these events a riot and blamed the youth at the mall for inciting the unrest. Yet the students had been doing what they do every day, trying to catch the bus after school—until they were greeted by a phalanx of police in riot gear and told to disperse. Then they learned that bus service had been suspended, leaving many with no way to get home.

There is no definitive account of how the confrontation at Mondawmin truly went down or who was to blame. What we do know is that the unrest prompted public officials to call in

This article is composed of excerpts from Coming of Age in the Other America *(The Russell Sage Foundation, New York 2016); the recommendations section is a condensed version of a fuller discussion in Chapter 7 of the book. The text has been edited slightly for clarity in this excerpted form, and citations have been omitted.*

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Reporters had no problem following a familiar script, painting Baltimore as burned out and hopeless.

roughly 5,000 National Guard troops, plus law enforcement officials from the surrounding area, who would occupy Baltimore for days. Police helicopters swarmed overhead as protesters marched, often ending their rallies at the intersection of Pennsylvania and North Avenues (the heart of the unrest), the Western District Police Department, or City Hall. Each night as curfew approached area clergy held hands, creating a human wall between angry protesters and the police. With footage of these events in hand, reporters had no problem following a

familiar script, painting Baltimore as burned out and hopeless. A pervasive narrative about Baltimore's youth was also stoked as an African-American mayor, and even the nation's first Black president, castigated at least a segment of them as "thugs." News coverage of events following Freddie Gray's death only amplified the view that Baltimore's African-American youth should be feared and controlled.

At the time these events were unfolding, we had spent more than 10 years conducting fieldwork with 150 Black Baltimore youth who were born in the late 1980s and early 1990s to parents who lived in what had become the city's poorest and most violent environs: Baltimore public housing. Most hailed from high-rise developments, like those featured on David Simon's vivid HBO series *The Wire*. Yet the story that had unfolded over our decade of research was strikingly different from the "thug" narrative spun by politicians and news anchors alike... We followed these youth from childhood through adolescence and into young adulthood, talking to their parents, siblings, and teachers along the way. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, getting "caught up" in "the game" was far from the norm—by their own accounts, fewer than one in five had been "in the street" for even a brief time. Instead, the large majority were actively resisting the street, determined to be "about something else," and hungry for postsecondary education and careers. Most scorned the drug dealers and other hustlers who dominated the public space of their neighborhood and instead strove to model themselves after the nurses, forensic scientists, lawyers, bus drivers, dentists, carpenters, cosmetologists, social workers, chefs, police officers, or small business owners they hoped to become. The large majority finished high school and went on to college or trade school. Few got addicted to alcohol or drugs.

Agents of Progress:
Schools and Child Traumatic Stress

Mary Kelly Persyn

Introduction

What's wrong with you?

So often, this is the question that K-12 students encounter at school in response to their misconduct. School staff members assume that the student's actions are the product of a conscious desire to rebel and disrupt. But researchers who study child trauma and early adversity present a very different explanation. What if the physiological and neurological effects of child trauma explain at least some of the behaviors that schools see? What if the appropriate question for many of these kids has little do with what's "wrong" with them, but rather finds the etiology of their actions in the traumas they have suffered?

What happened to you?

How much would change if this were the question that schools asked kids? In what follows, I examine this question by exploring child trauma, considering how it becomes visible in schools, and examining some possible pathways for change.

What is child trauma, and how does it impact kids and adults?

Child trauma encompasses several concepts. *Acute traumatic events* are singularities involving serious injury to self or witnessing serious injury to or death of another person. Threats of imminent danger so grave that they overwhelm the child are also in this category. *Chronic traumatic situations*

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involve continuing physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, domestic violence, and war and other political violence. Such traumas can lead to the development of *child traumatic stress* if the events overwhelm the child's ability to cope.

Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs, are a category of child trauma denoting ten different types of experiences that can harm child health and development, with permanent effects. This concept originated in a 1998 study conducted by Kaiser Permanente

> **For some, "bad behavior may simply be a biological response to the grinding torture of life below the poverty line."**

in cooperation with the federal Centers for Disease Control. ("About the Kaiser-ACE Study," CDC). The study, performed on a group of largely Caucasian, largely college-educated adults, surveyed their exposure to adverse experiences as children and then measured a variety of health indicators. (As discussed *infra*, researchers later added other Urban Indicators to account for the experiences of youth living in urban settings.) The original 10 events were emotional, physical, or sexual abuse; physical or emotional neglect; witnessing domestic violence; parental separation or divorce; and living with household members who were substance abusers, mentally ill or suicidal, or ever imprisoned.

In a result that has since been replicated and expanded, the ACEs study found that ACEs are remarkably prevalent, they are universal, and four or more exposures lead to greatly increased lifetime risk of serious health problems and early mortality. Ex-

amples include significantly greater risk of depression, suicidality, alcoholism, and COPD. Researchers believe that on average, people who suffer four or more ACEs without appropriate intervention and treatment die 20 years earlier than those with no ACEs in their history.

In the years since the first ACEs study, researchers have expanded our understanding of how the body's stress pathways affect health. Stress is not necessarily problematic. In fact, "positive stress" is fundamental to healthy development. But toxic stress, characterized by "prolonged or frequent activation of the stress response" without returning to homeostasis, can cause dysregulation of the body's neuroendocrine immune circuitry, which ultimately causes changes in brain architecture and organ systems. (Bucci 2016.) It's very important to understand that toxic stress doesn't implicate only psychological responses. It triggers a *biological* phenomenon. Consistently elevated stress hormones affect key areas in the brain, including the amygdala, hippocampus, and prefrontal cortex. These changes alter and erode key behaviors like executive functioning, memory, and emotions. Indeed, for some, "bad behavior may simply be a biological response to the grinding torture of life below the poverty line." (Keller 2016)

Further research has also expanded beyond the original study cohort, which was made up primarily of white, middle-class, highly educated people. One of the first studies to focus on an urban population was directed by the Institute for Safe Families, which formed the ACE Task Force in 2012 in order to study ACEs in Philadelphia. The participants in ISF's survey were 44% white and 43% Black; 42% had a high school education (or some high school).

The study found that "traditional" ACEs occurred at a higher rate than found in previous studies, and also measured the prevalence of other stressors. The survey found that 33.2% of Philadelphia adults experienced emotional abuse and 35% experienced physical abuse during childhood; about 35% grew up in a house with a substance-abusing member; 24% lived with a person who was mentally ill; and 13% counted an incarcerated person among their household. Overall, 68% experienced at least one of the original nine ACEs.

Beyond these ACEs, the Philadelphia ACE Task Force developed an urban ACE module to study how urban stressors affect physical and mental health. The additional Urban ACE Indicators include experiencing racism; witnessing violence; living in an unsafe neighborhood; living in foster care; and experiencing bullying. The behaviors and health outcomes measured included sexual partners, smoking, suicide attempt, substance use, cancer, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and mental illness. Addition of these indicators resulted in a total possible ACE score of 14, rather than the original 9.

> **Of the six zip codes with the highest ACE scores, four have a population at least 50% African American and two are 80% African American and over.**

The results were striking. Nearly 41% of the survey respondents had witnessed violence while growing up; 35% experienced discrimination based on race or ethnicity; 27% reported feeling unsafe in their neighborhoods during childhood. Overall, 58% experienced at least one of the five Urban Indicators; 81% experienced at least one of the 14 total ACEs; and 45% experienced at least one of the original ACEs *and* at least one Urban Indicator.

In all, over 37% of the respondents reported four or more ACEs. The equivalent number from the original Kaiser study is 12.5%. Philadelphia residents are nearly **t**hree times more likely* than Kaiser's white middle-class cohort to suffer this dangerously high level of adversity. Further, 14% of survey respondents experienced at least one Urban Indicator but zero traditional ACEs—meaning that these respondents experienced early adversity that never would have shown up in a traditional ACEs survey. (As the ISF notes,

Figure 1: ACEs in PHL vs. Original Kaiser Sample

	PHL Sample (N = 1,784)	Kaiser Sample (N = 17,337)	BRFSS, 2010 PA Sample (N = 5,646)
Standard ACE Indicators			
Emotional abuse[†]	33.2%	10.6%	30.8%
Physical abuse[*†]	35.0%	28.3%	13.2%
Sexual abuse[*†]	16.2%	20.7%	9.7%
Physical neglect[*]	19.1%	14.8%	Not measured
Emotional neglect[*]	7.7%	9.9%	Not measured
Substance using household member[*]	34.8%	26.9%	20.7%
Mentally ill household member[*]	24.1%	19.4%	15.1%
Witnessed domestic violence[*†]	17.9%	12.7%	14.0%
Incarcerated household member[*]	12.9%	4.7%	4.6%
Urban ACE Indicators			
Witnessed violence	40.5%	Not measured	Not measured
Felt discrimination	34.5%	Not measured	Not measured
Unsafe neighborhood	27.3%	Not measured	Not measured
Experienced bullying	7.9%	Not measured	Not measured
Lived in foster care	2.5%	Not measured	Not measured

* Asked slightly different than Kaiser; [†] asked slightly different from BRFSS.
Source: Institute for Safe Families, www.instituteforsafefamilies.org, © copyright 2012

Surveilling Health: The Community Consequences of "Stop and Frisk" Policing

Abigail A. Sewell

Increasingly, public attention has turned to the *"collateral damage"* of America's carceral state (Hatzenbuehler et al. 2015). The most highlighted forms of collateral damage include false arrests and police killings of innocents, along with failures to indict police officers for murder in high profile cases like those of Tamir E. Rice, Sandra Bland, and Michael Brown. Yet, the everyday toll the carceral state takes on ordinary citizens is often overlooked.

Examining data from New York City residents and the New York City Stop, Question, and Frisk Data Base, research I have conducted with colleagues identifies whether reports of well-being and illness are shaped by neighborhood policing practices. My interpretation of these results suggests that "Stop and Frisk" policies may pose a health risk for residents of highly and inequitably surveilled neighborhoods, even when a resident is not personally involved in criminal activity and even when a resident lives in a neighborhood that does not have a high crime rate. Policing matters for the health of those who are not incarcerated. Policing matters in ways that suggest that over-policing may be conceived of as a public health problem. Moreover, social status groups that are most vulnerable to policing—ethnoracial minorities and men—also accumulate some of its most negative health effects, both physically and psychologically.

Study Background

In a study published in the *Journal of Urban Health* (Sewell and Jefferson

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2016), I focus on data from 32,452 non-institutionalized adults living in 34 neighborhoods between 2009 and 2012. The study provides a comprehensive look at whether general and physical health problems are more prevalent in highly and inequitably surveilled neighborhoods. Highly surveilled neighborhoods refer to areas with above-average rates of pedestrian stops and likelihoods of frisking and use of force by police, while inequitably surveilled neighborhoods refer to areas where Black and Latinos are more likely than white pedestrians to be stopped, frisked, or have force used against them. The average neighborhood experienced 29 stops per 100 non-institutionalized residents. About 54%

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of pedestrian stops involved frisking, and nearly 21% of pedestrian stops incurred use of force by police. Racial disparities in police actions were substantial. Black and Latino pedestrians were stopped six times for every time a white pedestrian was stopped. Moreover, Black and Latino pedestrians were 25% more likely than whites to be frisked and 28% more likely than whites to have force used against them by police. These statistics indicate that police surveillance is a common fact of life in many neighborhoods and that racial minorities are more likely to bear the brunt of police activity.

My analysis merges two datasets — an annual community health survey administered by the New York City

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the annual administrative database of police reports of pedestrian stops collected by the New York City Police Department. These datasets have been analyzed separately to study community health patterns or the correlates of stop-and-frisk practices but had not previously been jointly assessed.

The study presents a complex picture of police surveillance and health and deepens our understanding of how stop and frisk impacts communities at the local level. The basic question at the heart of this line of inquiry is: Are people who live in neighborhoods where police stops are more likely to incur frisking and use of force less healthy than people who live in less (inequitably) surveilled neighborhoods? To answer this question, we started by identifying five health outcomes that are known to vary in prevalence across place—1) self-ratings of general health, 2) diagnoses of diabetes, 3) diagnoses of high blood pressure, 4) diagnoses of asthma, and 5) overweight/obese body weight status. We then identified six indicators of pedestrian stops: 1) the neighborhood stop rate, 2) the proportion of pedestrian stops in a neighborhood that involve frisking, 3) the proportion of pedestrian stops in a neighborhood that involve use of force by police, and 4) racial inequalities in: the neighborhood stop, 5) the neighborhood frisking proportion, and the 6) neighborhood use of force proportion. Racial inequalities in neighborhood indicators captured differences within neighborhoods in how police treated Black and Latino pedestrians versus how police treated white pedestrians. We next examined associations between these health indicators and police surveillance, comparing people with similar demographic characteristics who live in neighborhoods with similar racial,

economic, and crime characteristics.

Is the Health of New Yorkers Affected by Stop, Question, and Frisk?

The results indicate that the risk of illness increases for the average New Yorker who lives in an area where police are more likely to frisk pedestrians. For example, a 9% increase in the risk of frisking is associated with an 8.8% increase in the risk of reporting poor or fair health, a 11.7% increase in the risk of reporting diabetes, and a 17.2% increase in the risk of reporting high blood pressure. The neighborhood frisk risk was the single most consistent measure associated with ill health in this study.

A second study revealed that such associations could also be identified with regards to mental health problems (Sewell, Jefferson, and Lee 2016). Published in *Social Science and Medicine*, this analysis focused on 8,066 residents of New York City who were 18-59 years old in 2012 and characterized the areas they lived in according to policing conditions in 2009-2011. Similar patterns were shown as with physical health. Higher levels of non-specific psychological distress are noted for individuals living in communities where pedestrians face a higher risk of being frisked by police.

What Does Police Surveillance Mean for the Health of Racial Minorities?

Given prior claims of racial bias in New York City's Stop, Question, and Frisk program by the New York Civil Liberties Union, we assess whether the health of racial minorities—specifically, Blacks, Latinos, and Asians—was more likely to be affected by the neighborhood surveillance practices of police. For many associations, we found racial parity in the effects of police surveillance indicators: Blacks, Latinos, and Asians were similarly affected as whites by Stop and Frisk.

High blood pressure revealed a different pattern. For this indicator of poor health, there was evidence that Blacks, Latinos, and Asians were more detrimentally affected by stop-and-frisk policies than whites. Specifically, Blacks who lived in neighborhoods where minorities were more likely than whites to be frisked by police were more likely to report having high blood pressure than Blacks who lived in more equitably surveilled neighborhoods. Latinos who lived in neighborhoods where frisking and use of force by police were more common among pedestrian stops were more likely to report high blood pressure than Latinos who lived in less surveilled neighborhoods. Asians, although less likely to be the targets of pedestrian stops than are Blacks and Latinos, demonstrated adverse associations. Asians who lived in neighborhoods with a higher burden of pedestrian stops or who lived in neighborhoods where use of force by police were more common among pedestrian stops were more likely to report high blood pressure than Asians who lived in less surveilled neighborhoods.

What Does Police Surveillance Mean for the Health of Men?

Given that the vast majority of pedestrians stopped by police are identified as male, my colleagues and I assess whether the mental health of men are more likely to be affected by the neighborhood surveillance practices of police (Sewell, Jefferson, and Lee 2016). A striking pattern was discovered. Men who lived in neighborhoods with higher risks of frisking by police for pedestrians and higher risks of use of force by police for pedestrians reported higher levels of psychological distress. Police surveillance patterns, meanwhile, often did not differentiate the mental health of women. Specifically, men who lived in high-frisk communities faced a 16% increase in the likelihood of reporting feelings of both nervousness and worthlessness. Similarly, compared to women who lived in areas with higher levels of use of force by police against pedestrians, men who lived in such areas faced a 21% increase in the likelihood of reporting clinical levels of non-specific

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psychological distress, a 14% increase in reporting feelings of nervousness, a 12% increase in reporting feelings of effort, and a 18% increase in reporting feelings of worthlessness.

What Are the Implications of These Findings?

These findings present a quandary for public health concerns with violence victimization prevention, since a key intervention mechanism thought to reduce criminal activity is stop-and-frisk policies. However, the evidence is inconclusive regarding whether, in fact, New York City's Stop and Frisk program was responsible for the decline in violent crime against New York City residents. As such, the line of research presented here prompts us to consider ways of bringing about a safe society without police brutality.

These findings suggest that more attention should be paid to identifying intervention mechanisms that prevent crime and increase community engagement. Without such mechanisms, it is likely that America's carceral state will continue to feed itself and, ultimately, to contribute to increasing levels of areal, racial, and gender inequality in the quality and quantity of life. In sum, the research presented here suggests that the impact of stop-and-frisk policing may not only be to potentially curb crime: it may also curb the health of New York City residents. Fortunately, there is convincing evidence that the public health community has begun to take seriously the health consequences of America's carceral state. For example, a recent study in the *American Journal of Public Health* shows that young urban men who say they have been surveilled unfairly by police report worse mental health out-

comes (Geller et al. 2014). In fact, leading public health researchers (Krieger et al. 2015) have called for police killings to be considered a public health event, which is a particularly pressing matter as research suggests that legal intervention deaths— that is, killings by law enforcement— are on the rise (Feldman, Chen, Waterman, and Krieger 2016). Such research also suggests that considering such types of killings will also help us better understand racial disparities in health between Blacks and whites, as Blacks are three times more likely to be die at the hands of police than their representation in the population (Feldman, Chen, Waterman, and Krieger 2016). Our findings indicate that criminal justice policies have health consequences that extend to shaping morbidity and well-being as well. In short, criminal justice policies are also health policies. ❑

Creating Safety *and* Community: Neighborhood Safety Initiatives, Implicit Bias and Racial Anxiety

Rachel D. Godsil & Jessica MacFarlane

We are in a moment in which explicit racism and an alarming rise in hate crimes are demanding our attention—as they should. But even those of us who would never shout racial epithets can be implicated in creating a feeling of exclusion based upon race or ethnicity in our neighborhoods.

Before the election—and this trend is likely to continue—Neighborhood Watch organizations and on-line neighborhood groups have been organizing to protect their homes and families from crime. Collective efforts such as these have the potential to bring people together with a common purpose and to increase feelings of community and belonging. However, these positive outcomes will be imperiled and neighborhoods will be less safe if the neighborly vigilance turns into racial profiling. This term, *racial profiling*, is usually reserved for actions by law enforcement, but in some cases, the profiling begins with civilians. When a neighbor views a person's behavior as "suspicious" based upon their race or ethnicity and calls the police, it is the neighbor's determination that triggers the engagement of law enforcement.

Consider the following example: one late afternoon, a father glances out of the window of his home and notices a man slowly walking back and forth on the front lawn of the house two doors down. The man is Black. The father watches as the man continues pacing, talking to himself. The father finds this very suspicious and

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calls the police to report the man. Shortly afterward, four police cars arrive on the scene. The father feels good for having done his part to protect the community.

For some, reaction to this scenario might be that the father did the right thing. He saw a man acting suspiciously, walking back and forth in front of his neighbor's home. The man could have been thinking about breaking into the house. Maybe he was armed. In reality, though, the man was

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> **When residents do not feel close to their neighbors, they are less likely to engage in efforts to prevent neighborhood crime.**

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a friend of the neighbor; he was talking on his cell phone.

Sometimes people make mistakes, and it can be argued that the interest of safety outweighs the consequences of a mistake. But this particular mistake—calling the police to report actions by people engaged in seemingly innocuous activity such as talking on a cell phone—seems rarely to occur to white people and instead is a burden generally borne by people of color, particularly Black and Latino males (Harris, 2002).

Researchers—and increasingly police departments—have concluded that racial profiling by police officers does not promote safety. Instead, it diverts resources from identifying and stopping actual criminals (Harris, 2002). In his book, *Suspect Race: Causes and Consequences of Racial Profiling*, Professor Jack Glaser concludes that racial profiling neither controls crime

nor increases public safety (Glaser, 2015). And there is strong evidence to suggest that the same is true of racial profiling by neighbors.

The social science behind the concepts of implicit bias and racial anxiety forms a compelling case for why community efforts to promote safety may be ineffective. At the individual level, the occurrence of these biased responses leads to resentment among those who feel targeted, and divides neighborhoods, especially along racial lines. At the community level, racial profiling erodes social cohesion by undermining neighbors' shared values of equity and respect, their ability to form genuine relationships, and the sense of trust between groups.

Research has examined the link between social cohesion and community-based safety efforts, concluding that in neighborhoods where there are low levels of social cohesion and trust, residents feel less positive about their neighbors' efforts at social control and believe these efforts to be less successful (Warner, 2014). Further, when residents do not feel close to their neighbors, they are less likely to engage in efforts to prevent neighborhood crime (Warner, 2014). Not surprisingly, with decreasing participation, the system of neighborhood prevention loses effectiveness. In fact, Professor Barbara Warner argues that positive responses to neighborhood efforts are fundamental to effective crime prevention, and may be more critical than the efforts themselves (Warner, 2014).

The causes of racial profiling—and the tendency to view actions by Black and Latino males as suspicious—can occur even among people who reject racial stereotypes and hold egalitarian

Reflections on *Gautreaux* at 50

Alexander Polikoff

In August 2016 the *Gautreaux* litigation against the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) reached age 50, a milestone. The long-running, still on-going case, which established that both the federal government and the CHA were guilty of racial discrimination in Chicago public housing, reflects decades of commitment by Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI). Why devote so much time and energy to a single lawsuit? What has it all meant? What lies in the *Gautreaux* future? The 50th anniversary of the filing of the case on August 9, 1966, offered an occasion for some reflection on these questions.

The "legacy" of *Gautreaux* has been described as advancing a mixed-income housing strategy for combatting the scourge of racially concentrated poverty that afflicts so many of the nation's urban centers, visiting dreadful consequences upon both residents and the larger society. Gautreaux has sought to foster the mixed-income approach in three ways.

The first was low-density scattered site public housing. However, on a scale of one to ten the original *Gautreaux* scattered site program scored no more than a two or three. Years of contentious effort generated only about 2,000 scattered site dwellings that didn't come close to satisfying the right of over 30,000 *Gautreaux* families to a desegregated housing opportunity, or make much progress in desegregating Chicago's public housing system. Today, new tools offer an opportunity to improve on this history but progress remains frustratingly slow.

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The second *Gautreaux* approach has been to support the Chicago Housing Authority's plan to replace giant high-rise developments with mixed-income communities that include but aren't dominated by public housing. (*Gautreaux* support is essential because without further *Gautreaux* court orders replacement public housing cannot generally be built in neighborhoods that are still racially segregated.) This

> *The* Gautreaux *mobility program ran for over 20 years (1976-1998) and enabled some 7,100 families to exit their segregated, high poverty environs and move to "opportunity areas."*

approach has been more successful than scattered sites. Public housing families now live in some 3,200 apartments (with more to come) in the same buildings and neighborhoods as families of higher income—and in incomparably improved environments. Benefits accrue both to resident families and to the larger Chicago community.

There have, however, been downsides. One is compromising the desegregation objective of *Gautreaux*, although because of the scattered site disappointments it made sense (with court approval) to "trade" mixed-income in the short term for the possibility of desegregation in the longer term. Another is the suffering caused by the forced displacement of high-rise residents, which CHA handled badly in the beginning. A third is reducing the supply of public housing; replacing 100% public housing with mixed-income typically results in diminishing the total number of public housing units. Finally, it's been painfully slow; due in part to the recession

that began at the end of 2007, the work is still very much in progress.

The third *Gautreaux* approach is housing mobility—using federal housing subsidies ("housing choice vouchers") coupled with search assistance and counseling to enable *Gautreaux* families to leave Chicago's segregated, high poverty neighborhoods and lease privately-owned dwellings in low poverty white or integrated communities, mostly in the suburbs. Thanks to the *Gautreaux* Supreme Court decision back in 1976, housing mobility was pioneered in the *Gautreaux* case. Based on a settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reached in the wake of the High Court's decision, the *Gautreaux* mobility program ran for over 20 years (1976-1998) and enabled some 7,100 families to exit their segregated, high poverty environs and move to "opportunity areas." The program ended because the agreement with HUD called for termination when 7,100 families had been served.

Over a period of years teams of Northwestern University sociologists intensively studied the experiences of *Gautreaux* moving families. When finally published, their studies described such startlingly positive outcomes in employment, income, education, even health, that they commanded national attention. (At one of the Northwestern presentations someone in the audience observed, presumably with tongue in cheek, that if moving to opportunity areas could produce *Gautreaux*-like results, policymakers should abandon other forms of social intervention in favor of housing mobility.)

Disappointingly, however, the Northwestern studies did not lead to a new national housing voucher policy but rather to a big bump in the road. Instead of "going national" with housing mobility, HUD developed a five-

city demonstration called Moving to Opportunity to test *Gautreaux* results in a randomized experiment. When, 10 years later, the evaluation of MTO showed no income or educational gains for moving families, the conventional wisdom quickly became: "MTO shows that mobility doesn't work."

And there—despite court-ordered mobility programs in *Gautreaux*-type lawsuits in Baltimore and Dallas—mobility sat, and remained, largely becalmed. Until last year when economist Raj Chetty (then of Harvard, now of Stanford) and colleagues Nathaniel Hendren and Lawrence F. Katz released a major, longer term study of MTO families. By showing significant gains in income and college attendance rates for MTO children who had moved before age 13, the Chetty study "overturned" (as the *New York Times* put it) the MTO conventional wisdom.

Suddenly, a little life was breathed back into mobility. HUD formed a mobility team to reconsider mobility possibilities, and it recently proposed to base ceiling rents on zip codes instead of entire metropolitan areas, an important step in the direction of sanctioning realistic voucher rents in more expensive opportunity areas. Chetty and his team are planning to work with a number of housing authorities to explore inexpensive ways to increase moves to opportunity areas. A prestigious philanthropic advisory organization released a report on "big bets" for philanthropy, one example of a good big bet being—you guessed it—housing mobility.

Why, then, only a "little" life breathed back? Because HUD is still declining to make essential rule changes—such as reimbursing housing authorities for mobility counseling, rewarding them for achieving mobility moves, and more—without which large public housing authorities in big, segregated metropolitan areas won't engage. Even in the face of what Chetty and his colleagues have shown, without major changes in HUD rules mobility will not "take off."

Which would be too bad—in fact, terribly bad. Here's why. Triggered by police killings of African Americans, the nation is suffering a crisis in race relations the likes of which it has not seen for half a century. However, as *New York Times* columnist Charles Blow points out, bias in our criminal justice system is only one cause of the crisis. A more basic cause is what Blow terms the "systemic, structurally racist policies" that pervade American society. As President Obama said at the July 2016 memorial service for five slain Dallas police officers:

"As a society, we choose to underinvest in decent schools. We allow poverty to fester so that entire neighborhoods offer no prospect for gainful employment. We refuse to fund drug treatment and mental health programs."

This problem of the "ghetto" persists intergenerationally.

The President's comments are relevant to housing mobility. In addition to "no prospect for gainful employment," racially segregated high poverty neighborhoods produce low performing schools that offer little prospect for decent education. A solid body of research conclusively establishes that children growing up in such neighborhoods and going to such schools face high statistical probabilities not only of low educational attainment but of impaired verbal ability and cognition, of depression, diabetes, and lung disease, of joblessness and incarceration, indeed, of low life expectancy—in plain words, of dying prematurely.

What is more, these high probabilities are imposed disproportionately upon African-American children, not upon white children or—comparably—upon children of other minorities. Black children are surrounded by poverty to a degree that is virtually unknown among white children. They live in high poverty neighborhoods at over six times the rate of white children; they sit in high poverty classrooms at over ten times the rate of white students.

In short, not only does the American Dream not exist for vast numbers of African-American children, but we have confined those children within segregated, high-poverty, severely distressed neighborhoods where day after day, week after week, month after month, their futures are at high risk of being blighted in what amounts to an ongoing assault upon thousands and thousands of young lives.

This is what noted urban scholar Patrick Sharkey calls the problem of the "ghetto," a term he employs in examining "the concentration of poverty and its differential impact on racial and ethnic groups, most notably African Americans," that has resulted from social processes such as "economic exclusion, exploitation, abandonment, disinvestment, and racial stigmatization and domination." Sharkey defines the "ghetto" as an area characterized by racial and economic segregation that lacks the basic resources—institutional, economic and political—that foster healthy development in childhood and economic and social mobility in adulthood.

Moreover, this problem of the "ghetto" persists *intergenerationally*, for Sharkey has demonstrated convincingly that the effects of growing up in such environments are passed on to succeeding generations. Sharkey's data show that one-quarter of all African-American families, compared to just 1% of white families, have lived in the poorest 10% of all U.S. neighborhoods *in consecutive generations*.

How have white Americans dealt with what Sharkey terms the problem of "the inherited American ghetto?" Except when "trouble" erupts, white Americans have been largely indifferent. A fellow columnist of Blow's, Nicholas Kristof, points out that within the last decade almost two-thirds of white Americans said that African Americans were treated fairly by the police. Four out of five said that African-American children had the same chance as white children to get a good education. The history of white Americans' attitudes toward race, Kristof writes, has been one of "self-deception"; we have been "astonish-

ingly oblivious to pervasive inequity."

Suppose we try a thought experiment? Suppose that, miraculously, white Americans stopped being oblivious and the nation resolved to take remedial action. What are the possibilities?

First, we could undo the residential segregation that is one of the root causes of the ghetto problem. That would require both overcoming whites' historic antipathy to sharing their neighborhoods with African Americans, and trimming local governments' zoning powers. More radical changes in American society are difficult to imagine. Nevertheless, if imagine them we did, the time frame for large scale implementation of such changes would likely be measured in generations, too late to address the deprivations of African-American children currently being born and raised in high poverty neighborhoods.

Second, we could revitalize such neighborhoods and turn them into good places for children to grow up in, safe places with good schools, gainful employment, and all the rest. Yet for 50 years we have put revitalizing programs on the books, and for 50 years the results have been disappointing, either because of underfunding, or design or implementation flaws, or all three. But imagine that here too this societal change had taken place, that

we had mustered the political will, committed the stupendous amounts of needed funding, and learned from our mistakes how to do it "right." Here, too, there is no possibility that at the required scale revitalizing could happen soon enough to remove current and succeeding generations of African American children from harm's way.

There is a third possibility—a full-employment, living-wage economy

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A national mobility program does promise an immediate road out of harm's way for thousands upon thousands of African-American children.

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that would change the rules of how the market operates to enable the poor to work their way out of poverty. As with boats lifted on a rising tide, such an economy would benefit not only the poor but our hollowed-out middle class as well. But here too, the time frame for implementation is long. This too is not a "fix" for African-American children currently being born and raised in toxic environments.

Which brings us back to housing mobility and the thousands upon thousands of African-American children,

and *their* children, who face high risks of blighted futures. Though each of the longer term strategies should of course be pursued, with some changes in HUD rules and regulations, and some funding by Congress that would be far from budget busting, we could create a national mobility program virtually overnight. This would be a partial, not complete, solution because housing mobility isn't for everyone. For understandable reasons, such as leaving relatives, friends and support networks, many families would not choose the mobility option. And many who did would not succeed in the challenging task of finding scarce housing in "opportunity areas."

But for the families who did succeed in making opportunity moves, housing mobility would provide virtually instantaneous relief compared to the timeframes for ending residential segregation, revitalizing African American ghettos, or becoming a full-employment, living-wage society. A national mobility program *does* promise an immediate road out of harm's way for thousands upon thousands of African-American children who, faced with high statistical probabilities of blighted futures, could instead grow up in dramatically improved life circumstances with dramatically improved life prospects.

Could that become the "legacy" of *Gautreaux*? ❏

Resources

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attitudes. Well-intentioned people too often stereotype Black and Latino males as dangerous without conscious awareness, a phenomena referred to as *implicit bias* (Greenwald & Banaji, 2013). In the case of the man in front of the house, stereotypes linking Black men to crime and exaggerated representations of Black men as violent likely influenced the father's reaction, without him even realizing it. Of critical importance, even if we know such race-based stereotypes are distorted or we consciously refute them, they can be embedded in our unconscious minds and have a meaningful impact on our decision-making.

When this racial profiling occurs in communities—by neighbors—its effects can be pernicious. Police officers will receive a call from a person identifying "two Hispanic men driving in the cul de sac," without any other information suggesting criminal activity. The police are generally obligated to respond, leading to a misuse of police resources and harassment of men simply driving in a neighborhood. As was reported in 2015, the Santa Monica Police Department dispatched 19 police officers to an apartment complex after a resident reported he was witnessing a robbery. In reality, a Black woman had locked herself out of her home, and a locksmith was helping her get inside (Wells, 2015).

Implicit bias leading to unwarranted suspicion is a challenge we must address—but it is not the only one. *Racial anxiety* is another critical factor in inter-racial dynamics. Racial anxiety—the experience of stress before or during an inter-racial interaction—can be felt by anyone (Tropp & Page-Gould, 2015). For people of color, it is the fear that they will be met with distrust, poor treatment, or invalidation; for white people, it is the fear that they will be met with hostility or presumed to be racist. This anxiety is experienced acutely as a physiological phenomenon (Page-Gould, Mendoza-Denton, & Tropp, 2008); as can be imagined, this heightened anxiety has

the potential to exacerbate awareness of race-based stereotypes and, therefore, increase racial profiling. For instance, in the example discussed above, racial anxiety may have contributed to the father's fear of the man and his sense of urgency in contacting the police.

When racial profiling occurs in communities— by neighbors—its effects can be pernicious.

The social science research can be used to improve neighborhood crime prevention efforts by identifying strategies to counter implicit bias and racial anxiety. Most fundamental to effective neighborhood efforts is community unity. Increasing contact between neighbors, particularly from different racial and ethnic groups, builds familiarity and trust (Godsil et al., 2014), undermines stereotypic assumptions linked to race, and can prevent a kneejerk instinct to call police in a response simply based on race. However, the homogeneity of neighborhoods presents a substantial challenge, as many people may not come into contact with neighbors of varying races and ethnicities. And indeed, racial biases and anxieties can make people less likely to purchase homes in diverse neighborhoods (Boddie, 2010). As a result, a crucial step to minimize racial profiling is for individuals to take steps to override implicit racial bias. Research presents several strategies that can be employed to counter stereotypic assumptions and to prevent bias from manifesting in harmful behavior (Devine et al., 2012; Kang et al., 2012). Simply ex-

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amining the interpretation of harmless behavior as "suspicious" when carried out by a person of a certain race or ethnicity (i.e. asking ourselves, "would this still be suspicious if the person were white?") is a meaningful step in acknowledging the role of implicit bias and preventing the perpetuation of racial profiling.

While community efforts aim to promote safety, the automatic reliance on stereotypes ostracizes neighbors, breaks community trust, and in the end, undermines these efforts. Creating a truly secure community is harder work. In diverse neighborhoods, personal contact, shared activities, and inclusive planning can lay the ground-work for collective efforts toward safety. In every neighborhood, a conscious commitment to override the biases that cloud better judgment is critical to making these efforts successful. ❏

Eighty percent found work in the formal sector after high school. And they did so while continuing to struggle against neighborhood risk and the trauma of coming of age in families often plagued by addiction, violence, and financial strife.

Such stories are rendered invisible in the glare of attention on the most sensational aspects of urban America. When covering an isolated incident of looting, it is easy for viewers to believe that the extreme is the norm. This is not to say that the city's youth do not face challenges. Poor children growing up in Baltimore are less likely to escape poverty than those growing up in any other city in the nation. Paired with the strong mainstream aspirations of the large majority of the youth we studied, however, this finding suggests that the issue for youth in Baltimore is not a matter of "social psychology," to use David Brooks' words. Instead, it is further evidence of how much work there is to be done to keep structural barriers from neutralizing the ambitions of those raised in poverty.

Baltimore has changed in ways we never imagined since these young people were born. Baltimore's high-rise public housing has been torn down, and some of it has been replaced by mixed-income developments in neighborhoods that bring residents of varied incomes into close proximity. In the Inner Harbor, empty lots and rotting warehouses have been replaced by farm-to-table restaurants, coffee shops, galleries, and the like. Industrial areas that had been dormant for decades are now bustling with millennials and empty-nesters residing in new upscale condos and apartments. Baltimore's

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Poor children growing up in Baltimore are less likely to escape poverty than those growing up in any other city in the nation.

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port, once on the edge of extinction, has seen a surge of containers moving into its channel. Baltimore is not Brooklyn, by any means, but new life is being breathed into some blocks once previously lined with only vacant homes.

The unrest of April 2015 revealed in appalling clarity, however, that the benefits of this painstaking progress have not been equally shared. African-American communities in particular have not reaped the dividends of the city's revitalization. Worse, in the wake of the April 2015 unrest, Black neighborhoods saw a dramatic spike in homicide and violent crime, exacerbating residents' feelings of fragility and uncertainty about how to move forward and repair the damage and mistrust that had been building for generations. There is much work to be done in Baltimore, a city whose problems are a microcosm for much of what plagues cities across America.

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Family background and a history of racially discriminatory housing policies have continued to yield a strong influence on where children end up in life, and being born poor and black suppresses life chances to a frightening degree. Despite these sobering findings, we argue that social reproduction—children ending up "stuck" in the same place as their parents—is far from inevitable. We show that social policy has the power to interrupt the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage, and that when it does, children's trajectories can change dramatically. Young people's agency matters too. Even those coming from some of the most challenging situations can reach toward a brighter future if they manage to take hold of key resources that confer meaning and identity—a strong sense of what they are "about" and not about. Yet "Coming

of Age in the Other America" also shows that, despite their resilience and hard work, the strong undertow of the social origins of disadvantaged youth—the long shadow, as Karl Alexander and colleagues refer to it—can claw at their ambitions "like crabs in a bucket," as one youth said. When combined with the institutional traps that youth encounter in the pursuit of postsecondary education, these forces can shortchange the dreams of even the grittiest and most determined.

At the heart of this book is a complex reality: Our story is one of a glass half full and a glass half empty. These youth achieved far more than their parents. Most showed remarkable perseverance and optimism in reaching for mainstream goals while resisting the street as they moved through adolescence and into young adulthood. Many aspired to be nurses, electricians, police officers, social workers, restaurateurs, military officers, or teachers. Yet when we left them in 2012, too few had become all that they hoped to be—and were probably capable of becoming. This book considers what inspired those intergenerational gains before going on to describe what made the gains possible—the rich and vital inner lives that sustained these young people as they fought against the riptide of family background and ongoing neighborhood risk while reaching for a better future. Finally, these youths' unfolding lives cast a bright light on the exploitative traps in the labor and postsecondary educational markets, often explicitly aimed at young people pushed by tough economic circumstances to take an expedited path to adulthood. We find that these traps cut dreams short and kept even some of the hardest-working, most ambitious youth from achieving their potential, relegating them instead to low-wage, unstable jobs at or near the bottom of the economy.

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Over time, among the families we were lucky enough to follow, we be-gan to see a wearing down of sorts during adolescence. Despite the decrease in neighborhood poverty and the increase in exposure to neighbors with characteristics that reflected mainstream norms, many of the youth still had to deal with more than their share of crime, low-performing schools, and family trauma. A pall often set in. Some youth were becoming listless, sleeping long hours, failing to turn in homework assignments, procrastinating about college or trade school applications. It seemed as if some were

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One question our book addresses is whether these narratives do indeed provide evidence that grit can be inspired by acquiring a passion during adolescence.

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beginning to lose hope. In the face of these challenges, youth needed not only aspiration but inspiration—something to keep them motivated enough to do the gritty things it took to achieve dreams. And during this time about half of our youth did in fact discover a "life raft," an "outlet," a "passion in life" that seemed to spark renewed effort. Adolescents who found a consuming, defining passion—what we call an "identity project"—were much more likely to remain on track than those who did not. In telling their stories, young people often explicitly credited their passion as the source of the fortitude they needed to beat the streets and work toward a brighter future.

Therefore, one question our book addresses is whether these narratives do indeed provide evidence that grit, which is thought to be a skill carefully cultivated through years of socialization and possibly a feature of inborn temperament, can also be inspired by acquiring a passion during adolescence. In keeping with this notion, we show that the youth who best managed to persevere found a passion through an identity project, which can serve as a virtual bridge between challenging present circumstances and an uncertain, but hoped-for, future. Through identity projects, youth often distanced themselves from family and neighborhood influences that threatened to bring them down, while connecting with others, like teachers, programs, clergy, and coaches, who helped them thrive. Identity projects could spring from activities at places like school, work, or other institutional sites, or interests picked up from friends or family. Some youth were set apart from the pack by a unique interest—such as writing poetry, listening to punk rock or country music (these interests traditionally seen as the choice of white youth are seen as unique when chosen by a black youth), customizing cars, building pigeon coops, attending anime festivals, pursuing modern dance, or writing "beats" and selling them online. These activities protected and distinguished these youth, providing them with a sense of pride and accomplishment instead of the "drama" they saw around them. Others adopted identity projects that were more directly tied to school and a career. These aspirations transformed everyday activities into kindling for careers and sparked the grit that helped them beat the streets and persevere in school.

But even youth with strong identity projects struggled to launch. Persistent poverty, the ongoing undertow of their neighborhoods (which did not improve nearly as much as they might have), and their families (through the intergenerational transmission of trauma) still exacted a price from our young people (the glass half empty part of the story). We argue that these factors steered them away from the leisurely emergent path of their middle-class peers and put them on an expedited path to adulthood. This led many youth to downshift their dreams—to aim, for example, for a trade that was more tractable and, importantly, attainable sooner instead of a four-year degree and a professional career. Thus, the majority ended up trading college dreams for the shorter programs at trade schools, a corner of the educational marketplace rife with exploitation.

When expedited adulthood meets institutional traps such as these, potential is stunted via the very pathway that is supposed to build the vital human capital that is needed for youth to achieve their full potential.

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The stories of these youth make two things clear: First, many young adults born into extremely disadvantaged circumstance have tremendous potential and can flourish when their social contexts change. Second, their optimism and determination may be enough to get them to the starting gate, but are often not enough to win the race. The mechanisms of social reproduction—family disadvantage, ongoing risk in their neighborhoods, and underperforming schools—are strong. Even if youth navigate these land mines, they often encounter a stunted labor market and a postsecondary landscape full of snares.

In our book, we propose a policy agenda to amplify the potential of such youth and leverage the inner resources they already possess. The conventional wisdom holds that our nation should focus its investments on the very young—infants, toddlers, and preschool children—as interventions during these years seem to yield impressive returns. But our nation cannot stop investing at age five. Simulations by Isabell Sawhill and Quentin Karpilow of the Brookings Institution remind us that what America's young people really need are consistent investments throughout childhood and adolescence. A Social Science Research Council (SSRC) study estimates that the cost to society of disconnected youth reached $27 billion in 2013. While it requires money to *support* disadvantaged young people's efforts to launch, it is perhaps more expensive to *ignore* them.

Most youth in our study were at risk of becoming disconnected, often for multiple reasons. Each spent his or her earliest years in some of the most distressed public housing in the nation; these developments were not only physically degraded but had become breeding grounds for addiction and crime. Many youth were raised in troubled families who introduced trauma into their lives. Yet when we followed these youth for more than a decade, we found that they held many of the same aspirations as more privileged young people across our nation. Where one might have expected defeatism or a dismissal of society's rules, we often found optimism and a firm determination to "be about something positive." Yet, despite their dedication and perseverance, these young people continued to live in neighborhoods with few resources and too many risks. By 2010 the majority remained in families living below the poverty line, as do just over one in five American

How do we keep young people out of harm's way and help them grow up in safe, opportunity-rich neighborhoods?

young people between the ages of 16 and 24—and fully one-third of African Americans in that age range.

Part of our book therefore asks: What next? Specifically, how do we keep young people out of harm's way and help them grow up in safe, opportunity-rich neighborhoods? How do we support adolescents' quest for meaning and identity by helping more of them grab on to an identity project, ideally one rooted in a web of peer and institutional supports? How can we better scaffold these youth through the postsecondary education landscape, particularly those who feel a keen sense of urgency to take an expedited path to adulthood? Examining evidence-based practices in each area, we advocate for policies that recognize and promote the inner strength of youth from disadvantaged origins.

Improving Access to High-Opportunity Neighborhoods

Through HOPE VI and other programs, Baltimore demolished all of its high-rise public housing as well as many low-rise units. In Baltimore, some of the dislocated were merely moved to another housing project, while others were given vouchers but little relocation assistance. By definition, the high-rises themselves were contexts of highly concentrated poverty, so when families left through the HOPE VI program, they experienced, on average, a dramatic drop in neighborhood poverty. However, the program was also met with bitter opposition from some community members because of the loss of hard-unit public housing (most lost units have not been replaced), the severing of local social networks, and the involuntary relocation of many families. Although there was a silver lining for those youth in our study who left the projects during their childhoods because of HOPE VI, many families who left ended up in racially segregated neighborhoods that became poorer over time. Few would argue that it was not a good idea to get families out of the distressed high-rises, but entirely different policies are required to help them reach higher-opportunity neighborhoods.

Such integration can be achieved by a variety of means: Mobility programs, affordable housing development in opportunity-rich neighborhoods, inclusionary zoning, or other "in place" strategies that restore the economic vitality of our communities.

Supporting the Creation of Identity Projects

As the stories in our book show, having developed an identity project was one of the most important factors distinguishing those youth who were on track by our study's end from those who were not. Identity projects serve a powerful purpose—they keep youth

off the streets, help them weather tough circumstances, and inspire the grit necessary to accomplish their goals. We also find that youth are resourceful and construct their identity projects in innovative ways. No single program would support every type of identity project we observed. We have argued that those that link young people up with like-minded peers and—better yet—with institutions (with their ready-made activities, resources, and networks) work best. Those institutions most easily within the reach are our public schools, plus youth activities sponsored by local government, such as summer jobs programs. The nonprofit sector can also play a vital role too, through programs like the boys and girls' clubs, the Police Athletic League, and job sponsorship programs.

Unfortunately, over the last decade, trends in the financing of public education have reduced funds for the very activities that might encourage identity development. As schools have focused on boosting students' scores in math and reading, arts education and extracurricular activities have been left to languish. State finances felt the impact of the Great Recession in trimmed budgets for public schools. Schools in struggling districts were sometimes left without sufficient funds to cover much more than faculty and staff salaries and basic supplies, much less art faculty, speech and debate teams, musicals and plays, and athletic programs. This has particularly been the case in schools and school districts with the highest proportions of low-income students.

We call for a sharp reversal of the tide away from funding for the arts and other activities, both in school and out, and an increase in high-quality, career-focused learning communities such as career academies. Our contention is that it is precisely these kinds of activities that have the greatest chance of turning lives around, since much of the allure of the street lies in its role as a second-class substitute for the passions that those with an identity project are pursuing.

Changing the Postsecondary Landscape

We argue that the youth described in this book are often on an expedited path to adulthood. The "triple threat" from neighborhood, family, and school can traumatize youth in ways that shorten their time horizons. They feel pressure to take on adult roles, and they want to get on with the business of establishing an independent household and embarking on a career sooner rather than later. This pressure, in turn, makes the idea of pursuing a four-year college degree seem like a risky gamble to take with their precious time. Information is also a problem. Only about one-quarter of these youths' parents had finished high school, and

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Over the last decade, trends in the financing of public education have reduced funds for the very activities that might encourage identity development.

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hardly any parents had an associate's or a bachelor's degree; thus, parents had a difficult time advising their children on how to proceed if they wanted to attend a four-year school. Underlying all of these dynamics was the financial squeeze: Few of these parents had the resources to support their children beyond age 18. Indeed, many of these youth had begun to support themselves and their families in high school through part-time jobs or participation in the informal or underground economy. Though many had aspired to four-year or graduate degrees in professions like medicine or law, these pursuits ended up looking like a luxury they could not afford. Even the strong academic contenders with top grades downshifted; what we see in our data, repeatedly, is that the aspiring nurse, for example, ends up spurning college for a program that promises to earn her a certification instead and get her

out working in the "health care profession" in just a few months' time.

How might policy slow the transition to adulthood so that youth can make better decisions? How do we prevent downshifting among the college-ready? Upstream approaches that address disadvantage at the family, school, and neighborhood levels present one way forward. Yet focusing only on the upstream leaves the current generation of youth behind. In the meantime, we need to find ways to support a better-informed transition so that young adults can make decisions about their postsecondary education that will result in living-wage employment without incurring unmanageable student debt. And for those who want to go directly into the workforce—as many of the young men in our study do—there need to be better avenues for building valuable skills and experience on the job, as well as connections to viable occupations.

First, we must improve college and career counseling in high school so that youth can make informed choices. High schools must deliver information about how various postsecondary options stack up against one another—including average time to completion, costs (including the real cost to the student after financial aid), job placement rates, and average wages in the occupation. The youth in our study were almost never given this kind of information. Some who were clearly college-ready, at least in our assessment, never even considered four-year schools, while others were left vulnerable to the flashy commercials and aggressive recruitment tactics of for-profit trade schools. Those who did enroll in four-year schools often considered only a narrow range of local universities and colleges, usually ones with high loan default rates and low degree completion rates, even though there were higher-performing colleges and universities nearby, several with lower net prices.

Community colleges are responsible for much of the progress our nation has seen in college enrollment, especially among low-income and minority youth. These institutions now en-

roll about four in ten (42%) new college students in the United States. These schools provide college access for students who would probably not have enrolled at all if they had only a four-year college option. However, as we showed in chapter 6, community colleges have distressingly low degree completion rates. To expand opportunity, it is paramount that community colleges become gateways to four-year degrees.

Work

For those who cannot earn a bachelor's degree, we must shore up the labor market. The weakening of unions, offshoring, and technological changes in skills that reward those with a college degree have dampened the prospects of unskilled and semiskilled workers. Expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) (a tax credit toward the incomes of low-wage workers, especially those with dependent children) by including non-custodial parents and those who are not yet parents is one way to make work pay, as is increasing the minimum wage. But a focus on work conditions—especially involuntary part-time employment and unpredictable hours—is an even more fundamental need. Apprenticeship programs provide another approach. More innovation, along with rigorous evaluation, should be focused in this area.

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The research record is clear: Giving poor families of color the opportunity to live in lower-poverty neighborhoods through the demolition of distressed public housing, the use of mobility programs, or the expansion of the supply of affordable units in middle-income suburbs can make a world of difference. Since the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, rendered in 1954, our nation has avowed that separate is not equal. But racial and economic segregation does more than just prevent families from access to the geography of opportunity. It

also breeds an even more insidious psychology than "out of sight, out of mind"—it leaves people of all incomes vulnerable to poor sources of information about those who are at a different place on the income spectrum or a different racial group than they are. Daniel Kahneman, the Nobel Prize–winning psychologist and author of *Thinking Fast and Slow,* has identified different thinking. The brain's default is to think fast—what Kahneman calls "System I" thinking. System I is "hopelessly bad at the kind of statistical thinking often required for good decisions, it jumps wildly to conclusions and it's subject to a fantastic suite of irrational biases and interfer-

> *Affluent folk who lack meaningful personal contact with low-income minority youth may be more likely to render judgments based on poor sources of information."*

ence effects," writes Galen Strawman, who reviewed the book for *The Guardian.*

System I thinking suffers from what Kahneman calls "denominator neglect." In Kahneman's words: "If your attention is drawn to the winning marbles, you do not assess the number of non-winning marbles with the same care." System I also falls prey to what Kahneman and his longtime collaborator Amos Tversky call the "availability heuristic," a mental shortcut people take when judging the probability of events, drawing on what examples most easily come to mind. "Availability" can be influenced by the emotional power of examples—ones that are especially lurid or inspiring. Taken together, denominator neglect and the availability heuristic can lead to "gross exaggeration of minor threats, sometimes with important consequences," writes Kahneman.

So what does this have to do with segregation? Building on Kahneman, it is reasonable to expect that affluent

folk who lack meaningful personal contact with low-income minority youth may be more likely to render judgments based on poor sources of information. The shocking story on TV or in print has more play if we cannot easily draw on counterexamples from our experience. Meanwhile, what is "available" to middle-class Americans is fed by what has become a veritable industry seemingly devoted to presenting low-income Black children in the city as alien. Most of the time, when poor African-American youth are portrayed on TV, in movies, in news stories, and even in some ethnographic accounts, they are not portrayed as "our kids," to draw again on Robert Putnam's terminology. Instead, they are depicted as "risky" kids whose lives and perspectives are so different from our own that we cannot imagine sending our children to the same school with them, much less choosing to live on the same block. These outliers command our attention, and we fail to attend to all of the other cases that do not fit the pattern.

We drew a sample of youth from the poorest neighborhoods of Baltimore and followed them over time. Most of the communities they had resided in were geographically isolated from the eyes of those in the middle and upper classes, for whom it is easy to forget about those who struggle in poverty or overgeneralize about how different "they" are from "us." Yet our study revealed not how aberrant but, poignantly, how ordinary most of these young people were, even down to Ron and Whitney, two teens who sold drugs.

Ultimately, however, we believe that what research can accomplish is only a start. Americans have to see disadvantage for themselves, in their own backyard. Unfortunately, as income inequality has grown, so too has our propensity to live, work, worship, and socialize separately. In 2009 one-third of American families lived in either the poorest neighborhoods or the most affluent neighborhoods—those on opposite extremes of the continuum. This was twice the proportion of families

who lived on the extreme ends of the distribution in 1970, and the trend indicates that we are witnessing a growth in geographic segregation by income that mirrors the growth in income inequality. In fact, the income inequality of a given metropolitan area is highly correlated with how separated the rich and the poor are in that area. This seemingly inexorable trend makes it even more imperative that we prioritize policy tools to push back. We feel there is real power in this idea that, as Kahneman argues, firsthand experiences are more "available" for making decisions than things we think only happen to others.

We hope that our book makes the clear case that we cannot afford to squander the potential of the young people who hail from America's most-disadvantaged communities. Unfortunately, many Americans see policy as a zero-sum game. They think that if someone else's kids are getting SNAP, a housing subsidy, or a subsidized summer job, their kids are losing. But here we have argued that if "those kids" do not become "our kids," everybody loses. ❏

these results may not generalize to other urban areas. Further, the data are preliminary and need further refinement to account for possible confounding of variables. However, at a minimum, the study indicates that further research on Urban Indicators is necessary to explore these apparent disparities, including how ACEs vary by gender, race, and ZIP code.)

The overlay of the Philadelphia survey results onto city zip codes demonstrates the correlation of neighborhood poverty to the highest levels of ACE exposure. U.S. Census data reveals a further intersection with race; of the six zip codes with the highest ACE scores, four have a population at least 50% African American and two are 80% African American and over (Wade, 2016).

The Philadelphia data appear to show a strong correlation between race, poverty, and levels of ACEs exposure that are high enough to pose very significant threats to the physical and mental health of affected residents.

Figure 2: Map of ACE Scores of 4 and above in Philadelphia
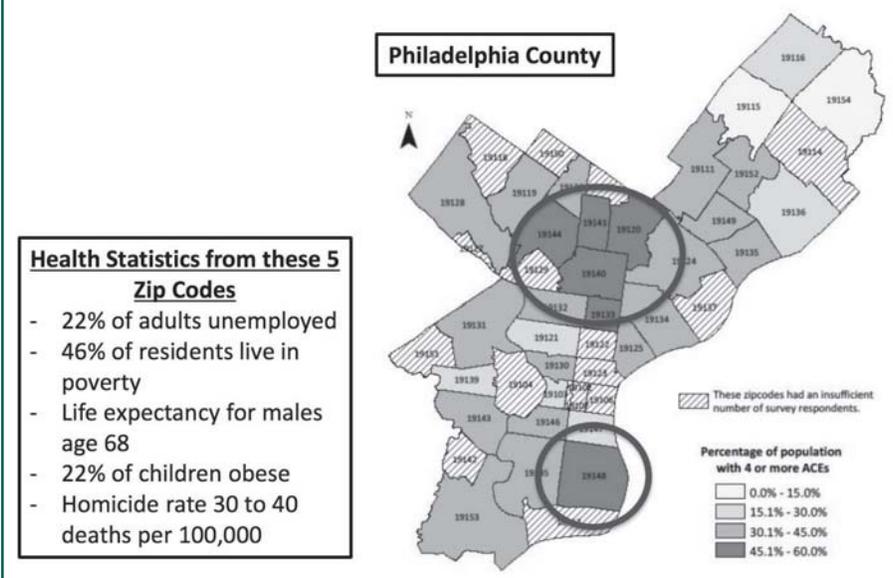
Source: Roy Wade, Jr., Childhood Stress and Urban Poverty: The Impact of ACEs on Health, slide 37, available at http://pa-elic.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/RoyWadepresentationforwebsite.pdf.

How does trauma manifest in schools, with what typical result?

We know that ACEs are prevalent and universal. Recent research appears to show that ACEs exposure is more severe for urban populations and especially for people of color and people living in poverty. What does this mean for children?

First, we know that high ACEs exposure negatively impacts child development. The resulting physiological changes can make cognition and sustained focus more difficult and interrupt the learning process. A report describing representative experiences of the general Head Start population in Spokane, Washington found that, among children three to four years old at the time of the screening, ACEs exposure is very high. Further, as ACEs exposure increases, teachers and parents report risks to child development. These results "suggest that children with higher ACEs not only experience lower development assets (attachment quality) but increased rates of behavioral concerns" (Blodgett, 2014). The study found that in this population, high ACEs were generational; 63% of parents and 40% of three to four year old children had experienced three or more, where three ACEs is the threshold for significant health and social risks.

In the context of school performance, these results are especially concerning because of the strong correlation between ACEs exposure and below-average measures of social and cognitive development (Id. at 3). Specifically, high ACEs exposure in very young children correlates to difficulties with school readiness, particularly social emotional adjustment and cognitive skills (Id. at 10).

The results appear borne out for older children in another study performed among public elementary school children in Spokane, Washington. Dr. Chris Blodgett and his investigators had school staff interview children regarding academic problems, health concerns, and adverse events.

It also highlights the greatly increased risk of severe attendance problems, with a spike between two ACE exposures (2.6) and three or more (4.9).

(Spokane Childhood ACEs Study) Among the academic problems were not meeting grade level expectations in one or more subject areas, attendance problems that interfere with learning, and school behavior problems that interfere with learning. The adverse events measured did not precisely duplicate traditional ACEs or Urban Indicators, but contained similar exposures.

In the context of this study, Dr. Blodgett and his researchers found that exposure to even one ACE increases the risk of poor outcomes. Further, the review confirmed the dose-response relationship between ACEs exposure and child development risk: the more ACEs, the higher the risk (Id. at 2). The table of odds ratios compiled by researchers highlights the particularly sharp rise in severe school behavior concerns in response to ACEs exposure, especially in response to three or more. It also highlights the greatly increased risk of severe attendance problems, with a spike between two ACE exposures (2.6) and three or more (4.9). This is concerning because chronic absence can severely damage learning and ability to progress toward a diploma. (For example, in California, researchers found that 73% of students who were chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are unable to meet California standards for English Language Arts once they get to the third grade) (CA AG 2016).

Researchers concluded that adverse childhood events should be a focus for school-based risk reduction efforts and that "attending to ACE exposure in children may be the most powerful predictor of risk for school to attend compared to other common school risk indicators" (Spokane Study at 4).

Second, as the Spokane Study's findings on behavioral issues and other studies appear to indicate, ACEs ex-

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Figure 3. Measures of relative risk for children with ACEs exposure

Odds Ratios for Child Development Problems Compared to No Known Lifetime ACEs

	Academic Failure	Severe Attendance Problems	Severe School Behavior Concerns	Chronic Health Problems
Three or more ACEs	2.9	4.9	6.1	2.5
Two ACEs	2.5	2.6	4.3	1.6
One ACE	1.5	2.2	2.4	1.8

* ACE level of exposure in the past 12 months provided comparable risk predictions
Source: Adverse Childhood Expereience and Developmental Risk in Elementary Schoolchildren, ACEs Study, available at http://ext100.wsu.edu/cafru/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/2015/02/Adverse-Childhood-Experience-and-Developmental-Risk-in-Elementary-Schoolchildren-Research-Briefx.pdf.

posure can trigger and exacerbate symptoms that lead to disciplinary difficulty in school for children who have suffered trauma. We know that trauma and its aftermath can cause symptoms including attention deficits, emotional dysregulation, and oppositional behaviors (American Academy of Pediatrics 2014). Because traumatized children have learned to evaluate their surroundings for danger, the classroom setting can "sabotage their ability to remain calm and regulate their behavior in a classroom" (Trauma Learning Initiative). Because traumatized children have great difficulty in interpreting social cues and communicating appropriately about their feelings, their behavior—whether acting out or "zoning out"—is ripe for misinterpretation by teachers, which can lead to significant difficulties for children (Id.). Traumatized children may distrust teachers and peers, and may be more aggressive in their relations with others. These characteristics of traumatized children may make them more likely to be subject to the very discipline—up to and including exclusionary practices like suspension and expulsion—that are most likely to re-traumatize them (Education Law Center 2014). (As noted below, the role of discriminatory school discipline practices is important to acknowledge here as well.)

The impact of ACEs on student learning is of special concern because poor students and students of color are overrepresented among the population of students with three or more ACEs (Keller 2016). Poor students perform less well at school not only because they attend schools with high turnover, high student-to-teacher ratios, and fewer resources at home (critical as those issues are): they are also more likely to have a high ACE score (Id.). Further, low-income communities are disproportionately comprised of minority persons (Id.). The burden of ACEs is borne, in large part, by those children least able to access the resources and support structures that could help them build resilience to

traumatic experiences. (Center for Youth Wellness CEO and ACEs expert Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, a pediatrician practicing in San Francisco, identifies several resources that help children build resilience to toxic stress. These include educating and empowering caregivers about ACEs and the community resources available to them; engaging families in Child-Parent Psychotherapy; enabling families to access healthy food and exercise; and using biofeedback to educate children about their own stress responses)(Harris 2014).

The high—and disproportionate—rate of suspensions of poor children and children of color may be another indicator of the heavy ACEs burden that these children bear. Recent fig-

These factors are at the heart of the claim that untreated trauma leads to conditions that qualify as disabilities under the ADA.

ures indicate that 16% of African-American students, 7% of Latino students, and 4%-5% of white students were suspended during the 2009-2010 and 2011-2012 school years (Losen 2015; Flannery 2015). In 2010, over 70% of students arrested at school or referred to law enforcement were African American or Latino (Kirwan 2014). Notably, while ACEs exposure may be a partial explanation for the disparity, the Kirwan Institute argues that the differential suspension rates are due in part to the forces of implicit bias. *Id.* at 2-3. It is entirely possible that both forces are at work in this phenomenon. These facts matter because of the impact that suspensions and involvement with law enforcement have on a student's chances of long-term success: a suspension is the number-one predictor of whether students will drop out of school and experience unemployment, reliance on social welfare programs, and imprisonment (Flannery at 3-4).

ACEs research appears to show that

children of color and children living in poverty suffer much higher rates of exposure to ACEs and also suffer higher rates of exclusion from the classroom. Research continues on who these children are, how they fare in the classroom, and what interventions will be most useful for them.

Two interesting developments out of California illustrate possible future pathways for action to transform the way that schools perceive and address trauma and toxic stress among their students.

The Compton USD lawsuit

The Compton Unified School District, located in Los Angeles, is one of the poorest and most challenged school districts in the state. In July 2015, plaintiff students and teachers filed suit against the District, alleging that the District had failed to address the students' trauma symptoms and, instead, had engaged in practices that pushed them out of school. The plaintiffs further argued that these trauma symptoms qualified as a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act; if true, the district was required by federal law to address and mitigate the consequences of the students' exposure to various types of trauma.

In September 2015, the trial court denied the District's motion to dismiss, finding—crucially—that the plaintiffs' allegations *could* qualify as claims under the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"). (Materials available at Trauma and Learning website.) The judge did not rule that claims of untreated trauma made against school districts *would* qualify under the ADA as a physical impairment for the purposes of the Act, but he refused to strike them categorically—and this was a big win. The allegations stated in the complaint cover many of the Urban Indicators discussed above along with traditional ACEs, claiming that these events profoundly affected plaintiffs' well-being and ability to learn. These factors are at the heart of the claim that untreated trauma leads to condi-

tions that qualify as disabilities under the ADA.

The parties are currently in settlement talks. The ultimate agreement regarding the District's responsibility to alleviate trauma symptoms could be a bellwether for other school districts across the state and nation.

The example of SFUSD

Many school districts are working on responding to trauma among their students by integrating trauma-responsive practices, becoming trauma sensitive schools, developing restorative justice techniques, and other approaches. (See, e.g., Trauma Sensitive Schools website.) The San Francisco Unified School District's approach, which relies primarily on its Safe and Supportive Schools programming, has experienced significant success over the last seven years in consistently reducing suspensions and including Social Emotional Learning Indicators on K-5 report cards (SFUSD 2016). (The District acknowledges it needs continued work on school climate, cultural competence, and classroom management, due to poorer scores in referrals and chronic absenteeism.)

A key part of SFUSD's shift away from retributive practices that can retraumatize students is its Restorative Practices Resolution, passed in 2009. The Resolution has four parts:

1. "The Paradigm Shift away from Punishment." The District moved away from "Zero Tolerance" and toward community building and social skill development.

2. "The Shift to doing things "With" People, instead of "To" or "For" People." This principle encourages schools to work with staff and students in a supportive and less controlling way.

3. "We are Advocates for Social Justice." The District acknowledged the significant role played by race

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and committed the schools and staff to be "agents of progress in the struggle for Social Justice."

4. "We consciously and proactively build positive school communities." The District committed to proactive activities with students and school communities throughout the year.

The District believes that the Resolution may be the biggest factor in the significant decline in suspensions in the District since 2011.

Conclusion

As our understanding of child trauma and toxic stress crystallizes, schools have a unique opportunity to view student conduct through a trauma lens and consider whether neurobiological and physiological responses to toxic stress have an undue influence over students' actions. The purpose is not to disregard the conduct, nor to avoid confronting problems of bias in school discipline, but rather to make use of the conduct as a red flag for psychological and physiological distress. Through the use of restorative justice and other innovative techniques, schools can ask not "what is wrong with you?" but rather "what happened to you?" These questions are of particularly acute importance to poor students of color, who, due to this intersection of identities, carry the heaviest burden of stress. Easing that physiological and emotional burden will go far to support these students and promote their success. ❏

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Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching
A new edition for a new movement

The enormously popular civil rights teaching resource and guide, published by Teaching for Change and PRRAC in 2004 is still used by teachers all over the country to help students see themselves in the civil rights movement, and deepen students' understanding of the CRM as a grassroots, multi-issue movement that continues today. Copies are even prominently displayed at the new National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC)

Responding to continuing demand for lesson plans and new content, Teaching for Change has embarked on the first major revision of the book since 2004, updating the content to include new stories linking the current movement to the historical movement, adding a companion website with additional lesson plans, background readings, handouts and video testimonies by teachers about their experiences teaching about racism and resistance. Like the first edition, the new edition will cover the civil rights movement inclusively, linking traditional struggles over racial discrimination with movements for gender equality, LGBTQ rights, immigrant rights, and labor history.

PRRAC is joining Teaching for Change in supporting this updated second edition. If you have developed your own civil rights teaching materials we'd be very interested in seeing them, and possibly sharing them (feel free to contact Deborah Menkart at dmenkart@teachingforchange.org). If you are interested in supporting this effort financially, please contact Deborah directly or send PRRAC your tax deductible donation with a note to direct funds to the new edition.
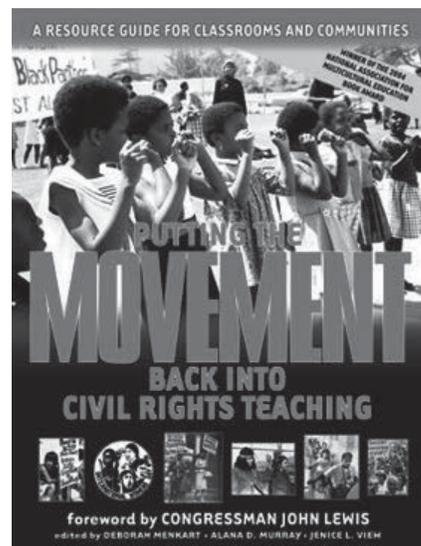
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Poverty & Race Index, Vol. 25 (2016)

This Index includes the major articles in the four 2016 issues of *Poverty & Race* (Vol. 25). Full issues, dating back to 1992, are available on our website, at http://prrac.org/news.php.

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