

# Fred Trump, the Ku Klux Klan and Grassroots Redlining in Interwar America

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## Abstract

The arrest of Fred Trump during a Ku Klux Klan (KKK) rally in New York City in 1927 came to light during the 2016 election campaign, but no one grasped its full historical significance. This article sets this contentious episode within the larger history of the Klan and the racial contests that scarred life in the interwar metropolitan fringe to produce a new account of how racially segregated communities were formed. The article finds a decade-long contested process of overlapping layers, driven by debates over race and national identity; tense relationships between community groups; the political machinery of city, state and federal governments; competition between civic groups for access to services; and all set against a turbulent speculative world of interwar real estate. The article argues racially redlined communities were created by a decade-long grassroots battle fought from below just as much as they were imposed from above by political decision-makers.

## Keywords

segregation, Ku Klux Klan, redlining, Trump, civil rights, New York City, Queens, New Deal

In another year, with another candidate, the revelation could have been devastating. On 9 September 2015, the website and blog *Boing Boing* reported Donald Trump's father, Fred, was arrested in a "KKK brawl with cops." The writer, Matt Blum, had unearthed a tantalizing snippet from the *New York Times* from June 1927 that named Fred as one of seven arrested during a violent confrontation between police and Klansmen during New York City's Memorial Day Parade. Fred lived on Devonshire Road in Jamaica, Queens, near where the fighting took place, and would have been 21-years-old at the time.<sup>1</sup>

When the revelation broke, Donald responded with a denial that was forceful, repetitive and contradictory: "It never happened ... I saw that it was on one little website that said it. It never happened. And they said there were no charges, no nothing." Jason Horowitz, the interviewer from the *New York Times* who put the story to him, had first got Donald to confirm his father lived at the same address, although he claimed in the next breath that "I don't think my father ever lived on Devonshire."<sup>2</sup> For a media often accused of creating "fake news," the initial

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handling of the story was quite careful. Blum cautioned the story was “not proof” Trump was a Ku Klux Klan (KKK) member and left open the possibility he could have been “an innocent bystander.” The story was followed up by *Vice*, who found corroborating evidence Fred was arrested and was “dismissed on a charge of refusing to disperse from a parade,” while unearthing another article containing the explosive description of seven arrested “berobed marchers.” On the other side of the political spectrum, alt-right outlets branded the story a “fraudulent smear” by the “lying mainstream media.”<sup>3</sup>

Completely missing from this short-lived media scrum, however, was any sense of the bigger and ultimately more important historical story that lurked not far from the surface. Although the limitations of evidence mean the waters surrounding Trump’s arrest remain muddy (like much else related to the 2016 election), this article shows the 1927 Memorial Day Parade and its aftermath serves another historical purpose. By analyzing the contentious events of that day, setting them within the larger history of the Klan in Queens and amidst the racial contests that scarred life in the metropolitan fringe in the interwar period more broadly, we are afforded a new perspective of one of the most important processes in twentieth-century U.S. urban history: racial segregation and the origins of redlining.

The phenomenon of redlining, whereby certain areas (and regularly, by proxy, non-white communities) were designated high risk for those offering mortgages and associated financial services like insurance, remains one of the more notorious chapters in the United States’s racially fractured recent past. The term came into common usage in the turbulent late 1960s, but historians soon argued its origins lay in earlier decisions. New Deal agencies like the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) initiated in 1933 and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) set up the following year have occupied particular places in the scholarly spotlight ever since Kenneth Jackson’s influential book on the growth of post-war suburbia, *Crabgrass Frontier*. According to Jackson, these New Deal interventions were part of an attempt by government to fix the United States’s broken housing market which succeeded in some aspects but which, ultimately, contributed to the racialized division between richer and poorer neighborhoods in suburbs and cities. A wave of scholars followed Jackson’s lead, tracing how redlining decisions operated in different agencies, cities and suburbs across the post-war period.<sup>4</sup> The growing recognition of the role of government in entrenching racial divisions eventually fed into contemporary political discourse too; Ta-Nehisi Coates, for example, has been among the most influential voices to cite redlining to bolster calls for reparative justice from the U.S. government.<sup>5</sup>

Some scholarship, however, has questioned the precise impact of these governmental decisions. Amy Hillier, for example, has examined one of the HOLC’s most infamous creations: the redlined maps that rated different areas according to risk on a four-tiered color-coded scale, with red signifying the notionally riskiest (and often, uncoincidentally, blackest), parts of town. Hillier studied the HOLC in Philadelphia and challenged the assumption it was solely responsible for instigating redlining. Although differential rates of interest were applied in redlined zones, HOLC maps were neither that widely shared or noticeably responsible for different lending patterns. Where HOLC actions reinforced segregation, moreover, Hillier argued this constituted racial “steering” rather than redlining. Jackson’s groundbreaking work, in this view, was part of the problem, prompting subsequent scholars to eschew “testing the redlining thesis” in favor of tracing its impacts. Other studies have complicated the picture further by showing the HOLC actually lent to some African Americans in its early life, even though its policies also often reinforced segregation.<sup>6</sup>

With the consequences of New Deal-era policy looking less clear-cut, attention has begun to turn to the question of causation. Hillier, for instance, found in Philadelphia that redlined sections were often being shunned by lenders well before the HOLC produced its maps. This finding chimed with Thomas Hanchett’s study of HOLC policy in Charlotte that suggested the effect was to “solidify practices that had previously existed only informally.” Jackson’s

earlier work, for its part, gave more attention to effect than cause but argued the HOLC built on interwar notions connecting race and ethnicity to land values and “simply applied these notions ... to real-estate appraising on an unprecedented scale.” There was clearly an important prehistory to the policy decisions of the New Deal. As Khalil Gibran Muhammad has shown, for instance, the supposed link between race and criminality (one of the most important underlying causes of discriminatory real estate practices through the century) was a statistical, ideological and political construction forged in urban spaces around the turn of the century.<sup>7</sup> Yet there is more work to be done to trace how interwar cultural values, social relationships, public policies and market forces collided to entrench segregated settlement in the variegated metropolitan landscapes of interwar America.<sup>8</sup>

In fact, strange though it might seem, the racial dynamics of the interwar period have become somewhat downplayed in the vast literatures of twentieth-century urban and suburban history.<sup>9</sup> More focus has been placed on the origins of inner-city racial segregation in the century’s first decades and on the “urban crisis” of the 1960s and its origins in the period around World War II.<sup>10</sup> This voluminous literature has, of course, contributed greatly to our understanding not just of urban and suburban places but to the most important historical forces shaping modern American life more broadly. Yet the period between 1919 and 1939 is in danger of being assigned a transitional rather than transformational role, after the First World War when racialized patterns of inner-city settlement were established and before the legislative activism of the New Deal and war set in motion the urban and suburban reordering of the century’s second half.<sup>11</sup> We know from scholars like Kevin Boyle that northern cities like Detroit experienced racial turf wars during the 1920s, while Andrew Wiese has shown racial contests over suburban space also pre-dated World War II.<sup>12</sup> Yet important questions remain about which local actors and national forces shaped these dramas most decisively, as well as when and how racial divides among communities were created and with what different regional effects.

Jamaica in Queens, New York City—the scene of Fred Trump’s brush with the law—is, at it turns out, a perfect case-study to tackle this task. Studies of the city exemplify some of literature’s larger contours, with much focus on the origins of Harlem in the century’s first decades and on the racial tensions that marked post-war experiences.<sup>13</sup> Yet the interwar period mattered greatly to the history of New York and as an embodiment of the national picture. While the Harlem Renaissance was in full swing, other quieter but important developments were playing out across the East River. Queens was brought officially into the fold of New York City with incorporation in 1898; it grew rapidly in the first decades of the century because of many of the same forces shaping the United States in the 1920s more broadly, especially an exodus from the inner city by first and second-generation migrants fuelled by overcrowding in older parts of the city, the creation of transport links to new communities, and the technological advances and speculative frenzies that promoted house building on a large scale.<sup>14</sup>

Making sense of Queens’s interwar history poses some challenges, however, especially when it comes to the distinction sometimes applied between “urban” and “suburban” experiences.<sup>15</sup> When it comes to how to define these places, most scholars would agree that alongside municipal boundaries, factors of population density, levels of home ownership, proximity to employment, and political control are all important. Yet stubborn questions about whether to define suburbs based on what they have (i.e. low-density buildings), or what they lack (i.e. political control by an urban core), or even what they are imagined to be, have led some to question of whether the term is worth abandoning altogether.<sup>16</sup> In response, this article applies a metropolitan approach—one that thinks carefully and critically about the “real” and “imagined” differences between cities and suburbs—to understand interwar Queens.<sup>17</sup> The Borough’s development blended both urban and suburban processes, typifying a moment in U.S. history when these distinctions were being thought about afresh: the preface to the 1930 census acknowledged as much, stating that although cities and towns had to be defined according to their legal boundaries for the survey to make

sense, “suburbs are from many standpoints as much a part of the city as the area which is under municipal government.”<sup>18</sup> To put the Census Bureau’s point the other way around, Queens’s history shows areas within interwar municipal boundaries could also house features often associated more readily with post-war suburbia.

Analyzing the growth of Queens, the circumstances of Fred Trump’s arrest, the activities of the local Klan and its part in a larger racial contest over metropolitan space produces a refined view of how redlined communities were formed. This approach reveals a decade-long fight of overlapping layers, driven by forces including national-scale debates over race, immigration and national identity; tense societal relationships between different community groups and their intersecting associational lives; the political machinery of city, state and federal governments; competition between civic groups for access to resources and services; and all set against the turbulent backdrop of the local and national economy and the speculative world of interwar real estate.

The maps that redlined several sections of Jamaica’s south side in 1938 formalized an association with racialized inner-city poverty and dilapidation over 10 years in the making. This outcome was not attributable to any failure on the part of black protest groups like the Jamaica branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to understand the problems they faced. On the contrary, community leaders had a keen sense of the task before them; the problem was they were trying to win a metropolitan game stacked against them by longstanding, racialized rules, a handicap manifested in the frustrating attempts to engage with the political machinery of New York’s Tammany Democrats and Republicans. Without in any way letting government officials or policies off the hook; therefore, this article shows racial divisions on the streets of boroughs like Queens were created by a decade-long grassroots battle fought from below just as much as they were imposed from above by political decision-makers and planners.

## **The Growth of Queens and the KKK**

Before the incorporation of Brooklyn and Queens into the city of New York in 1898, Jamaica was a sparsely populated settlement on the predominantly rural outcrop of Long Island. By the end of the 1930s, it was part of the city’s fast growing borough and shared many characteristics with the nation’s other growing urban areas: a high population density (31,759 in total) and a wide gap between wealthy and poorer residents which mapped onto its street plan. In Queens as a whole, the connected geographic and socio-economic boundaries between South Jamaica, Jamaica “proper” and neighboring districts like St. Albans and Hollis also became more visible. In a related development, although city dwellers in black clusters of settlement like South Jamaica occupied a wide variety of positions on the socio-economic ladder, the connections between “race” and “class” among Queens’s residents became imprinted on these increasingly fixed geographic lines by the Second World War.<sup>19</sup>

Beneath the statistics, however, lay a complex and multi-layered process—this was not just a story of another “ghetto in formation” two decades after Harlem.<sup>20</sup> The growth of Queens, after all, was intimately connected to changes in the city-at-large. Manhattan’s population grew rapidly in the late nineteenth century, a pointed example of the rapid industrialization and urbanization that marked national development after the Civil War. As Manhattan grew, so did its surrounding districts, both formal parts of the city like Queens and suburbs to the north, west and south and, especially, eastward onto Long Island. In the first decades of the century, Queens experienced a real estate boom fostered by improved transport links that pulled people into the area who were, simultaneously, being pushed away from the overcrowded and increasingly expensive older parts of middle and lower Manhattan. Construction on the Queensboro Bridge, which connected the newly incorporated borough to Manhattan, was completed in 1909 and the

subway arrived in 1917. The Long Island Railroad had already opened a station at Union Course in the northern part of Jamaica in 1905. Over a hundred thousand people moved to Queens between 1900 and 1910, with the population of the borough nearly quadrupling by 1930. African Americans began to arrive in noticeable numbers in the early 1920s, by which time other migrant groups—especially first and second-generation Irish-Americans and German migrants like the Trumps—were becoming well-established.<sup>21</sup>

As important as large-scale socio-economic, demographic and technological forces were in fuelling eastward migration, attitudes and values also mattered. In this regard, the image of Jamaica as a suburban setting—a place that melded both urban and rural attributes in a happy union—was a recurring trope that drew in people from different backgrounds. For African Americans, many real estate brokers continued to promote the benefits of life in Manhattan as Harlem became the famous “race capital” of the Negro world, but other entrepreneurs after the First World War began to extol the virtues of new settings like Jamaica. The Sun Rise Trail Realty Association, for instance, pitched itself at “colored folks,” promising a place in the “sun” with “no regrets.” Jamaica’s “suburban” attributes included its good transport connections to Manhattan, its tennis courts and club houses. As the black presence grew, many real estate agents continued to present Jamaica as part of Long Island rather than an adjunct of bustling Manhattan, marketing it as a place to avoid “the overcrowding of Harlem life.” Adverts often depicted a classic image of the bucolic suburban imagination: a single-family dwelling located in verdant surroundings.<sup>22</sup>

The constructed image of a suburban ideal had, for the time being at least, some basis in reality. In 1930, Queens’s had a higher percentage of single-family dwellings (70%) than Manhattan (25%) or Brooklyn (46%) and only 7% of its residences held three or more families.<sup>23</sup> As this building boom drew migrants from more densely populated parts of the city—especially Manhattan—Jamaica lost its rural character but retained a small town feel, even as connections with the metropolitan core grew stronger.<sup>24</sup>

In many ways the career of the KKK fed off these developments. The growth of Queens brought residents from inner city areas like Manhattan into close contact with others from New York state, other parts of the nation (especially the South) and from abroad. Although immigration slackened as a result of the restrictive governmental legislation of the early 1920s, a large-scale internal migration continued throughout the decade. Jamaica, located toward the geographic center of the borough, became a focus for organizational activities by—and contests between—these different migratory groups. The emergence of the Jamaica Klan, given the number 38 and named after the New York leader, Emmitt D. Smith, was part of this burgeoning civic and associational life. Smith, the King Kleagle in New York, resided in Binghamton and had helped develop its strength upstate toward the Niagara for some years.<sup>25</sup> The state-wide KKK had, in turn, already been influenced by the national organization and its attempts to adopt a “mainstream” position in American life. In this second iteration of the KKK, set up in Alabama by William Joseph Simmons in 1915 with the assistance of Edward Young Clarke, the organization adopted some of the trappings of a fraternal lodge. Hiram W. Evans, who took over as the “Imperial Wizard” in the early 1920s, continued to promote these activities: members paid a fee to join, met at social gatherings, and engaged in civic affairs including political office holding.<sup>26</sup>

Yet historians disagree about the Klan’s success in entering the mainstream of 1920s American political life, as well as its different local manifestations. In particular, there is a danger that acknowledgment of the 1920s’ Klan’s attempts at “respectability” lead to the erroneous conclusion that race was somehow an unimportant part of its platform. Although some have argued that ideas of white supremacy were secondary to the personal ambitions of its leaders in determining its story, the Klan’s success in the first half of the decade, where it is estimated its membership reached two million, depended on its ability to ride the crest of racist and reactionary waves



spilling over from the late nineteenth century.<sup>27</sup> The Klan in New York state, meanwhile, has been understood to have peaked in the early 1920s, with some commenting that the organization struggled to penetrate the state's largest city due to its heterogenous population. This observation, however, was made predominately with Manhattan rather than outer boroughs in mind.<sup>28</sup> A closer look into the primary evidence in Jamaica, Queens, shows an active local Klan in the second half of the decade that worked to enter the mainstream and play down overt anti-black racism, while operating simultaneously as a divisive force that became a focal-point for racial clashes over metropolitan space through the 1920s and beyond.

## The 1927 Memorial Day Parade

The 1927 Memorial Day Parade, scene of Fred Trump's now infamous run-in with the law, was central to the Klan's role in this larger metropolitan transformation. To start with, the KKK's attempt to join the parade reflected the organization's attempt to assume a "respectable" political position. They had the notorious hoods, but things were not entirely clandestine; several leaders on the day were highly visible and several were happy to be named in the press. The man reportedly in charge, Colonel Edward A. Watkins, tried to style himself as the epitome of moderation, claiming in the aftermath, "we were out to honor war dead . . . not . . . to start a controversy."<sup>29</sup> Yet the tension began before the parade even started. The week before, a number of civic groups got wind of the Klan's intentions and 150 people attended a meeting at the town hall on the subject. A rancorous discussion revealed the parade committee had approved the Klan's application and there were "heated and pointed remarks," with criticism coming from the American Legion and Allied Veterans. The Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal organization especially popular with Irish-Americans, withdrew from the parade in protest.<sup>30</sup>

The violent confrontations that followed on 30 May represented a seminal moment when the lines of demarcation between Queens's constituent communities were contested publicly. The Klan contingent was about 1,000 strong and stood a few blocks away when a parade including veterans' groups, civic clubs, and school students began at the intersection of Jamaica Avenue and 85th street. The KKK had been joined by 400 other supporters, described as their friends, relatives and wives, as they tried to join the procession at 89th street as the parade's seventh and last division, but a police officer with 50 men blocked their path. The officer said the Klan's white robes were provocative and could cause disorder. The Klan succeeded in breaking into the procession, however, and marched along Jamaica Avenue into Hillside Avenue, only for the police to stop their progress once more. After a half-hour delay, the Klan restarted, only to stop again at Hillside Avenue and Queens Boulevard.<sup>31</sup>

The parade then turned violent as it headed through the one of the busiest central thoroughfares in the Borough. Several reports agreed that a spark for the confrontation was a group of young men from the crowd rushing at a Klansman carrying the KKK banner. What followed was more confusing. Observers spoke of scenes of chaos. It was a "riot and free-for-all fist fight" involving both "friends and foes" of the Klan, according to the *Chicago Defender*. The *Herald Tribune* spoke of a "riotous four-mile gantlet of flying fists and importunate police." The *Times* reported that "women fought women and spectators fought the policemen and the Klansmen." The result was that the Klan's section of the parade disintegrated into a "disorganized mob" and it became difficult to separate spectators from participants.<sup>32</sup> Here, then, was the contested place of the Klan in 1920s America brought to life in graphic form in the physical and symbolic heart of this newly developed part of the city.

The parade's purpose was also loaded with meaning: the annual Memorial Day Parade set out to commemorate the dead from the Civil War, part of a tradition dating back over fifty years that attempted to promote the spirit of mutual reconciliation between two former enemies: Union and Confederacy, North and South. The process of national reunion was, from this perspective at

least, a remarkable success (achieved as much by forgetting as by remembering) but by 1927 a new series of questions about national identity—who was in, who was out, and what the nation's place in the world should be—were dominating political life beneath the glitzy façade of the “Roaring Twenties.”<sup>33</sup> The descent of a peaceful parade designed to promote national unity into a violent melee of ethnic, religious, and racial conflict was a powerful illustration that these cultural contests were not just played out in the abstract, but were rooted in real-world clashes for control of metropolitan space.

The men arrested—among whom Fred Trump was, of course, the most eye-catching example—reflected the local, regional and national dimensions of these contests. Most reports the day after listed five male arrestees, although some named six. By 1 June, after the cases had been heard by a magistrate, the number had grown to seven. Three lines in three newspapers, the *New York Daily Star*, the *New York Times* and the *Richmond Hill Record*, named Fred Trump of 175-24 Devonshire Road among them. The *Times* reported Trump had been “discharged” from custody, while the *Star* and *Record* gave the extra detail that he had been “dismissed on a charge of refusing to disperse from a parade when ordered to do so.”<sup>34</sup> Most reports agreed on the identities of the other six: John E. Kipp of 24 Main Street, Peekskill; John Marcy of 21 Cliff Avenue, Yonkers; Fred Lyons of Hyde Park, Long Island; Thomas Carroll of 476 South Street, Jamaica; Thomas Erwin of 7052 Reedland Street, Philadelphia; and Harry J. Free of Westbury Avenue, Long Island.<sup>35</sup>

A parallel can be drawn between the Klan's uncertain role in 1920s political life—which extended to questions over its legal status—and the variety of ways those caught up in the parade were dealt with by the courts. The arrestees went before the local magistrate the next day. Trump was discharged and the remaining six cases were adjourned.<sup>36</sup> These cases ended up being heard on 16 June by magistrate Harry Miller. George Herz, a Klan lawyer, was hired to represent most defendants. The session was rowdy, as jeers from the gallery prompted Miller to threaten to clear the courtroom. Kipp and Marcy were held for trial in the Special Sessions court and ended up serving time in prison (Kipp was an unapologetic supporter of the Klan—several reported he went to the police wearing his white robe—while Marcy denied involvement). The third, Harry J. Free, reportedly wore the uniform of the Nassau County Rangers who the *Times* reported were a “semi-military” group who did “police work” for the KKK. Free was “charged with being disorderly,” as was the fourth, Thomas Erwin, but both were eventually found not guilty.<sup>37</sup> Lyons and Carroll, meanwhile, were found guilty for fighting each other but given suspended sentences.<sup>38</sup>

As for Trump, a few brief observations are worth making. The idea that Trump must have been an innocent bystander because the other arrestees were all out-of-towners (advanced by some commentators when the story broke in 2015) is belied by the fact that those arrested comprised a mixture of locals like Trump and Carroll, those from other parts of New York's metropolitan fringes like Yonkers and Long Island, and some like Kipp and Erwin from further afield. The attempt to exonerate Trump by establishing non-Klan observers were arrested too has some more evidential grounding: Carroll, who represented himself in court, seems to fit that label, while even though at the other end of the scale, Kipp and Free's attire provides an unusually vivid confirmation of their affiliations.<sup>39</sup> The eye-catching line about all seven being “berobed marchers” can be read as a piece of journalistic license as there was no accompanying attempt to provide details of the arrestees, even though several other more detailed accounts also gave the impression all arrestees had an affiliation with the Klan.<sup>40</sup> It remains the case that a plausible, but by no means definitive, reason why someone would have been arrested for “refusing to disperse from a parade” was because they were in the way of the police, part of the parade in some form and/or in sympathy with the Klan. Yet the evidence does not allow a definitive verdict. With the court records unavailable (despite the author's best efforts to locate them), we do not know whether Trump was discharged because the police realized they made a mistake, whether they decided his

comparatively minor violation was not worth pursuing further, or some other set of circumstances altogether.<sup>41</sup> This open-ended conclusion may not satisfy the journalistic inclination for a clear-cut verdict of guilt or evidence, but it does fit the evidence.

## Cross Burnings along the Borders of Jamaica

The 1927 Memorial Day Parade's historical importance goes beyond its most famous protagonist; however, it set the stage for a longer grassroots racialized fight for control of community resources. Part of this battle involved the inflammatory signature cross-burnings of the Klan and began on the same day as the parade. Two others, Alfred Sholtze and George Bower, were arrested alongside the other seven on 30 May. They were picked up by police called to a disturbance at Kew Gardens, a short distance to the north of the parade route. A large crowd had gathered near a fifteen-foot gasoline-soaked cross and the police found the two "hiding in the bushes." The police believed Sholtze and Bower's excuse that they were only in the area as newspaper photographers and they were released, but the cross was real; its discovery marked the start of a spate of cross burning in the Jamaica area in the late 1920s that were associated with the Klan.<sup>42</sup>

The wave of cross-burnings targeted black residents, despite the fact anti-Catholic rhetoric was to the fore during the Klan's subsequent public relations operation. There was a concerted effort to redefine the messy events of the day into a neat story of police aggression and noble Klan heroism. The Klan distributed leaflets through Queens headed "Americans assaulted by the Roman Catholic Police of New York City," playing on prejudices against the Irish-American presence in the New York Police Department (NYPD). This propaganda exercise followed the publication of the melodramatically titled pamphlet, *The Trail of Tragedy*, which detailed the supposed injustices inflicted on the patriotic Klansmen by the combined machinations of the police, politicians and the Catholic Church.<sup>43</sup> The Klan succeeded in getting a Grand Jury investigation which ended up being highly critical of the police who, it was found, "unquestionably did more to incite riot than to quell disturbance." The city's mayor, James "Jimmy" Walker, responded with a classic politician's tactic: kicking the issue into the long grass by promising to give "consideration" to the issues raised. For the Klan, Walker's Irish heritage made him an obvious target, as did his past record as the instigator of state legislation that forced the KKK to file details of its activities with government.<sup>44</sup>

The Klan's public relations work also shed light on its local strategy to downplay overt anti-black racism. This manifested itself in the odd spectacle of the Jamaica Klan offering a hand of "friendship" to the recently formed Jamaica branch of the NAACP. A letter was sent from "Al Whitsu" on July 1, 1927 on the headed notepaper of the Jamaica Klan with the cordial salutation of "gentlemen." As well as confirming the group was the same as had participated in the Memorial Day Parade, the letter stated the local Klan was "composed of several thousand Americans, amongst whom are most of our prominent and influential business and professional men" (although the writer could have been inflating the KKK's influence, this is one of numerous pieces of evidence eroding the claims of some that all Klansmen in Jamaica were imports from out of town). The letter continued, "contrary to popular belief, we are in no sense anti-negro" and did not "advocate mob rule and prejudice against" minority groups. The writer even claimed he wanted to help local black churches—the Protestant ones, of course.<sup>45</sup>

The Jamaica NAACP was not naïve about the letter's intent. The branch sent a reply from their President, Charles Reid, who pointed out, respectfully and firmly, that although the Jamaica Klan might not have "hostility toward the Negro," they were "not unaware of the lynchings, floggings and other brutalities" perpetrated against blacks elsewhere. Reid's response was designed not to antagonize a dangerous foe while rejecting the Klan's provocative and disingenuous hand of "friendship." Because, at the very same time, Klansmen were acting in contradictory ways. Paul Winter, the Klan's "field representative" in Queens and the brain behind their



local propaganda, spoke at a Klan meeting the week after the Memorial Day procession where he stated the KKK's "only" opposition was to "Negroes marrying white people." The fear of racial intermarriage was no footnote to an otherwise inclusive policy; on the contrary, the fear of interracial sex—miscegenation—remained a central component of white supremacy.<sup>46</sup> In another piece of evidence that wound up in the Jamaica NAACP's hands, a Klan circular entitled, "The Negro Situation" argued "the man who does not believe in the supremacy of the white man should get out of America!" The signatory of the Klan "friendship" letter, meanwhile, was also a further telling sign of the racialized agenda of the Jamaica Klan: Al Whitsu was a play on the slogan "All Whites Supreme."<sup>47</sup>

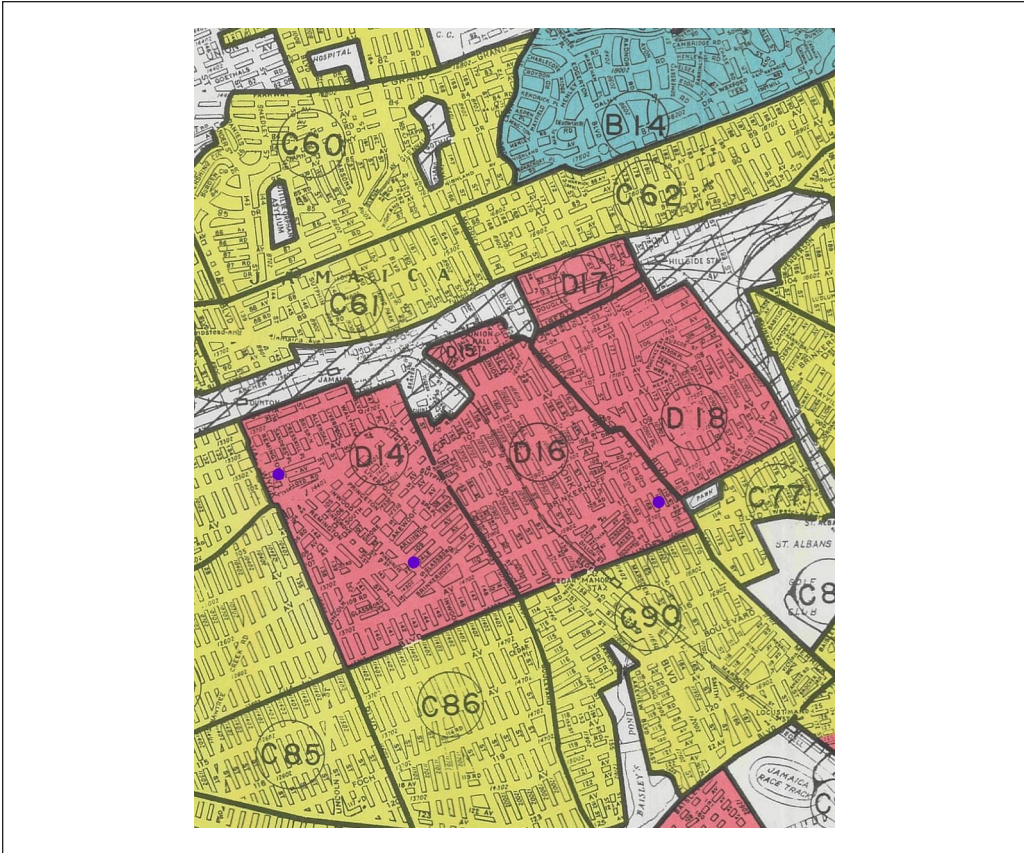
It was little surprise, therefore, when the Klan were implicated in a wave of anti-black vigilantism in the aftermath of the Memorial Day Parade. The Jamaica NAACP reported on and protested against several of these cross-burnings and intimidatory acts against black residents. At midnight on 17 September 1927, for instance, a cross was burnt in front of the house of Robert Avant on Ferndale Avenue. Avant appealed to both the police and the local NAACP for help, but a short time after he was sent a "threatening notice" demanding he move. This was not an isolated incident: two years later, a black resident bought a house on 169th street and threats were made by whites, red paint was daubed on the door and the front yard was filled with rubbish, before a cross was burnt outside. A third case around the same time occurred on Remington St. Leaflets advertised a 'Monster Protest Meeting of Residents ... against the Negroes settling in our section'; it was reported local klansmen were "up in arms" at the audacity of black people attempting to move to the area.<sup>48</sup>

It was not just what happened, but where it happened, that made these cases significant. At the western edge of south Jamaica sat Remington Street, toward Van Wyck Boulevard, beyond which lay Richmond Hill and Ozone Park. Ferndale Avenue was a little further south but still on the west side, while on the eastern edge of south Jamaica was 169th Street, very close to the border with St Albans, a reported "epicentre" of Klan strength (Figure 1).<sup>49</sup> A report written by the NAACP summarized the pattern of behavior these cases fell into, arguing that although the "prejudice and discrimination" in the neighborhood was not as severe as in some other parts of the country, the "spirit and influence of the ... Klan ... becomes evident whenever a colored family moves into a section or street that has previously been exclusively inhabited by whites." It was no surprise all cases were near to, or directly on, the contested borders of south Jamaica, home to the majority of the approximately 10,000 black residents in the area. Crucially, however, this was not yet a redlined district. In the late 1920s, the racial borders between communities were still in a degree of flux: far from being just an urban "ghetto" in formation, Jamaica was one of several new metropolitan communities where boundaries along racial and class lines were hotly contested.<sup>50</sup>

## The Grassroots Battle for Metropolitan Space

Important clues about how these contests would be resolved could also be traced back the 1927 Memorial Day Parade. The event was followed another more prosaic but no less important counterpart to the explosive cross-burnings of the Klan; a local civic battle for resources that played an important role in the growing separation of the black community, a separation that paved the way for the redlining of South Jamaica just over ten years later.

For about a decade between 1927 and 1938, the Jamaica NAACP was at the heart of this story through both its "traditional" campaigns against overt discrimination and concerns with civic improvements. Central actors in this work included the branch president, Charles Reid, and secretary, Frank M. Turner, as well as other committee members like Mrs Romeo L. Dougherty, Edward A. Beaubian, George W. A. Murray, Frosty D. Turner, Gordon H. Jones and Charles E. Shaw. Given the proximity to the NAACP's national headquarters in Manhattan, it made sense



**Figure 1.** Locations of cross burnings and anti-black vigilantism associated with the KKK recorded by the Jamaica NAACP, 1927-1930.

that relations between the two were comparatively close. The branch hosted talks by leaders from the national office like Roy Wilkins, while Turner combined his role as secretary with working as an accountant for the national organization. A campaign against Loew's Hillside Theater who had tried to seat black patrons away from whites represented one of its main early campaigns in the traditional mode of NAACP protest: seeking integration by highlighting and protesting instances of blatant discrimination.<sup>51</sup>

Yet alongside familiar features of NAACP branch work like membership drives, fundraising events and case-by-case protests, leaders in Jamaica also engaged in the struggle for community resources. The NAACP, with a hierarchical structure, was not, however, an ideal organizational vehicle for this type of work. As a consequence, although a lot of its officers engaged in these protests, they did so primarily through another overlapping group: the South Jamaica Property Owners' Association (SJPOA). The SJPOA was set up in 1926 and its first chair was Anna V. Barnes, an active presence in the AME church and women's Republican politics. The group's opening statement of priorities gave an instructive list of concerns; reporters noted its inaugural meeting lambasted the "shameful neglect" of South Jamaica by the authorities. Complaints ranged from faulty sewerage and inadequate refuse collection to dilapidated or incomplete roads. Attendees commented on the fact that the inferior services received by southern parts of the area continued despite residents paying the same taxes as better served sections. Another revealing concern was that house prices might be negatively affected by this

neglect; the SJPOA, after all, reflected both its members' personal financial interests (it was comprised of self-described "prominent colored property owners") and what they saw as the interests of the community-at-large.<sup>52</sup>

The SJPOA had early success, getting a meeting with the Borough President of Queens, Maurice E. Connolly. A delegation laid out the "deplorable condition of the streets of the south side of Jamaica," especially parts of Washington and State streets (around 160th streets) which became practically impassable when it rained. Connolly promised immediate actions on the worst areas, but warned "no permanent improvement or paving may be expected until sewers have been laid."<sup>53</sup> This was the first of several personal appeals to city officials that made little apparent headway. The SJPOA's vice chairman, Frank M. Turner, for instance, owned a property in Merrick Park, one of the first developments to entice black Americans to move across from Manhattan in the late 1910s, and tried to lobby government officials. Turner wrote to George U. Harvey, Connolly's successor, in 1931 to say that in the many years he had lived near 171st street and 108th he had "seen no evidence that the City Highway Department has made the slightest effort to improve the condition of that block." The condition of the streets was a central gripe, with Turner reporting home owners had taken matters into their own hands to try and fill pot holes. Turner's appeal to Harvey did not appear to succeed: a secretary in Harvey's office said the matter had been passed to the superintendent of highways who promised to inspect the area, but there is no evidence of subsequent remedial work.<sup>54</sup>

The fight to get properly laid sewers in this part of town, meanwhile, was a long and drawn out one. Six years later, the plan remained on the drawing board, with the city trying to secure Public Works Administration (PWA) money to top up the borough's severely depleted funds. The \$11,700 project remained mired in political wrangling, however, with New York City Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia arguing the receipt of federal funds depended on the state government passing his economy bill and Queens president Harvey complaining that the city's Board of Estimate and federal officials had dragged their heels. Although eight million dollars of PWA funds were allocated to Queens at the end of 1934, these concentrated on schools and subways and marquee projects like the Triborough Bridge. Some sewers were constructed in New York under the scheme but on projects on Coney Island and in Great Neck rather than Jamaica, while two PWA housing projects were built in Brooklyn and Harlem.<sup>55</sup>

The SJPOA's leaders would have been under no illusions, therefore, about the challenges before them, both as Jamaican property owners and would-be leaders of the African American community-at-large. Efforts to improve sanitation, streets, sidewalks and refuse collection were not just narrowly self-serving; they reflected a very real and important fight to get authorities to provide the support to stop the area falling behind other parts of the borough and city. In this respect, Jamaica was part of a larger pattern of racialized battles fought in the United States's metropolitan peripheries in the interwar period.<sup>56</sup>

Jamaica's experience, however, also showed these new fights were being shaped by a set of well-entrenched rules. The relationships and rivalries between a bewildering array dozens of civic groups were particularly important. These organizations had a variety of names—local examples included the Alban Manor Civic Association, the Sutphin Boulevard Civic Association and the Jamaica Terrace Civic Association—but most had a similar set of priorities: getting more services for their section and paying less for it. To take a typical example, on one representative civic page of the *Long Island Daily Press*, Queens groups could be found lobbying for better high school facilities, the extension of the railway in one place, the lowering of the tracks in another, more efficient garbage removal, all complete with a letters section headed, "as a taxpayer I think ..."<sup>57</sup> This clamorous associational activism echoed experiences in other urban centers going back to the turn of the twentieth century, while the parochial rivalries between local groups with autonomous aspirations gave a foretaste of features of life in post-war suburbia.<sup>58</sup>

The outcomes of these contests were, however, rooted in the political structure of 1920s New York City. Local politics had a series of well-established and infamous features by this point, especially when it came to the dominance of the Democrat Party's "Tammany Machine." With mythic roots in the large-scale Irish migrations of the nineteenth century, the Tammany Machine became legendary for its mixture of internal factionalism, corruption, clientelist patronage and electoral dominance. Even though the Tammany Machine had little experience in Queens at the time of incorporation, the Democrat Party moved quickly: it won the first mayoral election after consolidation and soon extended its influence across the borough.<sup>59</sup>

It followed, logically enough, that a series of scandals over the allocation of city resources soon swept Queens politics. One of the biggest involved the president of the borough from 1911 to 1928, Maurice E. Connolly, who stood accused of corruption in the allocation of public sewer projects. These political woes were capitalized on by a rival in the Republican Party, George U. Harvey, who won the borough presidency in 1928, but the legacy of projects from the Connolly era continued to rankle. A 1934 editorial in the *Long Island Daily Press*, for instance, lamented the tax burden imposed for the sewer on 148th avenue, right at the southern tip of Jamaica. It argued 10,000 property owners were up in arms about the \$254,000 bill for a sewer poor in quality, built without competitive tender, and typical, it was argued, of the "graft-ridden projects" of the Connolly period.<sup>60</sup>

If dissatisfaction with city officials became somewhat of a unifying force in Queens borough politics, race became a big dividing line. On the one hand, groups like the SJPOA were free to try and work the city's political systems to their own ends. Yet black organizations faced specific obstacles. The legacy of confinement to the poorest parts of Manhattan like the Tenderloin district on the mid to lower west side and, more recently, up town in Harlem, meant blacks Americans arriving in Jamaica wielded comparatively less purchasing power. Although black inhabitation grew, it was property ownership that mattered most in terms of influencing taxes and services and, in this regard, black Americans were at a disadvantage, with lower proportions compared to whites and lower average values.<sup>61</sup>

These economic disparities were compounded by the fact that African Americans were caught locally twixt and between the two main rival parties. That much was illustrated vividly by two episodes that can be traced once again to the aftermath of the 1927 Parade. While investigating the cross-burnings, the NAACP received an anonymous letter from a woman claiming she could shed light on the identity of those involved. The letter wrote:

I am one who knows who burnt the cross on 169th St. the other night. It was done by the Klan. Lots of them live in this neighbourhood, and they are supposed to be poloticians [sic] ... this bunch who call themselves the Alban Manor Republican Club.<sup>62</sup>

The woman claimed to know this because her son, to her dismay, had become involved. From the outside, however, the Alban Manor Republican Club was a typical association engaging in civic and political affairs. The group was headquartered at 167th street and 114th avenue, another significant location—the line between South Jamaica and St. Albans that later became a boundary for the red-lined maps of the HOLC.<sup>63</sup>

The Alban Manor Republican Club's links with the Klan were corroborated by a highly public court case involving one of its leaders, Harry Styles. Styles, who lived on Jamaica Avenue, admitted to being a "Grand Exalted Cyclops" in the local Klan at the same time as conducting campaign work for Harvey's election. This controversial connection came to light during Style's trial for perjury (he was accused of lying in a preceding court case against Queens-based contractors accused of bribing Harvey). A sensational detail of the case centered on whether Harvey had applied for membership of the "American Crusaders," the Klan's subdivision for those of foreign ancestry but sympathetic to their agenda. Styles said he sat next to, and delivered speeches with,



Harvey at Klan meetings but, despite Styles' defense producing an application for the Krusaders with Harvey's alleged signature, Harvey survived the scandal.<sup>64</sup>

Parsing out the precise relations between Klansman and local Republican politicians is not easy; even overt members like Styles were circumspect about their exact roles (when challenged at his trial on whether he had used the pseudonym "Al Whitsu," he refused to answer). Others, however, accepted they were one and the same, which made a letter sent from "Al Whitsu" to the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* in 1928 particularly interesting. Whitsu/Styles argued that "many thousands of Klanspeople" in Queens County had been "conducting a strenuous underground campaign" to increase support for the Republican Party.<sup>65</sup> Although this claim should be treated cautiously, the cumulative weight of evidence suggests that even as the Klan retreated to a more marginal role nationally, its leaders and values still influenced the local Republican Party, including possibly through the president of the borough himself.<sup>66</sup>

If black Jamaicans had good reason to be wary of the local Republican machine, another incident in the aftermath of the Memorial Day Parade suggested things were not necessarily more welcoming in the Democratic Party. Among the intimidatory acts against black residents linked to the local Klan, T.S. Edwards' experiences at his home in Remington St—right on the western edge of Jamaica's south side—was one of the most remarkable. There were meetings of infuriated white residents with the purpose of "protesting against the Negroes settling in our section." The group rallying white locals to "protect your home and your property" was the Nameoki Tammany Club, a local Democrat organization, and its leader, Joseph P. Dougherty, paid Edwards a visit in person. Dougherty introduced himself as the Democratic leader of the area. According to the NAACP's report, Dougherty warned Edwards that although "he himself was a Catholic ... most of the residents of that section were Klansmen and up in arms because he had the audacity to move into their neighborhood."<sup>67</sup>

Dougherty did not just blame the Klan, however. In comments revealing attitudes that went far wider, he also told Edwards that "white people had invested thousands of dollars in their property and had just paid hundreds to get the subway through there and would not stand by and see it depreciated on account of a Negro moving in." This was a classic in the longstanding genre of whites protesting black settlement in "their" neighborhoods on the grounds of property depreciation. This was an argument that fed on the purported connection between race and criminality that became part of urban sociology and real estate practices around the turn of the twentieth century. As far as New York City was concerned, these arguments had been rehearsed already by property owners' associations in the more familiar setting of Harlem for around twenty years. By the 1920s these groups and their ideas had permeated the city's real estate scene to the point where, in 1924, the New York Realtors Association wrote to the Birmingham Real Estate Board to enquire how they "prevent negro encroachment on white residential territory."<sup>68</sup>

On one level, therefore, the punchline in this specific case a few years later was predictable: Edwards was advised that "if he valued his life and property he would get-to-hell out of there and move over to the Negro section." But the incident also fleshed out in detail something that was often hidden: opposition to black residents in parts of Queens was made visible through the Klan, but permeated other civic institutions in the area (Dougherty remained an active force in local Democratic politics through the 1930s).<sup>69</sup> These racialized battles, moreover, spread quickly from housing to a broader fight for amenities and resources, making the comment about getting the subway nearby especially revealing.

As a result, black residents wishing to carve out a place for themselves in the social and political life of Queens faced a series of dilemmas. Some, like Anna Barnes, combined work with the SJPOA and auxiliary committees of the Republican Party. Others, like Charles Reid, worked to wield influence through larger coalitions of civic groups. The SJPOA, for its part, was listed as one many constituent bodies comprising the Central Queens Allied Civic Council. At other moments, Reid and colleagues joined coalitions like the Queens United Transit Committee of the



South Side and formed another group of their own called the Jamaica South Side Civic Association. Just like their names, the activities of these different were similar: goals included campaigns against tax assessments imposed on local residents for new sewers and seeking local transport investments. The attempt to join larger coalitions of civic groups made strategic sense, especially given the short shrift received by direct approaches to officialdom.<sup>70</sup>

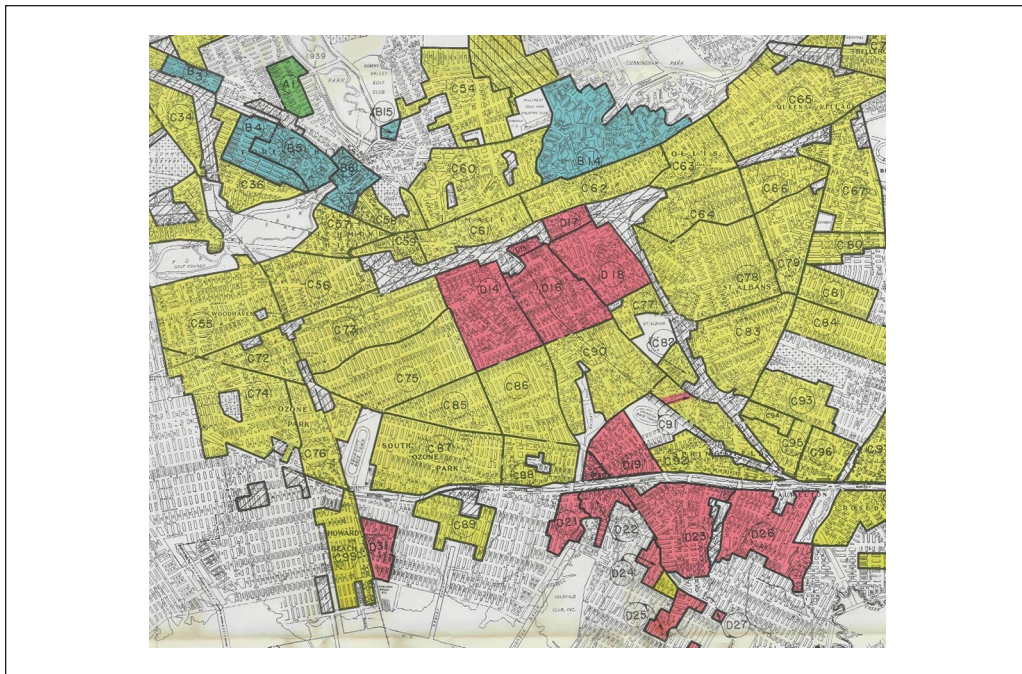
## The Redlining of South Jamaica

As the 1930s rumbled on, however, evidence mounted that black Jamaicans were struggling to make their voices heard. The 1932 Mortgage Conference of New York had already produced data and maps that cautioned lenders from dealing with African American communities.<sup>71</sup> Followers of the housing market and local campaigns for improvements in 1930s would have found the racially biased content of the FHA's *Underwriters' Manual* (1936) and the HOLC's redlined maps in 1938 grimly predictable. All the while some black Jamaicans, many formerly involved earlier with the SJPOA, joined a larger group called the South Jamaica Housing Committee (SJHC). The SJHC was set up to lobby for funding to improve the quantity and quality of housing in the local area and was chaired by a local white attorney called Joseph Rothman. The campaign also received support from the *Long Island Daily Press* and, by 1939, had secured funds for a "slum clearance" project—not from the local borough or city, however, but from the federal government.

This was to be the only such scheme in the south side during the 1930s. The project involved the construction of 11 "model" apartment buildings on 107th avenue and 159th street and, significantly, promoted renting rather than property ownership. When the build began, newspapers reported it was "ignored by city officials," even though it was cheered by the SJHC and local residents. When it opened the next year, Mayor LaGuardia came to lay the cornerstone but Harvey, still president of Queens, was criticized for his absence.<sup>72</sup> Dr John A. Singleton, Reid's successor as president of the Jamaica NAACP, knew where a lot of the blame for the persistent neglect of South Jamaica lay: at Harvey's door. Even before the model apartments were built, Singleton argued Harvey's "only appearance ... has been during elections seeking votes and making idle promises which he never had any intention to keep."<sup>73</sup> On the verge of a new decade, these frustrations had a longstanding pedigree.

When the HOLC's redlined maps of South Jamaica were produced, therefore, they drew directly on the racially distorted fight for metropolitan space that could be traced back to the 1927 Memorial Day Parade—and beyond. As the HOLC map for Queens shows, right in the heart of the south side of Jamaica, where black Americans were disproportionately clustered, sat five redlined zones neatly in a row (D14-D18, see Figure 2). Bound by Van Wyck Boulevard to the west, the rail line the north and east and Linden Boulevard to the South, this seemed a classic case in the familiar tale of government officials, planning officers and real estate agents conspiring to condemn black sections of the city to a future of ghettoized impoverishment.

Leaders in the Jamaica NAACP, with first-hand experience of the multi-faceted local fights waged for an equitable share of resources, wasted little time in trying to hold higher-level decision makers to account. Early in 1939, for instance, Singleton wrote a furious letter to officials in Washington. According to him, government policy had effectively branded black citizens as "slum dwellers without ambition to live in good houses." These "Jim Crow housing rules" were blamed on the FHA's *Underwriters' Manual*, which Singleton had viewed at a meeting with the official responsible for Queens, Stanley White. The notorious advice for valuers to consider neighborhood "stability" and to factor in the presence of "incompatible racial and social groups" was seized on as a license for local whites to discriminate against black applicants. Even at this early stage, this was no abstract concern: the NAACP reported it had received a "constant flow of complaints" from those seeking FHA help to buy to the south of 111th avenue between Merrick



**Figure 2.** HOLC map of Jamaica and surrounding parts of Queens, New York City, 1938.

road and 178th street—an area marked C77 in the HOLC maps, directly outside the “D” listed zones.<sup>74</sup>

These complaints from Queens came to the attention of the NAACP’s national secretary, Walter White who, in turn, approached President Roosevelt for an explanation. Roosevelt’s courteous, defensive and ultimately meaningless reply was typical of his response to many black grievances. He wrote he had conferred with officials in the FHA who found “no substantiation for the charge of discrimination,” but promised any problems would be dealt with “promptly and effectively.” Meanwhile, the complaints continued: the same newspaper report detailed three attempts to purchase property on 111th avenue—once again, right on the border of zones D18 and C77—where applicants reported being turned down for loans despite having “a substantial bank account” and a “good credit rating.”<sup>75</sup>

Although Washington bureaucrats were in local protestors’ sights, many were aware that local officials and agents also bore heavy responsibility. Singleton criticized Stanley White, who he called “dictatorial,” “prejudiced,” and “uncouth,” but argued it was also the “definite policy of the majority of white real estate dealer here to keep the Negroes in black ghettos.” It was a feature of the FHA, as in other areas of New Deal policy, to devolve key decisions on implementation to local officials. The dividing line between government officials and local real estate entrepreneurs, meanwhile, was blurry. Stanley White was part of the Long Island Real Estate Board (LIREB) before becoming an FHA underwriter, one of many local groups to praise extensions to FHA provisions in February 1938. Among the others to join the LIREB’s praise were “leading Brooklyn builders” including none other than Fred Trump, one of the area’s most enthusiastic users of FHA funds.<sup>76</sup>

Government policies in south Jamaica only make sense, however, when thought about in terms of a longer-term local process. Consider, for example, one of the complaints made the SJPOA on its founding in 1926. The problem was not that homes occupied by blacks in the south



**Figure 3.** Profile of the South Jamaica, Queens area from the 1943 New York City Market Analysis.

side were just inferior, but that their value was “depreciated because of the lack of sewers and neglected condition of the streets,” despite residents paying the same rate of tax as in surrounding sections with better services.<sup>77</sup> The gap between sections was established before the intervention of New Deal agencies like the FHA; it had been widened further by the fact that black residents were caught playing a metropolitan game to win resources for their neighborhoods according to rules stacked against them by deep-seated racial biases of New York City’s socio-economic and political system.

Although redlining did not have a name in the 1940s, the racialized differences between communities were becoming increasingly obvious. In 1943, they were laid out in their clearest form yet in profiles of the city’s communities published as a series entitled the *New York City Market Analysis*. The photographic illustrations for South Jamaica featured rows of well kept individual houses, complete with sidewalks and surrounding foliage (Figure 3). This recognizably suburban imagery contrasted sharply, however, with the accompanying map with its many sections of blue, indicating the lowest classification of monthly expenditure on rent (Figure 4). The accompanying blurb explained the area was a “crowded residential section” which had the largest concentration of Negro population in Queens’s (12,000 out of a total of 31,759). Richmond Hill to the west, St Albans to the South east and Jamaica “proper” to the north, meanwhile had noticeably more orange, pink, purple and yellow (typifying their more affluent inhabitants) as well as many fewer black residents—only 2,215 out of 131,572.<sup>78</sup>

Black Jamaicans, meanwhile, tried to work out how and why south Jamaica had fallen behind. Some blamed the failures of civic organizations. One local journalist, Mercer Meredith, wrote scathingly about the “discouraging picture” painted by a past full of “many failures along civic, social and political lines.” Although Jamaica retained an image as an “attractive” destination for those seeking a “suburban area with easy access to Manhattan and Brooklyn,” the SJPOA was named as one of several groups initiated in the 1920s that currently sat in “limbo.” Yet, if Meredith’s frustration was partly understandable, the failure of these groups to halt the escalating divide between the south side and neighboring districts, let alone reverse it, stemmed from deeper causes.<sup>79</sup> In a perverse piece of symmetry, just two months before Meredith’s lament, the Jamaica Klan once again laid a wreath at the Memorial Day Parade—it was reported they had been doing so every year since 1927 but had kept their identities hidden.<sup>80</sup>



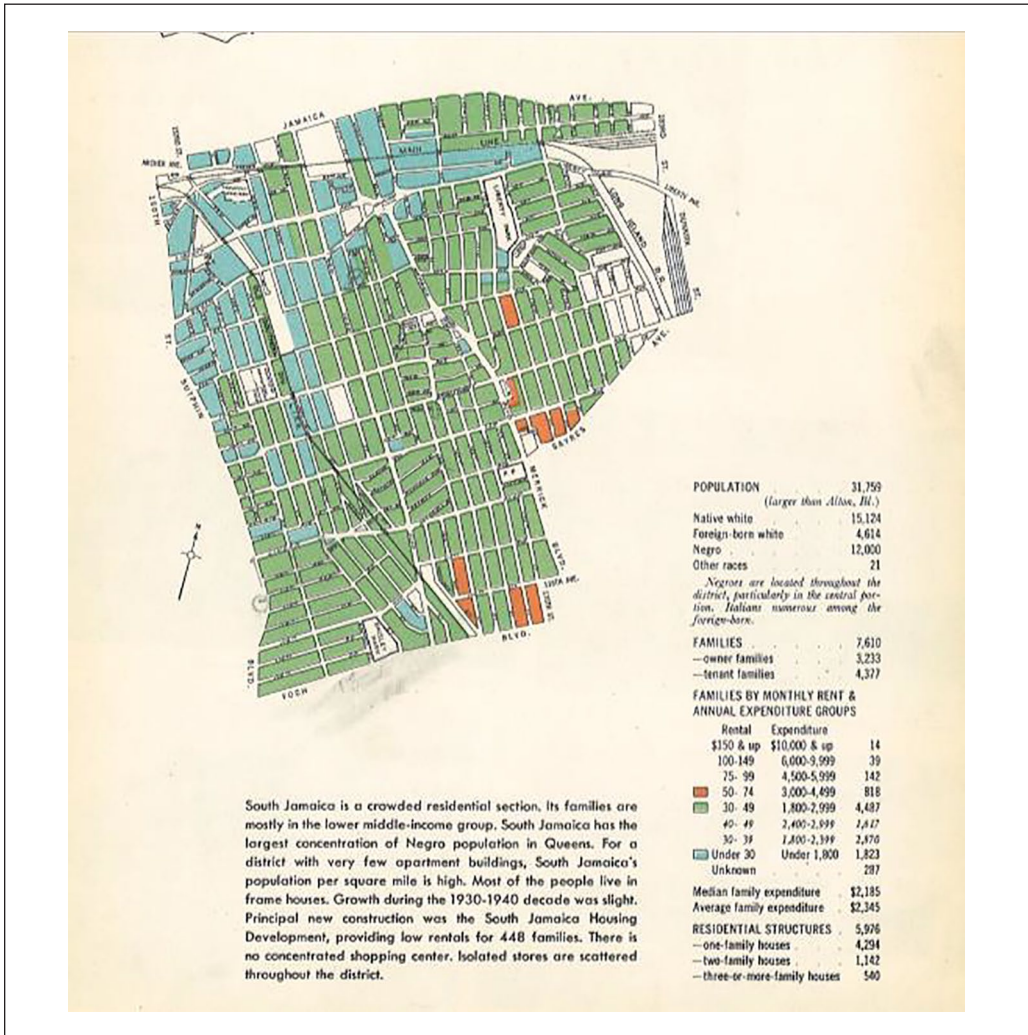


Figure 4. Profile of the South Jamaica, Queens area from the 1943 New York City Market Analysis.

## Conclusion

There is, of course, another chapter to this story that traces how this part of central Queens fared in the second half of the century. We need to be especially careful in assuming the fate of the area at the hands of the “urban crisis” of the 1960s was a foregone conclusion, being mindful of the dangers of relying on what Amy Hillier rightly calls the “loose correlations” made between 1930s HOLC maps and subsequent decline of an area.<sup>81</sup> At the same time, attempts to understand the consequences of New Deal-era decisions also necessitate careful exploration of the causes of these developments in the first place. This article has argued tracing the origins of redlining requires going beyond the actions of officials, planners and real estate operators in the late 1930s to consider local life in these communities for at least a decade before.

Fred Trump’s arrest in 1927, although given understandable attention for a different reason, reveals an important juncture in this long-term story. The escalating white defensiveness against black newcomers that followed the Memorial Day Parade of 1927, illustrated pointedly in the

cross-burnings of the Klan, provided a foretaste of the vigilantism that accompanied black moves into suburbia after the Second World War, but also signified a distinct moment when the racial lines in Queens were becoming drawn more sharply. The response of black community organizations in Jamaica was also significant, protesting overt manifestations of racism like the provocations of the Klan but also engaging in a larger battle for control of community resources. Getting properly paved streets, adequate sanitation and improved transport connections were all parts of the agenda of groups like the Jamaica NAACP. Yet tracing experiences through the 1930s shows the claims of black groups struggled to make themselves heard amid a vast number of white-dominated organizations competing for power in the city's growing municipal bureaucracy. Barriers between communities were being created, after all, from below as well as being imposed from above.

Shedding light on the grassroots redlining of urban communities like South Jamaica also helps understand why these problems proved so pervasive in a post-war period. It was not without significance that the Trump family remained connected to this history as Fred (with the initial help of his mother, German migrant Elizabeth Christ Trump) and then Donald led a business implicated in the maintenance of racialized barriers between communities. Four months after the story about Fred broke, journalists at the *Washington Post* wrote another expose that detailed a two-year legal battle during the early 1970s where local protest groups accused the Trump Management Corporation—by this stage on a huge scale with properties all over Brooklyn and Queens—of rejecting black applicants from certain properties and steering them back into the “ghetto.” The complaints were serious enough for the Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), using powers granted by the 1968 Housing Act, to investigate and take the Trump organization to court. But although the attitude of government toward racial discrimination had changed since the 1930s, the same was not necessarily true of local planners and real estate agents. Fred and his son, Donald—by this stage closely involved in the organization's day-to-day running—fought the charges tooth and nail. The case was settled out of court with the Trumps signing a non-discriminatory pledge, but the company did not accept liability and some complaints by black applicants continued.<sup>82</sup> Like the arrest in 1927, therefore, the case provided a further reminder of the importance of histories that uncover the people and processes that made America's racially conflicted past and that continue to shape the present.

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### Notes

1. Matt Blum, “1927 News Report: Donald Trump's Dad Arrested in KKK Brawl with Cops,” last modified September 9, 2015, accessed September 3, 2018, <https://boingboing.net/2015/09/09/1927-news-report-donald-trump.html>.
2. Jason Horowitz, “First Draft,” last modified September 22, 2015, accessed September 3, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/politics/first-draft/2015/09/22/in-interview-donald-trump-denies-report-of-fathers-arrest-in-1927/>.



3. Blum, "1927 News Report"; Mike Pearl, "All the Evidence We Could Find about Fred Trump's Alleged Involvement with the KKK," last modified March 10, 2016, accessed September 3, 2018, [https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/mvke38/all-the-evidence-we-could-find-about-fred-trumps-alleged-involvement-with-the-kk](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/mvke38/all-the-evidence-we-could-find-about-fred-trumps-alleged-involvement-with-the-kk); Charles C. Johnson, "PAPA TRUMP CLEARED: How LYIN' @ NYTimes, WaPo, @VICE & @BoingBoing Smearred Donald's Dad Fred As KKK Klan Rioter," last modified October 21, 2016, accessed September 3, 2018, <http://gotnews.com/papa-trump-cleared-how-lyin-nytimes-wapo-vice-boingboing-smearred-fred-trump-kkk/>; Even some historians fell into the pit-falls of interpreting the evidence from this toxic affair. Alberto Martinez, although not a specialist in the field, wrote an online article to try and read the evidence against the grain. The conclusion was left partially open, but Martinez implicitly gave support to an "innocent bystander" theory by suggesting, variously, that: Trump was the only local to be arrested; many Klan members were imports from out of town; some of the other arrestees were not Klan members; the event was not a Klan rally but a larger procession on Memorial Day; and, finally, the Klan of the 1920s was "not the same as the other two" movements after the Civil War and the 1950s. Alberto A. Martinez, "Fred Trump and the KKK," last modified January 1, 2017, accessed September 3, 2018, <http://www.newstandardpress.com/fred-trump-and-the-kkk/>.
4. Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York, 1985), especially chapter eleven "Federal Subsidy and the Suburban Dream: How Washington Changed the American Housing Market," 190-218; For other examples of studies of the consequences of redlining, see Louis Lee Woods II, "The Federal Home Loan Bank Board, Redlining, and the National Proliferation of Racial Lending Discrimination, 1921-1950," *Journal of Urban History* 38 (2012): 1036-59; James Greer, "The Home Owners' Loan Corporation and the Development of the Residential Security Maps," *Journal of Urban History* 39 (2013): 275-96; For a statistical approach to the question of the consequences of 1930s policy decisions, see Trevor M. Kollmann and Price V. Fishback, "The New Deal, Race, and Home Ownership in the 1920s and 1930s," *American Economic Review* 101 (2011): 366-70; Among the classic book-length studies to include analyses of redlining and other racially distorted features of housing policy are Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (New York, 1983); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, 1996).
5. Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," *The Atlantic*, June 2014, accessed January 22, 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>. Coates argued, "It was the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, not a private trade association, that pioneered the practice of redlining, selectively granting loans and insisting that any property it insured be covered by a restrictive covenant—a clause in the deed forbidding the sale of the property to anyone other than whites."
6. Amy E. Hillier, "Redlining and the Homeowners' Loan Corporation," *Journal of Urban History* 29 (2003): 394-42 (quotes 396, 398); Todd M. Michney and LaDale Winling, "New Perspectives on New Deal Housing Policy: Explicating and Mapping HOLC Loans to African Americans," *Journal of Urban History* (2019).
7. Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2010), 3-5.
8. Hillier, "Redlining and the Homeowners' Loan Corporation," 412-15. Hillier concluded, reasonably enough, that, "Much additional research is needed to piece together the many actors and sources of neighborhood risk ratings into a coherent narrative of historical redlining" (415); Thomas W. Hanchett, *Sorting Out the New South City: Race, Class and Urban Development in Charlotte, 1875-1975* (Chapel Hill, 1998), 231; Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 199; There has been lots of useful work on the racially distorted effects of other New Deal policies. See, for example, Mary Poole, *The Segregated Origins of Social Security: African Americans and the Welfare State* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).
9. The literature on these subjects is vast, but for useful introductions see Kenneth L. Kusmer and Joe W. Trotter, eds., *African American Urban History since World War II* (Chicago, 2009); Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, *The New Suburban History* (Chicago, 2006); The 1920s Klan has certainly been given attention, while some studies of the "long" civil rights movement have worked to expand the chronology of black protest into the period. For an accessible introduction to the sprawling

- historiography on 1920s America, see David J. Goldberg, "Rethinking the 1920s: Historians and Changing Perspectives," *OAH Magazine of History* 21 (2007): 7-10; On African American interwar experiences, examples include Joe W. Trotter, ed., *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective: New Dimensions of Race, Class, and Gender* (Bloomington, 1991); Beth Tompkins Bates, *The Making of Black Detroit in the Age of Henry Ford* (Chapel Hill, 2012); On the Klan see, for example, Kathleen M. Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (Berkeley, 1991); Felix Harcourt, *Ku Klux Culture: America and the Klan in the 1920s* (Chicago, 2017).
10. For a classic "ghetto formation" work see Gilbert Osofsky, *Harlem: The Making of a Ghetto, Negro New York 1890-1930*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1971). For a critique of this tendency, see Joe W. Trotter, "African American Urban History: Framing a New Perspective," *Reviews in American History* 21, no. 1 (1993): 80-85. The classic work in the "urban crisis" literature remains Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis*. Another influential post-war urban history to emphasize the importance of mid-century decision making is Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton, 2005). In addition, following the "urban crisis" literature's attention to the symbiotic relationship between inner cities and their peripheries, an emphasis on the growth of suburbia has had a powerful influence on narratives of political history, especially to explanations of the rise of the "New Right" during the Nixon and Reagan eras. See especially Matthew Lassiter and Kevin M. Kruse, "The Bulldozer Revolution: Suburbs and Southern History since World War II," *The Journal of Southern History* 75 (2009): 691-706.
  11. For instance, drawing in part on the pioneering work of Kenneth T. Jackson's work, Thomas Sugrue and Kevin Kruse argued in the introduction to their influential edited collection, *The New Suburban History*, that although suburbanization had a long pre-twentieth century history, its "scope, ... scale and form ... changed dramatically with the advent of the New Deal," while several contributing essays sought to spell out the post-war ramifications of 1930s-era decisions. Kruse and Sugrue, *The New Suburban History*, 2; See, for example, David M. P. Freund, "Marketing the Free Market: State Intervention and the Politics of Prosperity in Metropolitan America"; Peter Siskind, "Suburban Growth and Its Discontents: The Logic and Limits of Reform on the Postwar Northeast Corridor"; Margaret O'Mara, "Uncovering the City in the Suburb: Cold War Politics, Scientific Elites, and High-Tech Spaces," all in Kruse and Sugrue, eds., *The New Suburban History*; A classic work of urban history that makes an assertive case for the importance of the interwar period is Elizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919 - 1939*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2008).
  12. Kevin Boyle, *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age* (New York, 2004); Andrew Wiese, *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago and London, 2004).
  13. See, for example, Kevin McGruder, *Race and Real Estate: Conflict and Cooperation in Harlem, 1890-1920* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Themis Chronopoulos and Jonathan Soffer, "Introduction. After the Urban Crisis: New York and the Rise of Inequality," *Journal of Urban History* 43 (2017): 855-86; New York City's suburbs are less well-studied but see, for example, Paul H. Mattingly, *Suburban Landscapes: Culture and Politics in a New York Metropolitan Community* (Baltimore, 2001); Jerilou Hammett and Kingsley Hammett, eds., *The Suburbanization of New York: Is the World's Greatest City Becoming Just Another Town?* (New York, 2007).
  14. There is no detailed study of interwar Jamaica. One of the best introductions is Peter Eisenstadt's brief survey which he uses to provide background for the battles over housing reform of the post-war period. Peter Eisenstadt, *Rochdale Village: Robert Moses, 6,000 Families, and New York City's Great Experiment in Integrated Housing* (Ithaca and London, 2010), 44-50; For an ethno-graphic study of nearby Corona see Steven Gregory, *Black Corona: Race and the Politics of Place in a Black Community* (Princeton, 1999).
  15. The debate on labeling and categorization of urban and suburban spaces has taken many different forms. Mary Corbin Sies, for example, has challenged aspects of revisionist scholarship to suggest that there was an "enduring successful consensus" based on middle-class values about what suburbs should be about and who should live there that could be traced all the way back until the First World War and beyond. Mary Corbin Sies, "North American Suburbs, 1880-1950: Cultural and Social Reconsiderations," *Journal of Urban History* 27 (2001): 313-46 (quote p. 329). For a counter-argument, see Andrew Wiese, "Stubborn Diversity: A Commentary on Middle Class Influence in

- Working-Class Suburbs, 1900-1940," *Journal of Urban History* 27 (2001): 347-54. See also Wiese, *Places of Their Own*; One of the earliest challenges to the neat "white suburb" and "non-white core" was Reynolds Farley, "The Changing Distribution of Negroes within Metropolitan Areas: The Emergence of Black Suburbs," *American Journal of Sociology* 75 (1970): 514-15; See also Dylan Gottlieb, "'Closer to Heaven' Race and Diversity in Suburban America," *Journal of Urban History* 41 (2015): 927-35; For a recent attempt to emphasize the diversity of the post-war suburban experience, see the special issue of the *Journal of Urban History* in 2012, especially the introductory essay by Matthew D. Lassiter and Christopher Niedt, "Suburban Diversity in Postwar America," *Journal of Urban History*, 39 (2012): 3-14.
16. In one of the classic definitions, Kenneth T. Jackson argued suburbia was "both a planning type and a state of mind," while outlining low residential density, homeownership, a "socioeconomic distinction between the center and the periphery" and a significant commuting distance as four factors differentiating the American suburban experience. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 6-10; For a discussion of different disciplinary approaches see Ann Forsyth, "Defining Suburbs," *Journal of Planning Literature* 27 (2012): 270-81; See also James L. Wunsch, "The Suburban Cliché," *Journal of Social History* 28 (1995): 643-58; One scholar to use new terminology in reference to the first half of the century is James Borchert, who noted over twenty years ago the existence of "city suburbs." James Borchert, "Cities in the Suburbs: Heterogeneous Communities on the US Urban Fringe, 1920-60," *Urban History* 23 (1996): 211-27; see also James Borchert, "Residential City Suburbs: The Emergence of a New Urban Type," *Journal of Urban History* 22 (1996): 283-30; Others to have made the case for the "urban" quality of suburbia include especially Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias: The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (1989) and Joel Garreau, *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier* (1980).
  17. In this sense, the article responds to the ideas of Richard Harris and Robert Lewis who make a powerful case for breaking down the urban/suburban dichotomy for the period 1900-1950, arguing that "for many purposes, we must learn to ignore political boundaries and think simply of metropolitan, urbanized areas." Richard Harris and Robert Lewis, "The Geography of North American Cities and Suburbs, 1900-1950: A New Synthesis," *The Journal of Urban History*, 27 (2001): 284.
  18. The Bureau of the Census' solution was to include all adjacent areas to cities with a density of over 150 inhabitants per square mile as part of the wider metropolitan unit, as well as those of less density that were "directly contiguous." This meant the boundary for the metropolitan area of New York City went eastward out into parts of Suffolk county. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930* (Washington, D.C., 1932), 5, 140.
  19. *New York City Market Analysis* (1943), 9-10, "Welcome to 1940s New York," accessed September 3, 2018, <http://www.1940snewyork.com/#>.
  20. This pejorative label is increasingly rejected by scholars who point to the complex socio-economic forces that created inner-city areas in places like New York. For a good example, contrast the approach of Gilbert Osofsky who argued there had been "an unending and tragic sameness" with the attempt of Kevin McGruder to challenge the "black invasion versus white resistance" paradigm. Gilbert Osofsky, "The Enduring Ghetto," *Journal of American History* 55 (1968): 243-55 (243); McGruder, *Race and Real Estate*.
  21. Kenneth T. Jackson, "Introduction," in Claudia Gryvatz Copquin, ed., *The Neighborhoods of Queens* (New York, 2007), xii-xviii; See also Janet E. Lieberman and Richard K. Lieberman, *A Social History of Queens* (Dubuque, 1983); Fred Trump's father, Friedrich, was a typical example, swapping an itinerant lifestyle that led him from Kallstadt in Germany to various parts of Manhattan and to the far west during the Klondike Gold Rush in the 1890s, to a base in Woodside, Jamaica in 1907. See Gwenda Blair, *The Trumps: Three Generations that Built an Empire* (New York, 2000).
  22. The real estate listings in the *New York Age* in 1921, for instance, featured many brokers operating Harlem alongside those promoting suburban opportunities. See advert, "Do You Want a Bargain in a Building Lot?" and advert, Matthew G. Price, "Real Estate Broker," both in *New York Age*, June 25, 1921; Sprain Ridge Park in Yonkers was promoted as one of the "finest, healthiest, highest and most beautiful locations." Advert in *New York Age*, July 12, 1924; Advert for Sun Rise Trail Realty Association, *New York Age*, September 13, 1924; "Real Bargain in Jamaica, L.I.," *New York Age*, November 17, 1928; Advert for the Morinton Realty Corp, *New York Age*, September 5, 1928; "Buy a Jamaica One Family House," *New York Amsterdam News*, November 3, 1926.

23. Federal Housing Authority (lead author Homer Hoyt), *The Structure and Growth of Residential Neighborhoods in American Cities* (Washington, D.C., 1939), 25.
24. As Peter Eisenstadt points out, many New Yorkers continued to think of Jamaica as part of Long Island rather than Queens in the 1920s. Eisenstadt, *Rochdale Village*, 44.
25. For Smith's role in leading the upstate Klan in the first half of the 1920s, see Shawn Lay, *Hooded Knights on the Niagara: The Ku Klux Klan in Buffalo, New York* (New York, 1995), 60, 64.
26. One of the big debates about the 1920s Klan has centered on the question of how "mainstream" the Klan was in the 1920s. According to Thomas Pegram, "the 1920s Klan interacted with the mainstream and attracted the short-term loyalty of many ordinary Americans, but it was not, even when judged by its own intention to wield stealthy influence, a mainstream organization." Thomas R. Pegram, *One Hundred Percent American: The Rebirth and Decline of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s* (Chicago, 2011), xii-xiii. For an account that emphasizes continuities between different versions of the Klan see David M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The History of the Ku Klux Klan* (New York, 1976).
27. William Rawlings, *The Second Coming of the Invisible Empire: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s* (Macon, GA, 2016), 4; For a work emphasizing the Klan's racial outlook see Nancy MacLean, *Behind the Mask of Chivalry. The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan* (New York, 1994).
28. Kenneth T. Jackson, for example, argued despite New York City providing a useful source of funding, the 1927 Memorial Day Parade represented a "final humiliation of the local organization." Kenneth T. Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City, 1915-1930* (Chicago, 1992), 175-77 (quote 177); David Chalmers agreed that New York was an "enemy capital for the Invisible Empire," but acknowledged it was strong in Long Island and upstate. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism*, 254-57; On the Klan's regional variations see Charles C. Alexander, *The Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest* (Lexington, 1965); Leonard Moore, *Citizen Klansmen: The Ku Klux Klan in Indiana, 1921-1928* (Chapel Hill, 1991).
29. "Klan Fights Way through Queens Police," *New York Herald Tribune*, May 31, 1927, 12.
30. "K of C Withdraws After Klan Enters Memorial Parade," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 25, 1927, 2.
31. "20,000 Battles as Klansmen Parade," *Chicago Defender*, June 4, 1927, 12; "Protests Echo Police Fight on Klan Marchers," *Daily Star*, May 31, 1927, 15; "Two Fascisti Dies in Bronx, Klansmen Riot in Queens, in Memorial Day Clashes," *New York Times*, May 31, 1927, 1, 7.
32. *Ibid.*; "20,000 Battles as Klansmen Parade"; "Klan Fights Way through Queens Police," *New York Herald Tribune*, May 31, 1927, 1, 12.
33. See David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Boston, 2002).
34. Those listing five arrests on 31 May included the *New York Times* ("Two Fascisti Dies"), the *New York Herald Tribune* ("20,000 Battles as Klansmen") and "Warren Ordered Police to Block Parade on Klan," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 31, 1927, 1; For details of Fred Trump see "Warren Criticizes 'Class' Parades," *New York Times*, June 1, 1927, 10; "Four in Klan Riot Held for Hearing on Police Charge," *Daily Star*, June 1, 1927, 2; "4th Ward Memorial Day Parade Marred by Riot," *Richmond Hill Record*, June 3, 1927, 3.
35. Some papers reported their names differently—John Kipp became Charles and Harry Free became Harry Lee in the *Herald Tribune*—but these six identities were consistent. Some reported that another man, Ralph Losee of 120-11 Rockaway Boulevard, had been arrested for "refusing to disperse when ordered to do so," but others had him down as an innocent bystander; *Daily Star*, May 31 ("Protests Echo Police"); *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* ("Warren Ordered Police"); *New York Herald Tribune* ("20,000 Battles as Klansmen"); *New York Times*, May 31 ("Two Fascisti Dies").
36. *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* ("Warren Ordered Police"); *Daily Star*, June 1 ("Four in Klan Riot").
37. *Ibid.*
38. Lyons, represented by Herz, claimed he saw Carroll strike an old man in the crowd and, when he went to his defense, Carroll attacked him too. Carroll was the only one of the six to represent himself in court. The evidence against Erwin consisted of testimony by a police officer who had been pushed and sworn at, while the case against Free also amounted largely to the fact he had become 'abusive'; this evidence was deemed insufficient by the magistrate. *New York Herald Tribune*, June 7, 15; "Two in Klan Riot Held in \$1,500 Bail," *Brooklyn Standard Union*, June 16, 1927, 16; "Two Found Guilt in Klan Riot," *Long Island Daily Press*, June 17, 1927, 1, 10; "Klan Will Again Attempt to Stage Parade on Fourth of July," *New York Amsterdam News*, June 29, 1927, 16.



39. The contradictory claims of the Klan on this question should, of course, be treated with extreme caution. An article in the *Herald* quoted Herz, the attorney instructed by the Klan, stating his intention to defend the six arrestees to “establish the right of American citizens to parade peacefully.” The article contained the claim that only two of the six were Klan members and one was a member of the Knights of Columbus. The article made it clear, however, was that this was a claim made by Herz, not from impartial court records as gotnews.com claimed (the hearing did not take place until the next day). Paul M. Winter, the field representative of the Klan in Queens, reiterated the claim that not all arrestees were Klansmen the next day. Later on it suited Herz and the Klan to use the case to mount a larger attack on the Mayor, as was their stated intention, to claim the Klansmen were part of a bigger group denied their constitutional rights. *New York Herald Tribune*, June 6, 9; *New York Herald Tribune*, June 7, 15; On other occasions, moreover, the Klan changed their story. The *Buffalo Courier Express* reported a Klan statement that one of their members had been runover by the police, a likely reference to Ralph Losee, who others reported was an innocent bystander. “Klux Parade Heckled,” *Buffalo Courier Express*, May 31, 1927, 8; Winters claimed subsequently the Klan enjoyed the “applause and cheers of a sympathetic audience” before the heavy-handed intervention of the police. Paul M. Winter, *What Price Tolerance* (New York, 1928), 44.
40. The *Hastings News* listed all seven as “klansmen,” the *Richmond Hill Record* (which named Fred) described the arrests under a sub-heading titled “court action on klan arrests,” while the *Daily Eagle* (which listed only six) detailed how the arrestees were “picked up by police from the klan ranks.” The *Yonkers Statesman*, which also named six, added all were “said to be members of the Klan.” There numbers of arrestees were reported differently, but no papers speculated opponents of the Klan may have been among those arrested. “Meeting on Parade is Called Off,” *Long Island Daily Press*, June 2, 1927, 1; “Butcher Taken in Police Rush on Klan Parade,” *Yonkers Statesmen*, May 31, 1927.
41. Email correspondence with New York Municipal Archives, in author’s possession.
42. “Warren Clears Police in Klan Parade Rioting,” *New York Herald Tribune*, June 1, 1927, 21; “Man Cut as Fascist Riot Flares Anew,” *New York Evening Post*, May 31, 1927, 16.
43. “Warren Ordered Police to Block Parade by Klan,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, May 31, 1927, 6; “Haarle Denies Sympathy with Klan Parades,” *Daily Star*, August 1, 1927, 2.
44. The dispute rumbled on to the end of 1927, by which time Walker had shifted position, saying the Klan’s criticism of the police was without foundation as the organization itself was illegitimate. The Klan, according to Walker, had fallen foul of a state law from 1923 (a law he had helped draft) that called on organizations to register copies of their constitution, by-laws and members with the government. Winter wrote that Walker, “in keeping with his religious inspirations, pigeon-holed the decision of the Grand Jury ... and to this day has not punished the guilty police.” “Dayton Blames Ku Klux Klan...,” *New York Daily Star*, July 28, 1927, 2; “Klan Paraders Violated Law, Asserts Mayor,” *New York Daily Star*, December 22, 1927, 11; Winter, *What Price Tolerance*, 48.
45. Letter from Al Whitsu to NAACP Jamaica Branch, July 1, 1927, Papers of the NAACP, Part 12: Selected Branch Files, 1913-1939, Series B: The Northeast (hereafter NAACP Microfilm), Reel 3.
46. Letter from Charles Reid to Emmett [sic] D. Smith Klan No. 38, July 15, 1927, NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3; “Jamaica Klan Leader Says Negroes Must Not Marry White People,” *New York Amsterdam News*, June 8, 1927, 11.
47. “Extracts from Klan circular ‘The Negro Situation,’” n.d.; Letter from Al Whitsu to NAACP Jamaica Branch, July 1, 1927, both NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3.
48. Minutes of the regular meeting of the JAMAICA BRANCH N.A.A.C.P. held at the Club House of the Merrick Park Recreation Center, Tuesday evening October 25, 1927; Letter from Charles M. Reid and Frank M. Turner to Grover A. Whalen, Commissioner of Police, October 1, 1929; Untitled document, n.d. (a report of branch activities); “Developments in the case of T.S. Edwards, who bought house at 102-02 Remington St. Jamaica” December 5, 1929, all NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3.
49. On the Klan’s strength in St. Albans through the 1930s and 1940s see Eisenstadt, *Rochdale Village*, 48.
50. “The Jamaica Branch,” n.d. (c. January to June 1929), NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3; Eisenstadt, *Rochdale Village*, 47; The 1932 census listed 18,609 black residents in the borough as a whole. Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, 144.
51. “Report on the Activities of the Jamaica Branch NAACP from its organization in Apr. 1927 to November, 1928,” NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3; “Report on activities for Year ending Nov. 22, 1932,”



- NAACP Microfilm, Reel 4; On Turner's career, see "Turner, Negro Leader, Is Dead at 54," *Long Island Daily Press*, October 17, 1941, 15; In 1933, after six years of operation, the branch was on a firm enough footing to send nearly \$300 to the national office, which earned them praise from Field Secretary William Pickens. Letter from William Pickens to Charles Reid, July 25, 1933, NAACP Microfilm, Reel 4.
52. "South Jamaica Property Owners Score City Officials," *New York Age*, December 18, 1926, 1; "Organize Jamaica Property Owners," *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 1926; On Barnes' other political and religious affiliations, see "Stumping Thru Queens," *Daily Star*, October 17, 1924, 8; "G.O.P. Women Continue Auxiliary Committee in Eastern Division," *New York Age*, March 14, 1925, 3; "A.M.E. Women Hold Public Mass Meeting," *New York Age*, August 5, 1939, 9.
  53. Letter from Frank M. Turner to Romeo Dougherty, February 10, 1927; And press clipping [paper unknown], "Queens Street Conditions Put Officials Under Fire," March 20, 1927, both NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3.
  54. Letter from Frank M. Turner to Romeo Dougherty, February 10, 1927, NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3; On Merrick Park see Eisenstadt, *Rochdale Village*, 46-47; Letter from Frank Turner to George U. Harvey, March 16, 1931; Letter from Edna C. Sanchez to Frank Turner, March 18, 1931; Letter from Edna C. Sanchez to Frank Turner, March 28, 1931, all NAACP Microfilm, Reel 4; In 1930, Turner also wrote a grateful letter to George J. Ryan, the President of the Board of Education, thanking him for his rhetorical support for building a new high school on the south side despite what Turner called, "the determined activities and opposition of forces working for the location of the school in other sections of Queens Borough." Frank Turner to George J. Ryan, President of the Board of Education, July 3, 1930, NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3.
  55. "Board Votes 6 Street and Sewer Works," *Long Island Daily Press*, February 17, 1934, 2; "Queens Got \$8,000,000 of PWA Funds," *Long Island Daily Press*, October 28, 1934, 9; "Work on Coney Sewage Plan is Seen in Month," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, August 18, 1934; Gail Radford, *Modern Housing for America: Policy Struggles in the New Deal Era* (Chicago, 1996), 100.
  56. As Andrew Wiese's work on the suburban side of this story argued, "residential locations were not neutral with respect to social resources," but were part of a deeply racialized pecking order, with black neighborhoods often losing out in the battle for adequate resourcing creating self-reinforcing situations that eventually solidified for "whites an equation between black people, poverty, and substandard housing." Wiese, *Places of Their Own*, 7, 74-76.
  57. "Civic Meetings," *Long Island Daily Press*, March 24, 1928, 16; "United Plea Made to Get 3 Buildings"; "See Transit Coming to North Side"; "Invents New Way to Rid Sections of Waste Matter"; "Asks Tracks of Railroad to be Lowered"; "Behind the Guns in the Civic World"; "As a Taxpayer I Think..."; all *Long Island Daily Press*, March 10, 1928, 16.
  58. On the nineteenth century see, for instance, Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1997).
  59. For a recent history of Tammany Hall attentive to both its myths and realities, see Terry Golway, *Machine Made: Tammany Hall and the Creation of Modern American Politics* (New York, 2014), esp. 176-77 on consolidation; See also Oliver E. Allen, *The Tiger: The Rise and Fall of Tammany Hall* (New York, 1993).
  60. "A Connolly Sewer," *Long Island Daily Press*, November 19, 1934, 8.
  61. J. R. Logan, W. Zhang, and M. Chunyu, "Emergent Ghettos: Black Neighborhoods in New York and Chicago, 1880-1940," *American Journal of Sociology* 120 (2016): 1055-94; In Queens in 1930, 45% of the population owned and 53.% rented, less than 2% away from national figure. The national figure for black people, however, was 24% own versus 73% renters. In Queens, among blacks that did own, median values were lower, \$7,083 for blacks versus \$9,070 total. The average rental paid by black residents in Queens, meanwhile, was actually fractionally higher than that paid by those self-identifying as "native whites." U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930 (Population, Volume VI)* (Washington, D.C., 1933), 6, 12, 57, 60, 61; The majority of American still rented properties before 1950 but the 1940 census found a clear racial dividing line: 45.7% of whites were owners, compared to only 22.8% of blacks. F. John Devaney, *Tracking the American Dream: 50 Years of Housing History from the Census Bureau, 1940 to 1990* (Washington, D.C., 1994), 19, 28.

62. Letter from Frank Turner to Commissioner Whalen, October 4, 1929, NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3.
63. "Republicans Meet Tonight," *Long Island Daily Press*, July 10, 1934, 6.
64. Styles was convicted, but continued to protest his innocence and was freed on a certificate of reasonable doubt the following year. See "Short Shots," *Long Island Daily Press*, April 16, 1935, 10; "Styles Defense Witness Swears He Inducted Harvey into Klan American Crusaders' Group," *Daily Star*, April 26, 1929, 3; "Court Gets Harvey's K.K.K. Application," *Long Island Daily Press*, April 26, 1929, 1; "Styles Perjury Trial Argued in Brooklyn," *Long Island Daily Press*, February 11, 1930, 1.
65. "Styles Defense Witness Swears He Inducted Harvey into Klan American Crusaders' Group," *Daily Star*, April 26, 1929, 3; "'Who Will Best Represent' Ku-Klux Klan Voters," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, October 25, 1928, A 3; "Flashbacks," *Long Island Daily Press*, March 22, 1930, 8.
66. The Klan itself, moreover, did not disappear, with local press reporting its opposition to the influence of "reds" during the Great Depression. See, for example, "Ku Klux Klan Rides Again, Scoring 'Reds' on South Side," *Long Island Daily Press*, November 15, 1932, 2.
67. Untitled doc, n.d. (a report of branch activities); "Developments in the Case of T.S. Edwards, Who Bought House at 102-02 Remington St. Jamaica," December 5, 1929, all NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3.
68. On the connection between race and criminality in early twentieth-century urban America see Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*; Rose Helper, *Racial Policies and Practices of Real Estate Brokers* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 233-37.
69. Untitled doc, n.d. (a report of branch activities); "Developments in the Case of T.S. Edwards, Who Bought House at 102-02 Remington St. Jamaica," December 5, 1929, all NAACP Microfilm, Reel 3; On Dougherty's subsequent career, see "I.R.T. Man Gets \$6,000 'Plum' on Transit Body," *Daily Star*, March 19, 1932, 9; "Dougherty Association Chooses Leaders," *Long Island Daily Press*, January 5, 1934, 9; "Joe Dougherty's All-Stars are Ready to Go...," *Long Island Daily Press*, January 25, 1934, 17; "Dunton Man Urged for Transit Post," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, February 27, 1935, 14.
70. "Central Queens Allied 15 Civic Committees," *Long Island Daily Press*, February 18, 1928, 16; "Pastor Heads Civic Group," *Long Island Daily Press*, October 1, 1929, 2; "Harries Heads Civic Group," *Long Island Daily Press*, February 12, 1930, 3; The Central Queens Allied Civic Council, meanwhile, continued to press for numerous causes in the mid-1930s, lobbying to get improved facilities like a new center in Jamaica. "Civic Center Fight Points to Jamaica," *Long Island Daily Press*, January 22, 1934, 6.
71. Hillier, "Redlining and the Homeowners' Loan Corporation," 398.
72. "Housing Project Excavation Begun," *Long Island Daily Press*, October 4, 1939, 2; "Mayor Denounces Pari-Mutuel Betting as he Dedicates South Jamaica Houses," *Long Island Daily Press*, April 16, 1940, 1; "Slum Clearance Is Hailed as Saving to the Taxpayer," *Long Island Daily Press*, April 24, 1940, 13; "Branch News," *The Crisis*, August 1938, 272.
73. "Singleton Lashes Out at George Harvey Once More," *New York Age*, August 27, 1938, 10.
74. "Jim Crow Ruling of FHA Scored by Head of Jamaica N.A.A.C.P.," *New York Age*, February 14, 1939, 5; See also "FHA Accused of Jim Crow Regulations," *Long Island Daily Press*, January 4, 1939, 2.
75. "Systematic Discrimination of FHA in Queens Shown in Probe," *New York Amsterdam News*, March 25, 1939, 1, 12.
76. "Systematic Discrimination of FHA in Queens Shown in Probe," *New York Amsterdam News*, March 25, 1939, 12; The year before, for example, Thomas G. Grace, the FHA's director in New York State, had praised the decision to devolve decisions on acceptance for rental housing project to state officials. "FHA Aid Speeded," *Long Island Daily Press*, December 5, 1937, 23; "L.I. Real Estate Body Will Move to Jamaica," *Long Island Daily Press*, March 14, 1929, 1; "New Home Development in Bayside is Opened," *North Shore Daily Journal*, October 12, 1935, 8; "Housing Law Changes Spur Boom on L.I.," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, February 3, 1938, 4; On Fred Trump's early real estate career and his reliance on FHA support, see "Rushing Work on New Homes in Flatbush," *Brooklyn Eagle*, December 18, 1938, 2 E, which described his project in Flatbush as Brooklyn's 'largest FHA low cost single housing development'; "Banner Year for Building, Says Fred Trump," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 9, 1938, 1 E; "Long Island Seen as Fertile Field for New Federal Plan Homes," *Brooklyn Eagle*, February 4, 1940, 1 E.
77. "South Jamaica Property Owners Score City Officials," *New York Age*, December 18, 1926, 1.
78. *New York City Market Analysis* (1943), 41-44, "Welcome to 1940s New York," accessed September 3, 2018, <http://www.1940snewyork.com/#>.

79. Mercer Meredith, "History of Race Advancement Work in Jamaica Shows Retrogression," *New York Age*, July 31, 1943, 7.
80. "Ku Klux Klansmen Place Wreath at Monument," *Long Island Daily Press*, May 31, 1943, 1; The association between south Jamaica and racialized urban poverty grew stronger after the Second World War, yet memories of the area's suburban past lingered. Offering a more positive retrospective view than Meredith, journalist Larry Douglas wrote a hopeful profile in 1951 about how, following whites who had been "attracted to suburban life," a variety of notable black Americans made their homes away from Manhattan. Larry Douglas, "How Negroes Came to Queens," *New York Age*, July 21, 1951.
81. Hillier, "Redlining and the Homeowners' Loan Corporation," 396.
82. Michael Kranish and Robert O'Harrow Jr., "Inside the Government's Racial Bias Case against Donald Trump's Company, and How He Fought It," *Washington Post*, last modified January 23, 2016, accessed September 3, 2018, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/inside-the-governments-racial-bias-case-against-donald-trumps-company-and-how-he-fought-it/2016/01/23/fb90163e-bfbc-11e5-bcda-62a36b394160\\_story.html?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.90e018be2a22](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/inside-the-governments-racial-bias-case-against-donald-trumps-company-and-how-he-fought-it/2016/01/23/fb90163e-bfbc-11e5-bcda-62a36b394160_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.90e018be2a22); See also Johnathan Mahler & Steve Eder, "No Vacancies for Blacks: How Donald Trump Got His Start and Was First Accused of Bias," *New York Times*, last modified August 27, 2016, accessed September 3, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/28/us/politics/donald-trump-housing-race.html>.

### Author Biography

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