MEACHAM PARK:  HOW DO BLACKS EXPERIENCE POLICING IN THE SUBURBS?


by


ANDREA S. BOYLES


B.A., Lincoln University, 1997
M.A., Lincoln University, 2004


AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION


submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree


DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY


Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work
College of Arts and Sciences


KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas


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# Abstract

Historically, relationships between police and residents in minority communities have often been contentious. However most of the literature on race, place, and policing has focused on the policing of Blacks and their interactions with the police in urban settings. Building on this work, this study aims to capture similar processes of racialized policing as they occur in the suburbs. This project expands our understanding by exploring policing as it is carried out in a marginalized Black enclave located in a predominately white middle class suburb. Specifically, I focus on Meacham Park, which is a segregated enclave annexed to the nearby white community of Kirkwood, Missouri. Drawing on interviews with thirty African-American residents of Meacham Park, I explore how residents experience policing and their attitudes toward the police. The interviews reveal a contentious history of relations between residents and the police, and I discuss respondents' accounts of specific experiences with police surveillance, harassment, and (in some cases) misconduct. However, though many respondents reported extremely negative attitudes toward the police, the great majority also reported at least some positive interactions and experiences. This study extends research on the policing of minority communities into a segregated suburban context and offers implications for improving relations between the police and minority communities.

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Approved by:

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# Acknowledgements

While this dissertation embodies the challenges and experiences of Meacham Park residents, so too does it reflect my own. It is the product of an incredible journey; one that could not have been completed except for the unwavering loyalty, support, and encouragement of mentors, family, friends, and colleagues.

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Last, but certainly not least, I thank God. I believe whole-heartedly that it is God who made these relationships, occasions, and inevitably, this accomplishment possible.

# Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to Prentis, Sr., and my children, Prentis, Jr., Anaiah, and Faith. As a family, we agreed that I would pursue my doctorate. I would never have done so otherwise. We gained a lot, and yet, lost a lot. But it is all that we gained that prepared us and comforted us in our loss. Prentis E. Boyles, Sr. passed away only weeks before I defended this dissertation. After 20 years, I am forever changed for having shared life with him.

I also dedicate this project to the residents of Meacham Park, past and present, and to the loved ones of those lost to death as a result of conflict and struggle in the City of Kirkwood.

# Chapter 1 - Introduction

In this dissertation, I propose that there is an interactive relationship between race, place, and policing. Together they produce a particular kind of relationship, a particular set of experiences that cannot be explained except in relation to one other. At the intersection of race, place, and policing is racialized policing and racialized experiences with the police.

Having been raised in a disadvantaged, troubled community in the City of St. Louis, I have always been intrigued by the police. They were extremely visible in my neighborhood, and I often took notice of their interactions. Even now, I can recall very telling exchanges between the police and some of my neighbors. Following those encounters, I can also remember conversations among neighbors and family members where they shared their thoughts about the neighbors and the role of the police. Those recollections became an indelible part of my life experiences. They spurred my interests in Criminal Justice, and more specifically, in police-citizen relationships.

As I pondered ideas regarding the police and Blacks in disadvantaged communities, high profile cases such as Rodney King, Amadou Diallo, and Sean Bell, further piqued my interests. The media portrayed the nation as divided along racial lines with each incident, and increasingly, I found myself wanting to be a part of those national discussions. Like me, it seemed that people deeply wanted to understand why such incidents continued to occur. With each incident, people (particularly in the Black community) were outraged by what they perceived to be blatant police misconduct and even more outraged when police were often acquitted. Hence, my dissertation afforded a perfect opportunity for me to delve into issues pertaining to race and policing. This project began with a very basic question, "How do Blacks feel about the police?"

As a Black woman, with my own thoughts and ideas regarding the police in disadvantaged, Black communities, I saw this project as a chance to gain empirical insight into Black perceptions of the police. I wanted to extend the dialogue in ways that would work towards improving those relationships. Coincidentally, while there had been national incidents (e.g., Rodney King, Amadou Diallo, Sean Bell) where police-citizen relations were called into question in Black communities, two tragedies occurred, two years apart, in the City of Kirkwood. Three police officers were killed in two separate racially charged incidents in 2003 and 2005 in this same St. Louis suburban community. Hence it seemed an opportune place and time to begin this project.

While previous literature (Brunson and Miller 2006a, b) had focused on Black experiences and their relationships with the police in urban settings, this project presents a unique opportunity for capturing such experiences and relationships as they exist in a suburban setting. This project asks "How do Blacks experience policing in the suburbs?" The aim is to expand race, place, and policing research by focusing on a historically marginalized Black enclave in a predominately white middle class suburb.

In Chapter Two, I review historical literature on the policing of slave populations and the growth and policing of segregated urban and suburban areas. I then review research on contact with the police, particularly between police and Black communities. Then I review studies that have relied on interview and ethnographic studies to assess the community context of policing and the responses of Black citizens. In Chapter Three, I describe the research methodology and the community context in which my research took place. In Chapter Four, I report the findings of the project; the manner in which respondents came into contact with the police, what their interactions were with the police, and how they came to perceive the police as a result of their

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experiences.  In Chapter Five, I conclude the project by summarizing the findings and discussing the limitations and future possibilities for furthering race, place, and policing research.

# Chapter 2 - Literature Review

In this chapter, I review historical literature on the policing of slave populations and the growth and policing of segregated urban and suburban areas.  I then review research on contact with the police, particularly between police and Black communities.  Then I review studies that have relied on interview and ethnographic studies to assess the community context of policing and the responses of Black citizens.

## Historical Analysis

As the relationship between race, place, and policing dates back to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, a historical review is necessary, especially as it provides a template and a timeline from which Black/police relationships have emerged.  While place has always been restricted, relegated, and regulated on the basis of race, so too was pre-Civil War policing in the United States racialized.  To understand the current state of police interactions experienced by Blacks, one must understand the historically discriminative structures and trends that paved the way. Bass (2001) states:

> ...the [historical] connection between racial subordination and spatial development in the U.S. is relevant to understanding contemporary police practices for several reasons...First, the centrality of race in the formation and organizing ethos of the police is often ignored...  Second...history shows...the effects of these decisions are evident today...policy decisions, particularly those concerning criminal justice at all levels of government, remain a central factor in perpetuating the differential treatment and outcomes of minorities who come in contact with the police.  Third...policing in segregated zones has historically been quantitatively different from that of predominantly white neighborhoods.  Finally...despite the demise of de jure discrimination, police policies and practices perpetuate a relationship between the police and racial minorities that is...authoritarian and regulatory in character (Bass 2001: 162-164).

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Moreover, the history of racialized policing serves as a starting point for understanding how differential policing emerged in U.S. history, what it looked like, and how it was experienced by Black populations.

### Policing and Experiences of Blacks in United States History

In the U.S., Africans were enslaved by whites and faced oppression, abuse, and inhumane treatment. As oppression and cruelty became institutionalized among slave populations, the possibility of slave revolts and insurrections significantly increased. History reveals numerous instances where slaves rebelled. Such rebellions proved extremely threatening to white populations of both enslaved and free Africans (freedmen). Whites also feared freedmen, whom they believed to be supporters of and sympathizers with slave revolts.

Fear and suspicion of both slaves and freedmen, fueled an increasing desire for surveillance and social control among whites. The aim was to provide additional means—beyond the power held by slaveowners themselves—for controlling, restricting, and maintaining order among slave and freedmen populations as well as providing a sense of safety and comfort for whites. Along with the use of slave patrols—officers designated to police slave populations—this became the driving force behind enacting and encouraging the application of laws such as the Black Codes, and later, Jim Crow segregation.

#### The Slave Patrol

History suggests that the slave patrols were among the first organized police forces in the United States (Turner et.al, 2006; Roth 2005; Walker 1999). "Slave patrols, alarm men, or searchers" were formed by local and state militias, court appointed local committees, and state legislators, in an effort to secure and maintain control over slaves (Kristine 2004). Their goal

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was to keep both the slaves and the freedmen "in place," both physically and abstractly. By *physically* keeping the slaves in place, I am referring to the relegation of slaves to certain locations and the policing of slaves in those locations. In the *abstract* sense, the policing of slaves, and especially the freedmen, instilled and helped to maintain the inferiority and subjectivity of Blacks to the white population.

Prior to the institutionalization of African enslavement in North America, some Blacks served as indentured servants, and were treated similarly to their white counterparts. They were granted some liberties (e.g., education) during and following periods of servitude, when they became "freedmen." Though few in numbers compared to slaves, freedmen date back to as early as the 1600s in Virginia (Klein 1967) and had been known to own land, vote, and hold political office in Southern colonies (Wilson 1966).

However, as African enslavement became institutionalized in the U.S., Southern whites increasingly feared for their safety. As the numbers of slaves rose, revolts and insurrections became real possibilities. It has been documented that between 1699 and 1845, 55 mutinies occurred on slave ships (Websdale 2001). Slaves, particularly, in the Caribbean region, significantly outnumbered their white masters, and thus, were more inclined to "full-scale uprisings" (Websdale 2001). Slaves in North American were generally fewer in numbers, engaging in insurrections infrequently by comparison. Nevertheless, slave revolts did occur, as did other acts of rebellion. Out of white fear emerged the slave patrols.

The slave patrols or as the slaves and freedmen called them, "paddyrollers, padaroles, padaroes, and paterolers," emerged at different times, in different states (Hadden, quoted in Williams 2004: 39). Their presence was most significant in places where the slaves and freedmen population threatened to outnumber whites. As a result, where slave control and

regulation had primarily been the slaveowners' responsibility, by the late 1600s, it had become

the responsibility of the entire white population (Williams 2004).  Slave patrols and specialized

militias were appointed, paid, or in some instances called upon to volunteer by local and state

militias, court appointed local committees, and state legislators.  For example, in 1671, the

Charlestown Town Watch (slave patrol) was created in South Carolina, "consisting of the regular

constables and the rotation of six citizens" (Williams 2004: 49).  Additionally, "the laws also

established a militia, requiring every [white] man between sixteen and sixty years of age" to

serve (Williams 204: 40).  The duties of the slave patrols, in terms of keeping or putting slaves in

place *physically* included, frequent patrols in search of runaways, the apprehension of slaves or

freedmen caught outside of plantations or designated places, the prevention of all slave

gatherings and meetings, and searching slave quarters and the homes of white citizens suspected

of assisting slaves to escape (Williams 2004: 39-44).

As patrols policed Blacks and maintained their physical confinement, so did they work to

keep Blacks in place *abstractly*.  Slave patrols were expected to monitor and police slave

attitudes and behaviors and remind them of inferiority to whites.   According to *The Black Codes*

*of the South*:

> …one of the most effective means of controlling slaves was the fostering among the
> slaves themselves of the belief in the great inferiority of their race. The slave who
> thoroughly internalized the idea of Negro stupidity and animality disregarded his own
> aspirations for better things and discredited the Negro rebel who suggested that he do
> otherwise.  He was conditioned to obey (Wilson 1965:18-19).

Slave patrols were present and expected to keep order at markets, funerals, and festivals.  In

essence, their mission was to harass and intimidate slaves (Williams 2004).

Slaves faced a broad range of punitive actions in the effort to control them.  Just as ship

crews maintained a show of force to remind slaves of their expected place in society, so did the

slave patrols.  On sight, slave patrols were designed to provoke fear and submissiveness among

the slaves.  They patrolled on horseback both day and night, armed with guns, whips, and ropes

(Williams 2004).   Slave patrols were prohibited from killing slaves; slaves were investments for

whom the state would have to reimburse the legal owners.  Nonetheless, inflicting bodily harm

on slaves was common.  Slaves were terrorized and brutalized:  women were sexually abused,

captured freedmen faced being sold into slavery, slaves were frequently threatened and received

flogging, whippings, and mutilation, and their few valuables were taken from them; and so forth

(Williams 2004).  A former slave recounted this experience:

> De patrollers wouldn't [allow] de slaves to hold night services, and one night dey caught
> me mother out praying.  Dey stripped her naked and tied her hand together and wid a
> rope tied to de handcuffs and threw one end of de rope over a limb and tied de other end
> to de [pommel] of a saddle on a horse.  As me mother weighed 'bout 200, dey pulled her
> up so dat her toes could barely touch de ground and whipped her (Reichel, quoted in
> Williams 2004: 44).

### The Slave Codes

As slave patrols enforced restrictions and policed the behavior of slaves, these restrictions

were formalized in the use of slave codes (Websdale 2001).  Slave codes were laws put in place

to govern slaves as chattel.  After all, slaves were investments and the slave codes served to

protect masters' interests legally.

Slave codes were pre-emancipation laws and their restrictiveness varied among locations

and periodically changed depending on the threat level.  In other words, instances where white

populations felt most threatened by Black populations, enslaved or freed, "laws against the free

Negro were made more restrictive" and "the police codes of the slave states were strengthened"

(Cromwell, quoted in Wish 1937: 314).  Wish (1937) calls attention to such changes in relation

to the Nat Turner insurrection.  In this case, Nat Turner and 40 other sloaves killed 55 whites

across several plantations.  As white populations were aware of such occurrences and became

increasingly fearful of Blacks and the possibility of similar incidents, locations where slave

codes were not as strict could easily change, depending on the influx of new slaves, insurrections

in other locales, and rumors of plots.

Examples of how slave codes restricted the behaviors and movements of Blacks, bond or

free, included:

- Mississippi and Florida (paraphrased): "A negro or mulatto, bond or free… was subject to thirty-nine lashes if caught using abusive and provoking language" (Wilson 1965: 26)

- Virginia 1748: "If any negro or mulatto, bond or free, shall at any time lift his or her hand in opposition to any person not being a negro or mulatto, he or she, so offending, shall, for every such offence,…receive such punishment as the Justice shall think proper, not exceeding thirty lashes, on his or her back, well laid on…" (Wilson 1965:26)

- Mississippi 1857: "If any negro or mulatto shall bring into this State, or circulate, or cause to be brought into this State…any book, magazine, pamphlet, advice…shall be imprisoned in the penitentiary for any term not exceeding ten years" (Wilson 1965: 34)

- Georgia: "Any person may take up any negroes found out of the plantation or place where they belong, or incorporated town where they reside, acting unlawfully, or under suspicious circumstances, and it found with an offensive weapon shall take same away, and if the negro is insolent, or refuses to answer, may whip said negro as the patrol may" (Wilson 1965: 30)

- Charleston, South Carolina and Augusta, Georgia Ordinances (1813): "Prohibited negroes from swearing, smoking or walking with a cane on the streets—the infirm or blind were allowed use of a cane…No negro dances were to be held without the consent of the city wardens nor were negroes to assemble at any military parade" (Wilson 1965:40)

- Alabama: "Any free person of color, found in company with any slave, in any kitchen, or house, or negro quarter, without a written permission from the owner or overseer…for every such offence, shall receive fifteen lashes" (Wilson 1965:30)

- Georgia: "The free person of color is entitled to no right of citizenship, except such as are specially given by law. His status differs from that of the slave in this: No master having dominion over him he is entitled to the free use of his liberty, labor and property, except so far as he is restrained by law…All laws enacted in reference to slaves, and in their nature applicable to free persons of color, shall be construed to include them, unless specially excepted" (Wilson 1965: 35)

- North Carolina: "Free persons of color cannot be considered as citizens, in the largest sense of the term, or, if they are, they occupy such a position in society, as justifies the legislature in adopting a course of policy in its acts peculiar to them…" (Wilson 1965:35)

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Other laws prohibited the gathering of slaves for religious practices or otherwise, silenced Black preachers, prohibited the reading and writing of both slaves and freedmen, and restricted the movement of both enslaved and free Blacks. Slaves had to display permits from their masters if found beyond the limits of plantations. Free Blacks had to apply and register with the county courts to move to a new county (Williams 2004, Wilson 1965). In event that slave codes and patrols did not suffice, other provisions were made and allowed for the sake of "keeping [slaves in their] 'place'" (Wilson 1965: 34).

> Who does not know that when a free Negro, by crime or otherwise has rendered himself obnoxious to a neighborhood, how easy it is for a party to visit him one night, take him from his bed and family, and apply to him the gentle admonition of a severe flagellation, to induce him to go away (Wilson 1965: 35).

While slave codes were primarily for the purpose of restricting slaves, they were also applicable to free Blacks. Prior to the institution of slavery, free Blacks were granted some liberties; following the enactment of slavery, they too came under the control of slave codes. Slave codes especially created a rift between slaves and poor whites (Websdale 2001). The enactment of the slave codes affirmed racial inferiority for Blacks and superiority for even poor whites. Many poor whites ultimately became slave patrollers. Unlike wealthier whites, they were unable to buy themselves out of patrol duty (Websdale 2001).

### The Black Codes

The slave codes became a template for the enactment of Black codes, which were post-emancipation laws enacted to regulate free Blacks. Their purpose was to regulate the locations and behaviors of emancipated slaves, but more importantly, to monitor and mandate their continued employment.

Since Southern planters and former slave owners depended on slave labor, following emancipation, they feared a loss and shortage of laborers. They were convinced that now freed

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Blacks would no longer work for them. Planters had been known to hire white laborers, which did not prove as profitable. Realizing that freed Blacks were important to Southern agriculture, planters worked to negotiate and bargain contracts with them. Some Blacks agreed to stay on and work, while others fled the plantations, leaving a shortage of field laborers (Wilson 1965). Free Blacks migrated to cities and towns, away from the plantations that were a reminder of slavery. Southern white land owners, unable to retain or force freed Blacks back to the land, turned to the Black Codes as a means of doing so. White Southerners pushed for laws that would force Blacks back to field work or other menial labor. In 1865, the first Black Codes were officially enacted.

Under Black Codes, Black populations continued to face racialized policing along with ordinances that were not applicable to whites. For example, New Orleans mobilized a military unit called Gendarmerie, whose function was similar to the slave patrols (Williams 2004). The Gendarmerie were both mounted and on foot, and their duties exclusively involved enforced compliance with the Black Codes.

Mississippi, one of the first states to enact a Black Code, focused especially on "laws designed to drive Negroes back to the land and compel them to work" (Wilson 1965: 66). In event of non-compliance, Blacks faced vagrancy and loitering violations (Bass 2001, Wilson 1965). They could be punished by fines, imprisonment, and slavery for twelve months or less. Vagrancy statutes were particularly broad—Blacks could easily be convicted for the appearance of idleness, immoral conversations, behaviors and actions, unwillingness to sign work contracts or commit to some form of labor, and so forth. W.E. B. Dubois (1935) stated:

> …the Black Codes were deliberated designed to take advantage of every misfortune of the Negro. Negroes were liable to a slave trade under the guise of vagrancy and apprenticeship laws; to make the best labor contracts, Negroes must leave the old plantations and seek better terms; but if caught wandering in search of work, and thus,

unemployed and without a home, this was vagrancy, and the victim could be whipped and sold into slavery (153).

In essence, these codes attempted to legally reimpose a version of slavery.

Other examples of restriction in the Black Codes included:

- South Carolina: "…no person of color shall migrate into and reside in this State, unless, within twenty days after his arrival within the same, he shall enter into a bond, with two freeholders as sureties…in a penalty of one thousand dollars, conditioned for his good behavior, and for his support; Blacks could not manufacture or sell liquor; licenses for work had to be approved by judges and could be revoked for any infraction(s)"; Blacks were referred to as "servants", while white contractors had to be referred to as "masters"; farm laborers were to work from sunrise to sunset; servants had to be quiet, orderly, and go to bed at reasonable hours (Dubois 1935: 153-155);

- Mississippi: "Every freedman, free Negro, and mulatto shall on the second Monday of January…and annually thereafter, have a lawful home or employment, and shall have written evidence thereof…from the Mayor…or from a member of the board of police…which licenses may be revoked for cause at any time…" (DuBois 1935: 154);

- Louisiana agricultural laws: "In case of sickness…wages for the time lost shall be deducted, and where the sickness is feigned for purposes of idleness…the offender shall be reported to a justice of the peace…forced to labor…without pay;…bad work shall not be allowed…failing to obey reasonable orders, neglect of duty, and leaving home without permission, will be deemed disobedience…" (DuBois 1935: 154).

The Black Codes set a template for criminalizing Blacks, particularly as everything they did was subject to criminal codes, specifically designed and institutionalized for them. Moreover, just as the Slave Codes preceded the enactment of the Black Codes, so would the Black Codes influence the enactment of Jim Crow laws.

### Jim Crow

The first of Jim Crow laws were enacted in 1881 and mandated the segregation of railroad cars. While Black populations, through various means, had always been restricted to specific places by whites, the Jim Crow laws encoded a more formal separation of the races. Jim Crow laws solidified white supremacy and Black subordination, and came from a climate of "economic crisis, political opportunism, and racial fears" (Bass 2001: 160). While white

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populations had previously been motivated by fear of revolt, Southern whites were especially

intimidated by the Black vote and place in politics.  Consequently, segregation served as a way

to nullify and disenfranchise Blacks politically.  Blacks were also met with intimidation and

violence from groups of white vigilantes, such as night riders, Red Shirts and so forth.

> Until it was feasible, the Democrats contended themselves with other methods—some extralegal, others incorporated in state codes—of preventing Negro's participation in politics.  Intimidation continued on an extensive scale…For many white Southerners…violence was still the surest means of keeping the Negroes politically impotent, and in countless communities they were not allowed, under penalties of severe reprisals, to show their faces in town on election day (Franklin and Moss 1988: 231).

The enactment of Jim Crow laws not only barred Black populations from politics, but

restricted Blacks in all facets of social life.  Blacks were strategically ostracized as to maintain

white power and control, while the Codes simultaneously legislated the movement of Black

populations in the South.  Bass (2001) states:

> The intent of Jim Crow was to continually reaffirm and remind the Black population of their lesser status or "place" in the larger society.  Southern localities passed amazingly elaborate regulations to govern Black life in shared public spaces and interactions between the races (161).

Jim Crow laws gave way to policing by the now more formal/modern police departments, as well

as, the Klu Klux Klan, lynch mobs, and whites in general.

> The Jim Crow laws put the authority of the state or city in the voice of the street car conductor, the railway brakeman, the bus driver, the theater usher, and also into the voice of the hoodlum of the public parks and playgrounds (Woodward, quoted in Bass 2001: 161).

In other words, no Black person was exempt from surveillance, scrutiny, accusation, and the

abuse of white persons who felt justified in doing so through white superiority.   This logic left

Southern Blacks defenseless, particularly as the police upheld, supported, and in many instances,

inflicted brutality upon Blacks individually and collectively.  Here, a Black man witnesses

brutality:

One morning…the boss and his twenty-year-old son got out of their car and half dragged and half kicked a Negro woman into the store.  A policeman standing at the corner looked on, twirling his nightstick.  I watched out the corner of my eye…After a few minutes, I heard shrill screams coming from the rear of the store.  Later the woman stumbled out, bleeding, crying, and holding her stomach.  When she reached the end of the block, the policeman grabbed her and accused her of being drunk.  Silently, I watched him throw her into a patrol wagon.  When I went to the rear of the store, the boss and his son were washing their hands…they were chuckling.  The floor was bloody and strewn with wisps of hair and clothing…the boss slapped me…on the back…boy, that's what we do to niggers when they don't pay their bill…he said, laughing (Wright 1965: 275-276).

This was racialized policing; that is, racist policing that benefited white citizens in supporting and maintaining white power and superiority at the expense of Blacks.  This incident was merely one example of many where white citizens and the police would collectively bully and abuse defenseless Blacks.

Rules faced by Blacks under Jim Crow included:  complete separation of the races in businesses, hospitals, schools, the military, transportation vehicles, cemeteries, restrooms, elevators, residential areas, hiring practices, entrances/exits of most facilities, penal institutions, and all other locales; and being barred from interracial dating and marrying (Adam and Sanders 2003, Woodward 1966).

As these laws and others like them were implemented, Black populations experienced policing as they had before.  After all, it was the job of the police to secure social order and they did so by any means necessary.   A Black man recalls such fear as confronted by the police in the Jim Crow South:

Negroes who have lived South know the dread of being caught alone upon the streets in white neighborhoods after the sun has set...the color of a Negro's skin makes him easily recognizable, makes him suspect, converts him into a defenseless target.  Late one Saturday night I made some deliveries in a white neighborhood.  I was pedaling my bicycle back to the store as fast as I could, when a police car, swerving toward me, jammed me into the curbing.  "Get down and put up your hands!" the policeman ordered.  I did.  They climbed out of the car, guns drawn, faces set, and advanced slowly.  "Keep still!" they ordered.  I reached my hands higher.  They searched my pockets and packages.  They seemed dissatisfied when they could find nothing incriminating.  Finally,

one of them said: "Boy, tell your boss not to send you out in white neighborhoods after sundown." As usual, I said: "Yes, sir" (Wright 1937: 277-278).

While this account reflects Jim Crow segregation as frequently faced by Blacks in the South, similar laws and incidents were also commonly implemented and experienced by Blacks in white neighborhoods nationwide. The legacy of controlling space and place with regard to Black populations was wide-spread in the U.S. Similar circumstances have also been documented as they occurred in the Midwest and Northern regions of the nation. Inasmuch, the vulnerability and susceptibility of Blacks to segregation in other geographic locations can be best understood through the history of all-white neighborhoods or "sundown towns."

### *Sundown Towns and Segregation*

A sundown town is "any organized jurisdiction that for decades kept Blacks or other groups from living in it and was thus 'all-white' on purpose" (Loewen 2005: 4). In other words, sundown towns were all-white locations, particularly after dark. Such towns were, and in many respects, continue to be, another means for policing, controlling, and restricting space for and from Blacks. So while the idea of segregating and ostracizing Black populations was born out of slavery and often referenced in the South, its legacy was without boundaries. The idea of keeping Blacks restricted to certain locations reached far beyond the South to states, such as Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, California, Oregon, and more. Loewen (2005) extends the term *sundown* to "sundown neighborhoods" (80), "sundown states" (25), and even "sundown nation" (12).

The emergence of sundown towns has been tied to the migration of southern Blacks. As Blacks migrated from the South, the logic in the North and other regions was to restrict or prohibit their migration (Loewen 2005: 25). Early as 1848, the Illinois constitution stated:

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The General Assembly at its first session under the amended constitution pass such laws as will effectually prohibit free persons of color from immigrating to and settling in this state, and to effectually prevent the owners of slaves from bringing them into this state, for the purpose of setting them free (Loewen 2005: 25).

However, during and following the Civil War and Reconstruction periods, race relations began improving in the North. As a result, legislation changed, extending national and state citizenship to Blacks (Loewen 2005). As always, change was met with resistance and the institutionalization of Jim Crow remained visibly clear as migrated Blacks were strategically shuffled away from white spaces into urban ghettoes.

### *Sundown Towns in the Midwest*

Though Blacks were policed and relegated in and out of places in every region of the nation, the Midwest region is especially significant to this project. It is the regional setting for this study, and therefore, is extremely relevant in understanding the historical relationship of race, place, and policing in the Midwest, and more specifically, in Missouri. Interestingly, Missouri has been documented as having had "an extraordinary number of sundown towns" and counties around the 1930's (Loewen 2005: 67). This was also the case with the neighboring state of Illinois. Consequently, Blacks generally migrated to cities such as St. Louis and Chicago; avoiding all-white areas where they were clearly not welcomed. And in instances where Blacks did venture into or near white areas, the Klu Klux Klan (KKK) and others were successful in chasing them out. Loewen (2005) recalls a lynching in Maryville, MO, where as a result, neighboring towns and counties became increasingly motivated to get rid of their Black residents. He states:

…a lynching in one town might trigger an expulsion in another. Lynchings typically inflamed white opinion, not against the crime but against the victim class, and often this animus crossed state lines (Loewen 2005: 181).

While lynchings were the worst acts of violence, Blacks were subject to a variety of obvious cues, signs, and threats in an effort to create or maintain sundown towns. Such towns could easily be identified by the total absence or extremely small population of Black residents. Many towns went to great lengths to make Black-exclusion clear. A 1964 sign posted in every small town in Indiana stated, "NIGGER, DON'T LET THE SUN SET ON YOU HERE" (Leibowitz, quoted in Loewen 2005: 65). In fact, signs were common and can be recalled as having been posted in most, if not all sundown areas (i.e., train depots, main roads). In Norman, Oklahoma, a warning note was issued to a Black barber, which read:

> You are hereby notified to leave this town in the next ten days. We are determined that no "niggers" shall live in this town. We give you timely warning to get your things and "git" or you must stand the consequences (Loewen 2005: 169).

In Tamaroa, Illinois, the residents were referred to as "rock throwers," known for throwing rocks at Blacks passing through, even to the point of stoning (Loewen 2005: 277). In Anna, Illinois, the word "Anna" came to be understood as "Ain't No Niggers Allowed" (Loewen 2005: 3). In Sheboygan, Wisconsin, a police officer was assigned to meet Blacks at the train station, warning them to not stay (Loewen 2005: 68-69).

In Missouri, particularly in the Ozark region (near the Arkansas border), vigilante whites were known to post signs, brandish weapons, throw stones, and refer to sun-down areas as "gray towns" (Loewen 2005: 74). In Joplin, which is located within Missouri's Ozark region, whites "helped foment an ideology of ethnic cleansing that made most of the Ozark Plateau a sundown region…" (Loewen 2005: 93). White mobs rioted through Black neighborhoods, burned their homes, etc. In fact, Monett, Missouri, where the lynching of a Black man in police custody had taken place, has been chronicled as the start of such violence throughout all the Ozark counties (Loewen 2005: 95). Subsequently, additional lynchings took place in Pierce City and, again, in

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Springfield, MO. The Springfield lynchings claimed three Black victims and became known as an "Easter Offering" (Loewen 2005: 96). In the aftermath:

> …souvenir hunters sifted through the smoldering ashes looking for bits of bone, charred flesh, and buttons to carry away with them in order to commemorate the event. Local drugstores and soda parlors sold postcards containing photographs of the lynching, and one enterpriseman…[had] medals struck commemorating the lynching (Bishoff and Huber, quoted in Loewen 2005: 96).

Additionally, in Memphis, MO (near the Iowa border), a Black family stopped due to car trouble and was met by a group of white men who warned them to quickly get it fixed and go (Loewen 2005: 232). So, too, were a group of Blacks rushed out of Cedar County, Missouri, even after rescuing white teens from a burning car (Loewen 2005: 233). In Herman, MO, the logic was "didn't allow them to stay over-night; could come and shop, OK, but don't stay" (Loewen 2005: 153).

Segregation was not isolated in the South, it was a national phenomenon. While legislation has significantly changed, outlawing segregation and other discrimination, such practices persist. The persistence of sundown towns is merely one example of many, where off-the-record, discriminative practices and the threats associated with them continue to thrive throughout the nation. Just as the slave patrols, vigilante groups, and the police surveilled, harassed, and upheld white superiority through Slave Codes, Black Codes, Jim Crow laws, and sundown towns, evidence shows that the police continue to act in ways often advantageous to white interests while simultaneously disadvantageous to those of Blacks. Blacks continue to experience and live very segregated and regulated lives, particularly as they move in, out, or near white places. In many ways, the policing of race and place with regard to Blacks has not changed; its historical legacy continues through a more formalized and strategized approach.

# Racial Profiling

Since citizens are likeliest to come in contact with the police during traffic stops, racial profiling has been the subject of many studies, particularly with regards to Blacks/police interactions. While racial profiling research has employed both quantitative and qualitative methodology, many studies have relied heavily on quantitative analysis for interpreting its results. Nonetheless, both methods worked to gather, measure, and corroborate/contradict project data and findings. Such studies have taken three primary forms: police ride-alongs and observations, analysis of data from official databases, and self-reporting surveys.

## *Police Ride-alongs and Observations*

Chambliss (1994), observers spent 100 hours riding with officers from the Washington, DC Rapid Deployment Unit (RDU) as well as other officers. RDU officers policed inner-city drugs and violence in disadvantaged Black communities, while all other officers in the project patrolled predominately white communities. The ride-alongs with both groups of officers afforded opportunities for observers to note the differences in interactions (i.e., stings, traffic stops, serving warrants), as they occurred, among officers policing in Black places versus white.

Alpert et. al. (2005) conducted 132 ride-alongs with randomly selected police officers in Savannah, GA. Observers averaged 3.25 tours per officer, observing and documenting officers' reactions, behaviors, and interactions as they played out in sequence. Thus, the goal of this project was to gain insight into the processes by which officers' come to regard minorities as suspicious.

Meehan and Ponder (2002), on the other hand, focused on race-and-place effect. Their data collection process began with 240 hours of police ride-alongs and 25 interviews with officers of every level of command, over a four-year period. Their study worked to provide

greater understanding as to whether Black motorists were more vulnerable to police stops in or near white places compared to being in or near Black places.

While this project hinges on race, place, and policing within community context, Chambliss (1994), Meehan and Ponder (2002), and Alpert et. al. (2005) are relevant in that each study found race and place to be significant factors in policing.   For example, Chambliss observed RDU officers, assigned to predominately Black areas, exhibiting more aggressive and threatening behaviors compared to officers patrolling predominately white communities (Chambliss 1994).   Even in instances where there were no drugs, weapons, or offenses committed, officers were still documented as treating Black subjects differently (i.e., engaging in unprecipitated threats, warnings) (179).   Chambliss (1994) found the RDU patrolling "the ghetto continuously looking for cars with young Black men in them" (179).  Officers were noted as believing certain vehicles (i.e., newer models) to be drug cars (179).  Moreover, the vehicles became objects of suspicion, rather than behaviors.

Alpert et. al. (2005) found that "suspect in a car" was the greatest predictor for the forming of police suspicion (423).   Alpert et. al. (2005) found officers to be eight times likely to suspect individuals depending on the characteristics of the vehicle being driven, four times likely to suspect with Black citizens, and particularly suspicious when in troubled neighborhoods (423).  However, Alpert et. al. (2005) found that while race was significant in the forming of police suspicion, but it was insignificant in actual stops made by the police. Conversely, place was significant in actual stops (i.e., police were more likely to stop drivers in "troubled neighborhoods), but insignificant in nonbehavioral police suspicion.  Consequently, it is important to note that interactional effects may be at play with regards to race and place.  Since

most communities are racially segregated, it is likely that race and place variables reflect one another in both the forming of police suspicion and their decision(s) to stop.

Meehan and Ponder's (2002) found that officers were twice as likely to run the plates (i.e., conduct proactive queries) of Black motorists when there were no offenses committed (Meehan and Ponder 2002: 415-416). Then as a result of running plates, the police in turn produced more overall "hits" or MDT reports of legal problems for Blacks - at an 86% hit rate for Blacks versus a 66% hit rate for whites (Meehan and Ponder 2002: 419). Meehan and Ponder (2002) found higher rates of MDT queries for Blacks in white places; that is, "non-border" places, where Blacks also had the lowest hit rates (Meehan and Ponder 2002: 416-419). Meehan and Ponder state, "…considerations of place, not the productivity from hits, drives the Black query rate" (420). Overall, their findings support "race-and-place effect"; meaning, Blacks are twice as likely to be surveilled and stopped as they travel out of Black places into white. Additionally, Meehan and Ponder (2002) call attention to the possible use of MDTs in aiding racial profiling (422).

In all three studies (Chambliss 1994; Meehan and Ponder 2002; and Alpert et. al. 2005), researchers found police suspicion, discretionary power, and behaviors to be influenced by non-behavioral factors. While Alpert et. al. (2005) found "traffic offenses" (i.e., legal factors) to be most significant in producing citizen stops, race and place factors should not be discounted or underestimated. Instead, race and place deserve more attention, especially as all three studies found them to be significant in influencing police behaviors, even when there were no offenses committed.

Police ride-alongs provide answers in the heat of citizen/police interactions from the perspective of officers. This then minimizes or eliminates room for criticizing the lack of police

voice. In other words, ride-alongs make for an excellent outlet from which researchers can give space to police as they see and understand citizen-police interactions. That said, Alpert et. al. (2005), Meehan and Ponder (2002), and Chambliss (1994), all corroborate the persistence of racial profiling in that they found race and place to be significant factors in policing for Blacks compared to whites.

### *Police Databases*

Meehan and Ponder (2002) also made use of records from Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs), consisting of 5,604 preserved queries made by 111 officers. They defined 3,716 of those queries as "proactive," meaning the officers chose to run checks on vehicles when they were not engaged in actual service calls (e.g., traffic accidents). Meehan and Ponder (2002) found that Blacks were two times likelier to be queried compared to Whites (2.1 versus .8), regardless of their location. They also found such queries to significantly increase as Blacks moved further from Black areas and closer to white areas. For example, the ratio for proactive queries of Blacks in the border sectors (areas that border Black-populated parts of city) ranged from .9 to 1.6. Proactive queries for Blacks in the nonborder sectors (closest to white-populated areas), increased in range up to 3.8. This means in the section closest to or in the white-populated areas, police suspicion of Black motorists increased and Blacks were three times likely to have "unwarranted" checks run on them compared to whites.

Gelman et. al. (2007) analyzed New York's "stop and frisk" data, which consisted of 125,000 pedestrian stops over a 15-month period. Since the goal was to assess whether "race-specific stop rates" were reflective of "race-specific crime rates," Blacks, Hispanics, and whites as associated with four types of crimes (i.e., violent crimes, weapons offenses, property crimes, and drugs) were first assessed for stop rates compared to arrest rates (Gelman et.al, 2007: 817).

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Gelman et. al. (2007) found Blacks were stopped 23% more often than whites, and Hispanics were stopped 39% more compared to whites (817). Then when categorized and analyzed across three precincts (i.e., <10% Black, 10-40% Black, >40% Black), the findings were as follows: for *violent crimes*, Blacks (1), Hispanics (2), and Whites (3) in this order, were likeliest to be stopped in precincts with less than 10% Black population; for *property crimes*, Hispanics (1), Whites (2), and Blacks (3) were likeliest to be stopped in precincts with less than 10% Black population; for *drug crimes*, Hispanics (1) with Blacks and Whites tied (2) were likeliest to be stopped in precincts with less than 10% Black population; and for *weapons crimes,* Blacks (1), Hispanics (2) and Whites (3) were likeliest to be stopped in precincts with 10-40% Black population (Gelman et.al, 2007: 819). Overall, Blacks and Hispanics were 2.5 and 1.9 times likelier to be stopped for violent crimes and 1.8 and 1.6 times likelier for weapons crimes compared to Whites (Gelman et. al., 2007: 820). However, though Blacks and Hispanics were MORE likely to be stopped, they were LESS likely to be arrested; 1 in 7.9 whites stopped were arrested, compared to 1 in 8.8 for Hispanics and 1 in 9.5 for Blacks. This suggests that Blacks and Hispanics were stopped with less probable cause than whites.

Chambliss' findings (1994) mirror these, though in a different context. In ride-alongs, Chambliss (1994) found 10% of the vehicles police stopped to actually have had drugs, guns, weapons, or someone wanted by the police (179). However, "the officers themselves believe that they find serious violations in about a third of vehicular stops" (179). Consistent with Meehan and Ponder (2002), Gelman et. al.'s findings suggests *one*, race and place are significant factors; *two*, that minorities are likelier to be stopped in any location compared to whites; *three*, that the likelihood for minorities to be stopped significantly increases, compared to other locations, when they near or enter into white places; and *four,* their stops lead to fewer arrests

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compared to whites. If arrest rates are lower than the frequency of stops for minorities, this suggests that at least some stops are about police suspicion and unwarranted surveillance rather than criminality.

Similar to police ride-alongs, the uniform databases reflect the actions of police officers as they report them. Officers have some measure of discretion in what they actually report, therefore, there may be crucial information not shared by officers, offsetting or limiting the ability to adequately measure differential policing or the stops of Blacks (Meehan and Ponder 2002). Meehan and Ponder (2002) found that 25% of the stops they observed were not MDT recorded. The "stop and frisk" data analyzed by Gelman et. al. (2007) reflected only 72% of actual recorded stops. As police are likely motivated to minimize any appearance of discrimination, these studies likely underestimate the extent to which discriminatory patterns of policing occur.

## *Self-report Surveys*

Self-reporting data, again, differs from police-reported data in that the information gained reflects the voice of citizens as they experience and perceive their interactions with the police. This data collection technique is consistent with this project in that the goal here is to understand policing as experienced and voiced by Blacks. Lundman and Kaufman (2003), Lange et. al. (2005), and Warren et. al. (2006), conduct and use citizen-reported surveys/data, as part of their analyses.

Like police reporting, self-reported data has also been met with criticisms in that citizens may under-report when questioned about particular kinds of information. Nonetheless, the benefits of self-reporting surveys outweigh the negatives. Drawing on a sample of 7,034 respondents, Lundman and Kaufman (2003) find that Hispanics and Others were less likely than

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whites to report having been stopped by the police. These effects held by sex as well – Hispanic men and women were less likely than white men and women to be stopped. This appears to be inconsistent with the literature cited above. So then are there "unaccounted for" interactional effects at play, working to decrease the likelihood of Hispanic stops compared to White? Could culture play a role here, especially as Hispanic women may drive less than Black and White women? Additionally, are Hispanics likelier to car pool or ride in groups, decreasing the number of Hispanic drivers on the road compared to Black and White?

As self-reported data affords opportunities for collecting information beyond stop rates and arrest rates, Lundman and Kaufman (2003) extended the scope of their project to respondent perceptions of stops. They asked *one*, whether respondents felt their stops were legitimate, and *two*, whether they believed officers to have behaved appropriately during stops. Here they found that Blacks and Hispanics were least likely to feel their stops were legitimate and most likely to believe officers behaved improperly. When accounting for gender, Lundman and Kaufman (2003) state, "Men are less likely to believe that the stop was legitimate than are women" (Lundman and Kaufman 2003: 207).

Warren et. al. (2006) drew on 2,830 self-report surveys to estimate racial disparities among police stops from local and state police in North Carolina. Through regression modeling, race (being Black) and higher education proved to be significant factors with stops by local officers. While the first is consistent with the racial profiling argument, the second is not. Neither of these findings held in analyzing stops by highway patrol. Warren et al. suggest that education may be connected to age – those with higher education may be college students, and age is a predictor of traffic stops in other studies (e.g., Lundman and Kaufman 2003). Additionally, Warren et. al.'s (2006) findings are consistent with Lundman and Kaufman (2003)

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in that men are likelier than women to be stopped by local and state police; when accounting for race and gender, Black men are likelier to be stopped compared to White men and Black women are likelier to be stopped compared to White women (local and state police) (Warren et. al. 2006: 721). In terms of place, where race decreased in significance with highway patrol, interestingly the significance of place increased. Drivers were more likely to be stopped in suburbs and rural areas as opposed to cities. Overall Black men, 18-22 years of age are most vulnerable to police stops locally and on the highway (see Warren et. al. 2006: 721). Importantly, Warren et. al. 2006 do make clear that speeding behaviors were virtually the same for both Black (7.40%) and White (6.70%) respondents, and yet, the percentage of stops for Blacks compared to that of whites by local and state police remained disproportionate.

These studies have examined the behaviors of police and the experiences of motorists with police. Yet, in these studies the voices of respondents have been minimal (Chambliss 1994; Meehan and Ponder 2002; and Alpert et. al. 2005). Two other kinds of research have highlighted this aspect – research (largely survey and interview) on attitudes toward the police, and ethnographic research (largely in the form of community studies).

## Attitudes Toward the Police (ATP)

As ATP projects have identified both the attitudes themselves as well as the factors that often determine those attitudes, analyses have focused on individual-level variables and contextual variables. Consequently, this project looks at both sets of variables (i.e., individual, contextual), especially as they may provide a greater understanding of gaps in ATP research/literature and the compelling goals behind this project.

## *Individual Variables*

Studies focused on individual-level or demographic factors have included variables such as race/ethnicity, sex, age, education, income, etc.  Beginning with age, research shows that youth populations are likelier to have negative ATP in comparison to adults (Miller and Davis 2008; Brunson and Miller 2006a, b; Nihart et al. 2005; Fine et al. 2003; Taylor et. al., 2001; Hurst and Frank 2000; and Browning et al. 1994).  Adolescents view themselves as targets for police harassment, surveillance, and restriction (Fine et al. 2003; Browning et al.1994).  They are generally more concerned with freedom and independence versus safety and protection.  As such is the case, researchers indicate that youth attitudes towards the police often correlate with attitudes towards other authority figures (i.e., parents, teachers) (Nihart et. al. 2005; Fine et.al. 2003).  Youth often resent the idea of surveillance.

In terms of gender, previous studies show that ATP are less favorable among boys/men compared to girls/women (Brunson 2007; Brunson & Miller 2006a, b; Fine et al. 2003; Taylor et. al., 2001; Hurst and Frank, 2000; Hurst et. al., 2000; Leiber et al, 1998; and Chesney-Lind and Sheldon1998).  Men are likelier to come in contact with the police under suspicion and as assailants than are women.  Consequently, male ATP is generally defensive and apprehensive, while female ATP tends to be more credulous and composed.

Similar to age, negative ATP vary and may be further exacerbated when gender is coupled with SES, race/ethnicity, etc. (Brunson 2007; Brunson and Miller 2006a, b; Mastrofski et al. 2002; and Fagan and Davies 2000).  Studies show that there is an increase of police surveillance, harassment, and other aggressive tactics in minority neighborhoods, particularly among disadvantaged males (Brunson 2007; Brunson and Miller 2006a, b; Smith and Holmes 2003; Bass 2001; Chambliss 1994).  The criminal justice system, local and otherwise, has a long standing history of positing young Black men as the likeliest perpetrators of crime.  While such

stereotypes work to create hostile police practices directly and indirectly, so are those

perceptions then reciprocated by young Black males in terms of ATP (Brunson 2007; Brunson

and Miller 2006b; Kane 2002; Anderson 1999, 1990; Klinger 1997).  Studies also support similar

negative ATP among Black women in disadvantaged neighborhoods (Brunson and Miller 2006a;

McDonald and Chesney-Lind 2001). While their ATP may not equally reflect the threats as often

perceived and felt by Black men, they are still pertinent in that Black women view the police as

personal threats to themselves and their loved ones.  While such experiences and perceptions are

common among disadvantaged Black populations, they tend to be least experienced or felt

among white men and even more so among white women (Fine et al. 2003; Robinson and

Chandek 2000; Bush -Baskette 1998; and Visher 1983).

As race and socioeconomic status (SES) are intractably intertwined, it is virtually

impossible to measure ATP solely on the basis of one or the other   In fact, many studies analyze

the effects of SES and disadvantaged communities along side of race (Websdale 2001; Anderson

1999, 1990).  Consequently, ATP among low-income, disadvantaged white and minority

populations tends to be less favorable compared to middle class populations (Albrecht and Green

1977).   More specifically, disadvantaged minority (i.e., Black) populations are likely to have

less positive ATP compared to predominately white middle class populations (Anderson 1990).

Black middle- and upper class populations are equally likely to have less positive ATP compared

to their white middle- or upper class counterparts (Albrecht and Green 1977).  And since

communities reflect the income status of its residents, these trends tend to remain the same when

accounting for community context.

## *Contextual Variables*

Contextual variables, such as political alienation, police presence, expectations of police, the nature and frequency of police contact, victimization, and the fear of crime, community conditions and space and place, are crucial to analyses of ATP. Theorists have either relied on individual variables, a combination of individual and contextual variables or a complete neglect of contextual variables. In short, many researchers have focused their efforts on controlling for socio-demographic factors (i.e., age, gender, race), while failing to consider or control for non-demographic factors (i.e., social/political alienation, contact with police, community context).

Type of contact is important in shaping ATP. Studies suggest that Blacks are "more likely to leave an encounter with the police upset or angry" (Bordua and Tifft, quoted in Weitzer and Tuch 2004). Consequently, it is essential to take into full account the circumstances through which they become acquainted. Was it a forced encounter? Meaning, did the police initiate the contact or the citizen? Did the individual(s) come into contact with the police through circumstances of their own or others?

Direct contact is personal contact and experiences with the police. It is often the vehicle through which Black populations have historically faced public discrimination. Examples of such discrimination may include personal experience(s) of racial profiling and excessive use of force. Indirect or "vicarious" contact is knowledge gained through police contacts as others (i.e., friends, family) have experienced them (Miller and Davis 2008; Brunson 2007; Rosenbaum et. al., 2005; Weitzer and Tuch 2004, 2005; Feagin and Sikes 1994; Browning et al 1994). This is frequently the case among Blacks. They often share stories with one another, detailing their experiences and the experiences of others with the police. Sharing such experiences may occur through discussions and observations. Some individuals come to internalize the experiences of

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others as eye-witnesses, that is, they observe police indiscretions with others firsthand or through media accounts (Weitzer and Tuch 2002).

Research references "voluntary and involuntary" as additional forms of police contact (Decker 1981). While both contacts (i.e., voluntary and involuntary) are generally understood and discussed as direct (personal) contacts, they differ in that voluntary contact is initiated by the citizen and involuntary contact is initiated by the police. While voluntary contacts may prove favorable in certain situations, studies suggest that both voluntary and involuntary contacts can lead to unfavorable ATP (Miller and Davis 2008; Homant et. al. 1984; Koenig 1980; Smith and Hawkins 1973; and Block 1971). This is often the case for Black populations compared to Whites.

As voluntary police contacts are citizen-initiated, it is likely that the contact was prompted by an emergency situation, where the citizen(s) had no other recourse. In fact, such interactions are often precipitated by fear; that is, a fear of crime or an actual occurrence of crime, such as victimization (i.e., physical or property) (Reisig and Parks 2000; Reisig and Giacomazzi 1998; Sampson and Bartusch 1998; Cao et al 1996; Davis 1990; Murty et al 1990). However, even in such instances, some studies suggest that citizens may experience negative ATP when crime and victimization are associated with community incivility (Cao et. al. 1996). On one hand, citizens may be favorable to in that they fear crime and look to police for protection. But, on the other hand, citizens tend to hold the police responsible for the occurrence of crime. Where crimes such as victimizations are likely to occur, citizens often perceive the police as inadequate or incompetent (Cao et. al. 1996). They tend to lack confidence in them and their ability to protect them. Negative attitudes toward police may also come from voluntary

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contacts in which citizens believe the police perform poorly and offer low quality service (Dean 1980; Smith and Hawkins 1973).

When Blacks voluntarily contact the police, studies show that they experience the following: often delayed responses, no responses, unjust resolutions or no resolutions when officers do respond (Robinson and Chandek 2000; Frueudenberg et al. 1999; Anderson 1999, 1990; Klinger 1997; Walker et al. 1996; Homant et al 1984; Koenig 1980; Furstenberg and Wellford 1973). These experiences translate into negative opinions and attitudes by the individual(s) directly affected. Additionally, this creates opportunities to extend such experiences and ATP to those they may share stories with.

Involuntary contact, on the other hand, is initiated by the police. Involuntary contact, by its very nature, typically results in negative experiences and attitudes (Murty et al. 1990; Maxfield 1988; Thurman and Reisig 1996; Reisig and Correia 1997; and Radalet and Carter 1994). Blacks are likely to have more encounters with the police than their white counterparts. Such contacts translate into surveillance and harassment (Carr et. al. 2007; Brunson and Miller 2006a, b; Fine et. al. 2003; Browning et. al. 1994). The ideal of harassment, surveillance, imposed authority, and so forth, all become culminated experiences (Feagin, quoted in Brunson and Miller 2006b).

Social and political alienation has also been significant in understanding ATP. Minority populations tend to be systematically and discriminatively isolated; thus, leaving minorities segregated and feeling as though they do not have a stake in the everyday functioning of the larger society. Consequently, Black ATP may also be indicative of their attitudes regarding overall social/political structures (Dawson 1994; Benson 1981). Minorities have a tendency to perceive social/political institutions and its agents (i.e., police) as sources of prejudice and

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inequality.  In fact, they often see them as culturally, racially/ethnically insensitive, dictating and restricting their every facet of life (e.g., values, behaviors, lifestyle).  That said, as there is an existing alienation and distrust of larger social/political structures among Black populations, so then are Blacks also likely to feel alienated and distrustful of the police.

The police are often viewed as restrictive, discriminative, enforcers and protectors of the dominant way of life, lacking both interest and understanding of minorities and their culture.  Consequently, as the police are viewed as agents of a perceived racially discriminative Criminal Justice System, then so are their practices and on-the-job performances.  Such attitudes are then further exacerbated by disproportionate incarceration and unjustifiable acts of aggression and violence (i.e., brutality) towards Black citizens in disadvantaged communities (Weitzer and Tuch 2004; Kane 2002; Homes 2000) and the ability of involved officers to escape prosecution and conviction (Brooks 2000; Wortley et al 1997; Hagan and Albonetti 1982).

Community context significantly influences ATP.  It is the locale for where citizens and police alike define, as well as, interpret one another's positions, expectations, and experiences (Brunson and Miller 2006a, b; Terril and Reisig 2003; Meehan and Ponder 2002; Kane 2002; Websdale 2001; Reisig and Parks 2000; Anderson 1999, 1990; Cao et al. 1996).   And more specifically, it is in certain places that stereotypes give way to negative police assumptions and behaviors.   Therefore, as Black populations, especially young Black men (Brunson 2007; Brunson and Miller 2006b), are often viewed as persons of suspicion, then so are the places they occupy (Terrill and Reisig 2003; Phillips and Smith 2000; Bass 2001).  Thus, Black citizens are more inclined to distrust police, especially where there are frequent involuntary contacts and harassment, as a result of unwarranted suspicion (Alpert et. al. 2005; Browning et. al. 1994).  The culture and experiences in a disadvantaged, urban setting differ from those of a middle and

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upper class setting (Akers and Sellers 2004; Kane 2002; Bass 2001; Anderson 1999, 1990; Klinger 1997). Low-income communities tend to be disproportionately Black populated, isolated, structurally unstable locations, lacking in resources and conducive for crime. They are places by which previous studies link Blacks' distrust of police (Brunson and Miller 2006 a, b; Bass 2001; Websdale 2001; Anderson 1999, 1990).

Through questionnaires and 934 randomly selected citizens in the City of Cincinnati, OH, Cao et. al., (1996) calls attention to community conditions (i.e., social and physical disorder) as a significant factor in citizens' confidence or the lack thereof in the police. They found when accounting for *community disorder* (i.e., littering, noisy neighbors, loitering/rowdy teens, deteriorating property), the effect of race became insignificant. In other words, this study showed that citizens' lacked confidence in the police in places where there was social and physical disorder. Simply put, if the characteristics of the community were bad, then so were the residents' ATP and confidence in the police likely to be as well. Race and place are important in analyzing Black relationships with the police. Moreover, in an effort to better understand how they work in relation to one another, this project lends itself to analyzing race, place, and policing as an interactive relationship.

### *Ethnographic Research*

Ethnographic and qualitative interview methodology is particularly well suited to eliciting the stories of minorities, whose experiences are often ignored or lost in the larger social debate over citizen-police relations. Consequently, previous projects have used interview research to address the interactive relationship between race, place and policing from various angles. For example, Fine et. al. (2003) used interview research to gain greater insight into how youth perceived the police and other authority figures as agents of surveillance in public places.

She found that youth experience "micro-aggressions," in which they are likely to be disrespected/suspected by police and others in stores, schools, and on the streets; (2) youth are likely to have a distrust of adults; (3) youth are likelier to be open and receptive to adult views, but believe they are not open to theirs; and (4) Black youth were least likely to believe that something could be done to provoke social change with authority (Fine et. al. 2003: 152). Additionally, the project extends citizen-police dialogue, especially as "belief that adults stereotype because of appearance" emerged as a reoccurring theme (Fine et. al. 2003: 152). Thus, the project was especially able to account for minority youth experiences and perceptions as they are likelier to face stereotypes and then increased surveillance as a result.

Weitzer (2000) also relied on in-depth interview research. His project focused on the significance of community context and their perceptions of racialized policing. Weitzer (2000) sought to gain a greater insight into the perceptions of Black versus white residents in Washington, D. C. and whether they believed policing behaviors to vary depending on the communities they lived in. Of the three communities, two were predominately Black and one white; while two were middle class and one lower class. Cloverdale was the predominately White, middle class community. Merrifield was predominately Black and middle class. Spartanburg was predominately Black, lower class and consisted of two areas combined into one community in this analysis.

After conducting interviews with 169 residents, Weitzer (2000) found that majority of the residents believed race made a difference in how people were treated by the police (i.e., 82% Spartanburg, 65% Merrifield, 71% Cloverdale). However, where they differed at is in their reasoning for why differential treatment existed. The Black residents of Spartanburg and Merrifield attributed it to "simple racism" (Weitzer 2000: 136). A few Black residents

mentioned the idea of Black criminality. But in instances where they did, they discussed Black

criminality as an inexcusable *explanation*. The white residents of Cloverdale discussed Black

criminality as *justification* (Weitzer 2000: 137-138). Black residents also suggested "stereotypes

and racialized expectations" (Weitzer 2000: 138). Regarding the significance of community

context, the Black residents of Spartanburg and the white residents of Cloverdale both believed

their neighborhoods to have an influence on how the police treated them. Both Spartanburg and

Cloverdale believed the residents of Cloverdale to be treated much better than those of

Spartanburg, especially as it is a middle class white neighborhood. Ideally, the logic was that

Cloverdale as an affluent neighborhood was crime-free compared to the crime-infested

community of Spartanburg. Consequently, the police generally dealt with Cloverdale *reactively*

and Spartanburg *proactively* (Weitzer 2000: 143).

Interestingly, while the residents of Merrifield believed the police to treat them and other

Blacks differently compared to whites, their neighborhood perceptions were inconsistent with

that of Spartanburg and Cloverdale (Weitzer 2000: 145). Though Black, they believed their

middle class status placed them on the same level as white Cloverdale. Consequently, Merrifield

residents separated themselves from Spartanburg as a Black community, in the sense that they

believed their affluence made a difference. Since they were Black professionals, living in an

affluent crime-free neighborhood, they believed the police viewed and regarded their community

in the same fashion as white, middle class Cloverdale. Interestingly, Cloverdale would reject

this ideal, particularly when comparing police treatment in their community to that of "any"

Black community (Weitzer 2000: 151). That said, the question then becomes one of class or

race. Meaning, does discrimination lie in class disparity, as argued by Wilson (1978) or racial

disparity? This then furthers the need for additional projects, especially as history suggests interactional effects between race and class, rather than one over the other.

Anderson's (1990) use of ethnography in *Streetwise: Race, Class, and Change in an Urban Community*, chronicles 14 years of shared experiences of residents in the Northton-Village area. As the Northton section is low-income and Black populated, the Village area is middle to upper class, mostly white, with some Black residents. This project provides insight into the experiences and perceptions of residents from both neighborhoods. However, Anderson's primary focus is on the Black residents of Northton, as they are the disadvantaged and most destitute of the two neighborhoods. The Blacks in Northton are socially isolated, and yet dependent upon the businesses and services of the Village neighborhood. As they are left to deal with the effects of gentrification and the disappearance of what Anderson refers to as "the Old Heads," Northton Blacks are underemployed and left without Black role models. Thus, their neighborhood is infested with drug selling/use, teen pregnancy, Black-on-Black violence, etc.

Nonetheless, as the Northton and Village neighborhoods are adjoining, the residents of both crossed paths frequently. They shared streets; again, they shared space. Consequently, Anderson elicited stories that relayed clear messages about the way the two neighborhoods interacted. More specifically, through the use of narratives, we know and better understand how and why Black men were feared in the Village neighborhood, as well as, how they came to be viewed as suspicious by both Village residents and the police. This is significant, especially as it calls attention to race in particular places and how when the two overlap/interact (i.e., race and place)—especially for Blacks in disadvantaged communities, they can make for fear, suspicion, and concerns for safety to become very real. Thus, Anderson's (1990) narratives work to further our understanding of how Black men from the Northton neighborhood experienced and

negotiated stereotypes about them that led to them experiencing differential and discriminative behaviors by both Village residents and the police. Consistent with Fine et. al. (2003), stereotypes have a tremendous effect on the experiences of minorities. Even when it comes to the way they are dressed, especially men of color, they face being marked for surveillance.

Furthering ethnographic studies and the insight they provide into the lives of forgotten and ignored minority populations, Anderson's (1999) *Code of the Street* benefits the literature in that it too provides accounts of disadvantaged urban life as lived and understood by Black residents. Moreover, as *Code of the Street* is also situated in community context, it furthers our understanding of the interactive relationship between race and place, the emergence of Black-on-Black violence, as well as, other distinct sets of behaviors constantly being negotiated between poor Black urban residents. Anderson refers to such behaviors—how, when, and where they manifest— and the ways in which they are perceived and understood as the "code of the street". He states:

> The code of the street emerges where the influence of the police ends and personal responsibility for one's safety is felt to begin, resulting in the kind of "people's law," based on "street justice" (Anderson 1999: 10).

Thus, the emergence of the code in itself is reflective of the residents' knowledge of and experiences with the police and the overall breakdown of local social structures. They lack faith in the police, least expecting or relying on them for protection (Anderson 1999:34). Instead, they negotiate ways of protecting themselves; they revert to the Code. Anderson's (1999) use of ethnography provides a window into the significance of *respect* and the conditions of a community, where all else appears to be lost for a disadvantaged Black population. Meaning, the way the residents behave or interact can be better understood when looking at their way of life through exclusion and deprivation. Consequently, the characteristics of the community—their

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social and cultural norms—reflect high crime rates, unemployment, hopelessness, frustration, and the dire need for respect.  Respect then becomes everything and is earned or accomplished among community members by any means necessary (i.e. drug dealing, violence).

*Code of the Street* benefits the literature in that one, it allows the reader(s) to better understand the overlapping, everyday difficulties/oppressions as faced and voiced by disadvantaged, inner city Blacks; and two, it gives significant attention to race, place, and policing dialogue, especially as Black people and the places they occupy make for very different policing experiences and perceptions (i.e., distrust, contempt) (Anderson 1999:36).  Anderson (1999) concludes that the effects of poverty and joblessness in urban areas make for very vulnerable and compromising environments for the young (323).  Thus, he suggests the development of jobs and the emergence of political leaders and coalitions sensitive to the inner city, as a starting point for reversing persisting alienation and hopelessness (Anderson 1999: 324-325).

Websdale (2001), on the other hand, relied on ethnographic research for analyzing citizen-police relations in relation to community policing.  He conducted several police ride-alongs and interviewed both officers and citizens residing in several of Nashville's most disadvantaged housing projects, the Metropolitan Enterprise Community (MEC).  The MEC, which is predominately Black, consists of four housing projects (i.e., J.C. Napier, Tony Sudekum, Edgehill, and Vinehill) and is the site for one of Nashville's Community Policing projects.  Differing from Anderson (1999), this project calls attention to the experiences of Blacks as they exist alongside of community policing.  Websdale (2001) discusses and interprets the residents' experiences, by situating them in historical and community context.  More specifically, Websdale (2001) calls attention to the history of policing in Nashville's housing

projects, where relatives and residents spoke openly about incidents of police aggression and brutality. They spoke candidly about the murder of Leon Fischer, a local Black man gunned down by the police. As residents are able to recall previous incidents of police brutality, they share feelings of contention towards the police. So while there is community policing in the projects, Websdale (2001) finds that most residents do not recognize their presence as making a difference in the community; and due to past incidents of brutality, residents are suspicious and impartial to their presence. Websdale (2001) concludes that community policing is more about increased surveillance and control of the poor. He speaks of community policing as a program having been justified and strategically placed in poor, Black communities in an effort to target and implement harsher penalties on crack cocaine versus powder (193). Nonetheless, residents reveal feelings of intimidation and fear; that is, of both the police and each other in a crime-infested community.

Additionally, through the stories of residents, Websdale (2001) finds that the everyday experiences and choices of Blacks in disadvantaged communities all hinge on survival. In other words, impoverishment, crime, incarceration, violence, intimidation, and fear as collectively experienced daily in these housing projects are the effects of marginalization. Thus, these are not innately characteristic of Blacks as a people, but rather ways of living consistent with having been politically and socially "quarantined" from the larger society (Websdale 2001: 37-39).

Meanwhile, Brunson and Miller (2006a, b) are also significant in the advancement of race, place, and policing dialogue (also see Brunson 2007). They provide insight into how Black youth experience policing and come to have expectations of the police. Additionally, through interview research, they account for gendered experiences with the police. By giving voice to young Black urban populations, both young men and women were able to share their

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experiences, especially as they are shaped and vary at the intersection of gender and race. Brunson and Miller (2006a, b) studies were motivators for this project and, thus, became templates from which to advance it.

As Brunson and Miller's (2006a, b) studies are situated in the City of St. Louis, MO, they account for Black/police interactions in disadvantaged, urban communities. These communities can be characterized as predominately Black populated, with high rates of poverty, unemployment, and female-headed households. They are segregated, isolated, drug and violence infested, similar to the disadvantaged Black communities described in Websdale (2001) and Anderson (1999, 1990).

Brunson and Miller (2006a, b) began data collection with a survey, followed up by in-depth interviews with young men and women (N=75) from targeted neighborhoods. Brunson and Miller (2006a) provide a comparative analysis for how young Black men and women experience policing. They found that most of the youth knew someone who had been harassed or mistreated by the police (67/75); very few youth, male or female, believed the police were easy to talk to (10/75); few youth thought the police were polite to those in the neighborhood (6/75); a significant number of youth said "the police often harass or mistreat people in the neighborhood" (47/75); and young men were likelier to be "harassed or mistreated" (33/40) compared to young women (16/35).

Gendered experiences with the police were most visible in the harassment or mistreatment faced by young men compared to young women. These notable differences were acknowledged and discussed by the respondents, particularly the females. Though the young women discussed being harassed by the police, they believed the treatment they received from the police to be somewhat minor compared to the young men (Brunson and Miller 2006a: 539).

The police usually focused on truancy and curfew violations with the young women and were likely to approach them at night. The young men were viewed and treated as criminals and typically approached during the daytime. Even when approached, the young ladies spoke of the police mostly talking poorly to them; whereas, for the young men, the young ladies recalled witnessing incidents of aggression/excessive use of force (i.e., stops and searches, slamming heads into the car) and arrests (Brunson and Miller 2006a: 544-545). Then in instances where young men were approached in the presence of women, officers were noted as being less aggressive towards them.

As young Black men face proactive policing strategies, they do so fully aware of how the police view them. In Brunson and Miller (2006b), a young man discusses and describes involuntary contacts with the police (623). He speaks of how officers suspect them of being drug dealers, when they are spotted in different parts of the neighborhood. The assumption is that they are circling around selling drugs, resulting in frequent stops and pat downs. This is harassment, a proactive policing strategy experienced by most of the young men in the sample (83%), despite history of delinquency or not (Brunson and Miller 2006b: 622).

When accounting for other experiences and perceptions of young Black men towards the police, Brunson and Miller (2006b) also found: most young men knew someone who had been harassed or mistreated by the police (93%); many believed the police to do a good job enforcing the law, *sometimes* (42%); many believed the police to *almost never* respond quickly to calls (46%); the police were believed to work hard at solving neighborhood crimes, *sometimes* (42%); most felt the police were *almost never* easy to talk to (66%); many believed they were *almost never* polite to people in the neighborhood (49%); and that they *almost never* did a good job preventing crime (49%) (Brunson and Miller 2006b: 622).

Through interview research, the project benefits the literature in that it allows for narratives where the respondents discuss, describe, and identify their interactions and relationships with the police as hinging on suspicion and disrespect.  These are interactions that can only be detailed, explained, and understood as experienced by the young men who live them daily.  Additionally, young men were able to discuss how they negotiated and avoided unwarranted police contacts in their community (i.e., avoiding certain places and people) (Brunson and Miller 2006b: 625).  In some instances, avoidance worked to decrease police suspicion and contact; while in most, police harassment remained the same.  Nevertheless, through these accounts, it is clear that as the police used proactive tactics *to make contact* so did the young men also—in an attempt *to avoid contact*.

Brunson and Miller's (2006a, b) studies pay considerable attention to the experiences or rather the "accumulative experiences" of Blacks (Brunson 2007: 72).  After all, it is through such experiences, positive or negative, that attitudes are formed toward law enforcement, regardless of race, gender, age, etc.  Brunson (2007) states:

> Most studies regarding Black citizens' perceptions of police have relied on survey research or official data on citizen complaints and have typically focused on discrete, one-time experiences rather than on cumulative measures of police contacts.  And although these examinations have highlighted the importance of race and age differences, they have not elicited the kind of information that would allow researchers to acquire deeper understandings…in-depth interview techniques provide a unique opportunity to examine the interplay of direct and indirect contacts to better understand the range of experiences that may influence attitudes toward police (72).

Brunson and Miller (2006a, b) present a framework that makes distinctions between experiences and attitudes, while simultaneously using such distinctions to explain and describe the *process* by which perceptions of police come to be shaped (also see Brunson 2007).

The proposed project then benefits the literature in the following ways:  (1) it brings to life intimate Black experiences, as lived, understood, and shared by them in poor segregated

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neighborhoods; (2) it explains Black experiences with regard to exclusion, fear, and policing by situating them in historical and community context; and (3) it calls into question the history, justification, and the benefits or the lack thereof of with community policing.

### *The Limitations of Race, Place, and Policing Dialogue*

Race, place, and policing research has typically addressed urban settings, and has provided greater insight into how Blacks experience policing, how policing differs by population and location, and how the policing agenda particularly is shaped and influenced by dominant forces. While this research has been beneficial, it has been limited in that it has not addressed such interactive relationships as they exist in the suburbs. Past research has addressed Black faces in white places as a sidebar to larger discussions. Theorists have yet to make suburban locales an ecological focal point in race, place, and police projects. The literature is also limited in that, apart from some studies (Brunson 2007; Brunson and Miller 2006a, b), researchers generally account for ATP rather than the experiences that lead to them. Consequently, it is essential that as we work to understand police/citizen relations, that we do so by first acknowledging and understanding everyday experiences that work to shape ATP.

Addressing individual variables (i.e., race, gender) or contextual variables (i.e., neighborhood/community context, segregation, and alienation) alone does not adequately account for the effects of those variables as they appear in everyday interactions. Instead, studies have generally listed and situated variables as influencing negative or positive ATP, rather than as interacting relationships that account for particular experiences.

### *The Goals of this Project*

So how do Blacks experience policing in the suburbs? *Should* we *expect* such experiences be similar/dissimilar of those in urban areas? How and why? *Are* the experiences

similar/dissimilar than those of urban communities? Again, how and why? These are all crucial questions to be answered if race, place, and police dialogue is to be extended. This project seeks to do just that. Past projects have suggested that Black experiences in urban and suburban areas are similar in many instances, and yet different in terms of perceived measures of threat. History, along with previous studies, suggests that Black experiences with the police are worse in suburban locations. Some researchers referenced such instances as "race-and-effect" (Meehan and Ponder 2002) and "racial threat" (Smith and Holmes 2003). Nonetheless, in all cases, theorists suggest that Black experiences with the police are worse when situated away from Black places and closer to or in the predominately white suburbs. They argue that the threat level among whites significantly increases as Blacks move closer to white communities. This prompts more aggressive police tactics, especially as the very nature of police work is to serve and protect the interests of the dominant populations.

This is the context in which this project takes place. Meacham Park is a predominately Black enclave located in predominately White middle-/upper-class Kirkwood. This means that perceived threats of Black ghettoization and contamination through crime are real for whites. Through interview research, this project attempts to answer the following question: How do Blacks experience the police in Meacham Park? The idea is to gain first-hand insight into police/citizen interactions as voiced and experienced by Meacham Park residents. In general, I will ask residents, "How would you describe the relationship between Meacham Park residents and the police?" "Have you ever called the police for help or to report a crime?" "Can you tell me what happened?" Have you ever been stopped by the police in Meacham Park?" "What were the circumstances?" "What happened?" "How do you think most people in Meacham Park view the police?" "How often do you see the police?" "What are they usually doing?" "Have

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you ever been stopped or approached by the police in Kirkwood?" "If so, what were the circumstances?" "How do you think the relationship between Meacham Park residents and the police compare to the relationship between the Kirkwood residents and the police?" Are the respondents' experiences with the police consistent or relative? Under what circumstances are they likely to become or remain one over the other?

These questions are crucial in understanding relations between Meacham Park residents and the police. This project is unique in that it affords opportunities for expanding race, place, and policing dialogue into a middle-class white community, as experienced by neighboring, disadvantaged Blacks. As the interactional effects of race, place, and police often make for tense relationships between Blacks and the police, it is advantageous to understand and account for a broad range of minority experiences as they emerge and exist in places beyond urban locations. Through qualitative methodology, my hope is that this project will offer greater insight into the state of Black relationships with the police in Meacham Park, and that race, place, and policing research will be extended in academic literature. Finally, I hope that my findings will work to create a platform whereby the experiences of Meacham Park residents and others can be drawn on in an effort to improve relations between their community and the police.

# Chapter 3 - Methodology

This project seeks to analyze the relationship of race, place, and policing in the suburbs. While previous dialogue has successfully done so in urban settings (Brunson and Miller 2006a, b), this project uses the same logic, while simultaneously working to expand and account for additional effects as they might exist in different locales (also see Brunson 2007). Specifically, the objective of this project is to gain a greater understanding of how Blacks experience policing in the suburbs, particularly in the Meacham Park/Kirkwood communities.

## Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is the method of choice for this project. This method is particularly well suited for eliciting the stories of Black adults, whose experiences are often ignored or lost in the larger social debates. Moreover, as Meacham Park is predominately Black, in-depth interview research provides a safe platform from which residents may freely discuss, at length, their relations with the Kirkwood police. Additionally, this method lends itself to careful descriptions, interpretations, and explanations of issues most sensitive to Blacks. It does so while simultaneously calling attention to their social significance through the use of grounded theory methods.

Grounded theory methodology (Corbin and Strauss 1990) is particularly beneficial here in that it brings to life everyday interactions as they have occurred between Meacham Park residents and the police, through a systematic and theoretic approach. Thus, analyses begins with the actual words, conversations, mannerisms, and gestures as lived and shared by the respondents. This project allows for acknowledging and engaging in data collection and analysis as interactive processes. The research findings guide the researcher so as not miss emerging issues and analysis occurs throughout as to provide direction with additional interviews.

Concepts become the basic unit of analysis, meaning raw data becomes interpretable by analyzing and labeling them as specific concepts. Categories that emerge can be grouped together as they repeat in and between interviews. Patterns and variations should be noticed and accounted for, especially as additional patterns may be emerging. This project works to follow grounded theory methods as designed and outlined by Corbin and Strauss (1990). It is the most effective means for providing tangible and quality research findings with Black/police interactions, particularly as the goal is to enhance race, place, and policing dialogue both in and out of academia.

## *Research Question*

This project is aimed at understanding Black experiences and interactions with the police by accounting for, describing, and explaining such experiences in a specific community context. This study primarily seeks to answer the following question: How do Blacks experience policing in the suburbs, more specifically Meacham Park?

## *The Participants*

I interviewed 30 adult respondents from the Meacham Park community in Kirkwood, MO. Twenty-nine of the respondents were Black and one was white. The white respondent was female. In total, this project consisted of seventeen women and thirteen men, eighteen years of age and older. Sixteen respondents were home-owners, six were renters, and eight lived with someone. Ten respondents were employed, while twenty respondents were unemployed. The unemployed respondents consisted of the following: nine retired, two disabled, and nine unable to find work. Sixteen respondents attended college, while fourteen respondents only acquired highschool education. Nine respondents were married; twenty-one were single. I used snowball sampling through various social networks to obtain respondents.

Interviews ranged from 30 minutes to two hours, depending on the amount of information respondents shared regarding the community and the police. Most interviews were approximately an hour in length. All interviews were conducted individually and privately. Twenty-eight interviews were conducted in the Meacham Park community, while two were conducted in other parts of Kirkwood. Eighteen respondents were interviewed at their homes, eight were at the home of the Meacham Park Neighborhood Association President, one at the local library, one over the phone, one at work, and one in a car. All locations were convenient, comfortable, and safe by both interviewer and respondents. The identity of each respondent has been kept confidential. Each respondent has been assigned a pseudonym.

Interviews were recorded using both manual and digital tape recorders. The first eight interviews were conducted using a manual recorder, while the remaining twenty-two were recorded using a digital recorder. Additionally, field notes were taken for each interview, documenting respondents' facial expressions, as well as, information shared before, during, and after the recordings. Each interview was then uploaded from the digital recorder onto my personal desktop computer and numbered according to the order they were conducted. Interviews conducted using the manual recorder were played while in private, re-recorded on the digital recorder, and also uploaded on the desktop.

Once uploaded, each interview was then transcribed using ExpressScribe. Transcription times ranged from four to fourteen hours per interview, depending on the length of the interview. Meaning, the shortest interview (i.e., 30 minutes) took at least four hours to transcribe. The longest interviews (i.e., two hours) took approximately fourteen hours to transcribe. For most interviews (i.e., one hour), transcription time was approximately eight hours.

After transcribing all 30 interviews, transcripts were printed. The initial analyses began with reading through and identifying themes as they emerged in print. Transcripts were then uploaded, coded and further interpreted using Nudist software.

### *Personal Reflexivity and Summary*

As this project is designed to reflect the experiences of Meacham Park residents with Kirkwood police, in many ways, it will likely overlap with experiences of my own. As an Black woman, I am particularly close to this project on many fronts. I am a native of St. Louis, MO, born and raised in a disadvantaged, urban community. I currently teach at an institution a few blocks east of Meacham Park/Kirkwood, as well as one actually situated in Kirkwood. I ride through the two communities several times a week, fully aware of the often tense relations between the Meacham Park and Kirkwood communities.

While raised in an urban community, roughly fifteen minutes or so from the Meacham Park/Kirkwood area, I too engage in this project with policing experiences of my own. My experiences with the police reflect my childhood in the inner city of St. Louis, as well as in my adulthood in a predominately white suburb outside of St. Louis. Nonetheless, I approach this project with great anticipation, especially as I am eager to learn and share the experiences of other Blacks with regards to policing. My hope is that as I access the Meacham Park community, my "insider status" will provide a measure of comfort and trust for my respondents.

As I am especially sensitive to Black communities/populations and intimately understand many of the day-to-day challenges they often face, ideally I hope this project will increase awareness and expand understanding of the relationships between race, place, and policing. I suspect that the findings of this project will prove advantageous first to the residents of Meacham Park, then the City of Kirkwood, and beyond. I am optimistic that these communities, others like

them, and the academy will significantly benefit from the voiced experiences of those most neglected and misunderstood. In this case, those least heard and understood are the residents of Meacham Park.

## Study Setting

Meacham Park is an annexed, low-income enclave in Kirkwood, MO. As of 2000, its population was 764, with 79.2% of its residents Black and 16.9% white (see Figure 1). Many of the white population lives in a new gated apartment complex, situated at the border of Meacham Park (see Figure 2). The Black residents compared to the white show considerable differences in median incomes, educational levels, and so forth. Thus, I am inclined to assume that the residents of the gated complex reflect the statistics for Meacham Park's white population.

Meacham Park compared to the larger segment of Kirkwood and the whole of St. Louis County, is extremely disadvantaged (see Figure 1). Its property values are low and a significant number of its residents fall below the poverty line, receiving low wages or welfare benefits. While the City of Kirkwood, also known as West County St. Louis, is predominately white and often called the "Queen of the St.Louis Suburbs", Meacham Park is extremely segregated, and somewhat of an "enigma" to many Kirkwood residents (City of Kirkwood Online 2008). Meacham Park is characterized as the ghetto; that is, a shadowy, crime and drug infested community only a couple of miles from the more elite sections of Kirkwood. There has been a history of racial tension between Meacham Park and the City of Kirkwood. This makes the location ideal for analyzing the relationship between race, place, and policing.

### *The History of Meacham Park*

Many debates surround the historical beginning of Meacham Park. Some Black residents argue that the community is named after John Berry Meachum, a freed slave known for his significant contributions to Black education in the St. Louis region (Corrigan 2008). Others attribute the purchase of the 158-acres community to a white man name Elzey E. Meacham, a Memphis real-estate broker, in 1892 (City of Kirkwood 2010). Nonetheless, its humble beginning can be characterized as rural, with a population of roughly 3,500 before World War II and 1,300 – 2,000 residents following the war. The community was once self-sufficient, largely made up of dirt roads and farms, and home to both Blacks and whites.

Like most communities during the late 1800s and early/mid-1900s, the Meacham Park/Kirkwood schools were segregated. In 1908, the City of Kirkwood established a school for white students only and in 1916 did it establish a school for Black students only, drawn from both Meacham Park and Kirkwood. Even then, the affairs of both Meacham Park and Kirkwood were significantly intertwined and complicated. In 1924, Kirkwood established another school for "Meacham Park" Black children only (Corrigan 2008), since there were more Black children from the Meacham Park area attending the "Black" Kirkwood school than were Black children from Kirkwood. As a result, not only was there a divide of Black children from white within the area, but also an added separation among Black students—those from Kirkwood and those from Meacham Park. Hence though the governance of the Meacham Park community and the City of Kirkwood have always overlapped, there have always been a deep racial and economic divide. Kirkwood has historically been the lead, "parent" city and Meacham Park its dependent benefactor.

Following World War II and the Great Depression, Meacham Park remained a community with outdoor plumbing, no sewer system, and substandard housing. Discussions of

Meacham Park redevelopment emerged during the 1960s-1990s. By then, the community was

post-Black migration and white flight, as was the rest of the St. Louis City and County regions.

So following a series of events, Meacham Park was officially annexed to the City of Kirkwood

in 1991.

### *Racial Tensions Between Meacham Park and the City of Kirkwood*

Amid the Black migration and white flight of Meacham Park, the community faced

increased resistance and racism from Kirkwood's white population. Bill Jones, a Black resident

of Meacham Park since 1945 and once editor of its only Black newspaper *In Our Opinion*,

recalls the following in the *Webster-Kirkwood Times Online Edition* (2008):

> I remember later, in the 1950s, white people used to drive their cars through the
> Meacham area on Sunday afternoons and they'd point their fingers at the run-down
> houses and the outhouses—and they'd be telling their friends, "This is our colored
> section here,"…"That used to make me angry. It was upsetting for all of us who lived
> here" (para 19).

Likewise, history suggests that many Meacham Park residents were skeptics of the City

of Kirkwood. They believed that the relationship between the two communities was far more

beneficial for the White residents of Kirkwood than it was them. In fact, the logic used by white

Kirkwood officials to rally support for Meacham Park annexation gave credence to Black

skepticism.

> The City of Kirkwood can never be safe, healthy or economically strong as long as the
> conditions in Meacham Park are allowed to exist…Potential criminals, raised in an
> atmosphere devoid of police protection, are not respectors of municipal boundary
> lines…Incidents of civil disorders which have emanated from similar deprived areas in
> other communities stimulate our concern…Because Meacham Park is in the R-7 School
> District, the general high standards of our educational system are threatened because of a
> relatively large group of children coming from a deprived area (Corrigan 2008: para. 15-
> 16).

Essentially, the suggestion is that "by saving them (Meacham Park), we save ourselves (Kirkwood) from them." So while annexation is a local political move, the relations that between the parent-community and the annexed-community often resemble the relations and affects of colonization. In this case white wealthy land-owners intervened as if to rescue the poor Blacks of Meacham Park from themselves. As the former mayor of Kirkwood put it: "That was a city ghetto sitting in a suburban community. Now it looks like a normal neighborhood." (Herb Jones, mayor of Kirkwood from 1984 to 1992, quoted in Kohler 2008) Meacham Park as a suburban community was, and still remains, segregated and isolated just as Black populations are in the inner city. In fact, in an effort to maintain the lines of distinctions between the two communities, white realtors have been known to redirect Blacks looking for homes in the City of Kirkwood to Meacham Park (Corrigan 2008).

### Two Tragedies Strike Meacham Park/Kirkwood

As racial tensions persisted, at varying degrees, between the residents of Meacham Park and those of the City of Kirkwood, tragedies gained national attention. The first was the case of Kevin Johnson, a 19-year old Meacham Park man. In 2005, Johnson shot and killed a Kirkwood Police Sargeant, William McEntee. Johnson held McEntee and other officers responsible for delayed medical treatment resulting in the death of his 12-year old brother, Joseph "Bam-Bam" Long. The St. Louis-Post Dispatch (2005) captured the sentiments of a Meacham Park resident:

> The Rev. Harry Jones, who lives across the street from the Johnson family, said the neighborhood has been tense since Kirkwood annexed the area in 1991, tearing down some homes to make way for the Kirkwood Commons retail center…Residents feel excluded from the community… "There has been friction between the police and the neighborhood…we're treated like outsiders" (Ratcliffe and Harris).

In the case of Kevin Johnson, officers were in pursuit of Johnson on a probation violation of a 2002 domestic assault conviction. Johnson's great-grandmother reported hearing his 12-

year old brother "Bam-Bam" gasping for air, after having been chased home by the police in search of Kevin (Cooperman 2008).  Shortly thereafter, "Bam-Bam" collasped and laid dying from a congenital heart condition as officers continued their search of Kevin.  Both the great-grandmother and Kevin believed the police to have been more concerned with catching Kevin than providing medical assistance to "Bam-Bam".  Consequently, Johnson emerged from a neighboring home to avenge his brother's death.  With a 9mm, he open fired on Sgt. McEntee as he sat in his police cruiser, killing him.  As the area prepared for the funerals and memorials of Meacham Park's 12-year old Joseph Long, Kirkwood's 20 year police veteran Sgt. McEntee, and the trial of Kevin Johnson, they could not have foreseen the tragedy yet to come.

In February of 2008, Charles "Cookie" Thornton, a Black 52-year old Meacham Park resident, went on a shooting rampage at a Kirkwood City Council meeting, resulting in six dead, including himself, and two critically injured.  Among those dead were a Kirkwood Police Sergeant and Officer, two City Council members, the Director of Public Works.  Thornton was killed by responding officers.  Among the injured were Kirkwood's Mayor Mike Schwoboda and a *Suburban Journal* reporter.  Seven months later, former Mayor Schwoboda died from both injuries sustained in the February shootings at City Hall and cancer complications.

Once again, the Meacham Park and Kirkwood areas were thrust into the national limelight, as persistent racial tensions emerged as the motive behind the City Hall shooting rampage.  While debates stirred surrounding the very suggestion of racial divide, headlines such as "Shooting Reactions Reveal Racial Divide" and other like coverage posited unresolved racial tensions at the forefront of another Meacham Park/Kirkwood tragedy.  A New York Times article, "In Missouri, City Ask What Made Killer Snap" stated:

Mr. Thornton was Black, and several residents of Kirkwood's poor and mostly Black Meacham Park neighborhood said Friday that the attack at City Hall was a sharp reminder of the racial division that has plagued the city for decades (Saulny and Gay 2008).

The rampage occurred subsequent to years of what Thornton, who owned and operated an asphalt company out of his home,  believed to be harassment from the City of Kirkwood. Those close to Thornton said he believed he had been unfairly and repeatedly targeted by the City of Kirkwood.  City officials claimed that he did not have the correct business licenses, his company trucks had been repeatedly ticketed - at one point, resulting in as many as 150 citations and thousands of dollars in fines, he was thwarted in his attempts to voice his concerns and frustrations at City Council meetings, resulting in two Disorderly Conduct convictions, he lost lawsuits against the City, and ultimately lost both his business and parents' home, which he had used to finance his lawsuits (Moore, Deereand, and Giegerich 2008).  The St. Louis Post-Dispatch (2008) wrote:

> Cookie absolutely was a victim of racism, said Jim Hollinshead, 46, a white former cellular phone salesman who was Thornton's friend…He said the city abused its power by passing over Thornton's construction company for a massive redevelopment of Meacham Park in the late 1990s, then by peppering him with parking tickets and fines (Kohler 2008).

### The Road to Recovery

A St. Louis Post-Dispatch article (2008) begins by stating:

> Two gunmen, both consumed with rage directed at City Officials and police…In attacks, less than three years apart, the two men from the largely Black Meacham Park neighborhood set crosshairs on agents of a city that, from all appearances, they believed to be their oppressors (Kohler 2008).

Questions still remain in terms of understanding how and why such tensions resulted in tragedy. However, the long history of racial tensions between Kirkwook and Meacham Park make this a uniquely valuable setting for understanding relationships between race, place, and policing.

"We've all been here before, unfortunately, and we will move past this," Plummer said Friday. "There's an old phrase: 'You don't get more than you can handle.' That's being tested, but we'll get through it. We ask for your help." (Ratcliffe and Jonsson 2008)

**Table 3.1 Meacham Park in Relation to Kirkwood and St. Louis County**

| | Meacham Park | Kirkwood | St. Louis County |
|---|---|---|---|
| Population | 764 | 27,324 | 1,016,315 |
| Percent white | 16.9% | 90.8% | 76.8% |
| Percent Black | 79.2% | 7.1% | 19.0% |
| | | | |
| Percent female headed households with children under 18 | 25.1% | 4.6% | 7.4% |
| | | | |
| Vacant housing units | 16.7% | 4.4% | 4.6% |
| Owner-occupied housing units | 29.7% | 77.1% | 74.1% |
| Renter-occupied housing units | 70.3% | 22.9% | 25.9% |
| *Value – owner occupied units* | *$84,700* | *$160,500* | *$116,600* |
| *Median household income* | *$31,088* | *$55,122* | *$50,532* |
| *Median family income* | *$32,778* | *$72,830* | *$61,680* |
| *Percent public assistance* | *15.7%* | 1.5% | 2.2% |
| *Poverty status – families* | *28.9%* | 2.8% | 5.0% |
| *Poverty status – female headed with children under 18* | *54.5%* | 15.9% | 23.1% |
| *Poverty status – individuals* | *30.5%* | 4.6% | 6.9% |

**Table 3.2  Blacks and whites in Meacham Park**

| | Black | White |
|---|---|---|
| Population | 630 (79.2%) | 134 (16.9%) |
| Percent population living in family households | 91.6% | 46.3% |
| *Percent of adult population (25+) that is female* | *71.5%* | *37.3%* |
| | | |
| Percent of households that are family households | 76.3% | 28.2% |
| Percent of households that are non-family households | 23.7% | 71.8% |
| Average household size | 3.31 | 1.73 |
| | | |
| Percent female headed households with children under 18 | 34.7% | 5.1% |
| | | |
| Owner-occupied housing units | 40.0% | 6.4% |
| Renter-occupied housing units | 60.0% | 93.6% |
| | | |
| *Percent high school graduate or higher (adults 25+)* | *83.0%* | *100%* |
| *Percent graduate degree or higher (adults 25+)* | *13.1%* | *56.6%* |
| | | |
| *Percent unemployment (of those in labor force) – age 16+* | *8.5%* | *0.0%* |
| *Percent not in labor force – age 16+* | *37.6%* | *16.0%* |
| | | |
| *Median household income* | *$21,761* | *$70,000* |
| *Median family income* | *$25,333* | *$70,000* |
| *Per capita income* | *$12,150* | *$29,346* |
| *Poverty status – families* | *34.7%* | *0.0%* |
| *Poverty status – female headed families with children under 18* | *54.5%* | *0.0%* |
| *Poverty status – individuals* | *36.2%* | *0.0%* |

# Chapter 4 - Findings

The findings for this project provided insight into citizens' experiences with the police, particularly as those experiences intersected with their perceptions of the police. Interactions and perceptions overlap in ways that often make for complicated analysis. Respondents in this project experienced policing through involuntary and voluntary contacts, vicariously, indirectly, and directly. It is then through those contacts that they entered into a particular set of interactions with the police. That is, interactions where they developed relationships and attempted to make sense of those relationships. Some respondents in this study directly referenced their experiences with the police as harassment and misconduct and then provided accounts accordingly. Others simply discussed how they felt about the police and why, which also accounted for interactions consistent with harassment or misconduct.

As the goal of this project is to extend race, place, and policing dialogue, I discuss the following below: the manner in which respondents came into contact with the police; what their interactions were with the police; and in the end, how they came to came to perceive the police as a result of their experiences. All 30 respondents experienced vicarious contact with the police; they all came to experience the police, indirectly, through stories shared and observations, particularly surrounding the Kevin Johnson and Cookie Thornton cases. Additionally, over two-thirds of the respondents' experiences came from involuntary contacts with the police, while half came from voluntary contacts. This means more respondents came into contact with the police through unwelcomed, uninvited circumstances than did those who sought them out.

**Table 4.1 All forms of Police Contacts**

| Age | Gender | | Vicarious Contacts | Involuntary Contacts | Voluntary Contacts/ Service Calls |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Men (13) | Women (17) | 30/30= 100% | 22/30=73% | 15/30=50% |
| **Below 30 (6)** | **3** | **3** | **6** | **6** | **0** |
| | Jeremy(29) | Carla(18) | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | Keith(22) | Crystal(19) | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | Steve(22) | Pam(21) | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| **30s (5)** | **1** | **4** | **5** | **5** | **2** |
| | Terrance(38) | Jackie(34) | 2 | 2 | 1 Jackie |
| | | Tiffany(36) | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | | Lisa(34) | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | | Felecia (37) | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| **40s (3)** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **3** | **2** |
| | Travis (45) | Jasmine (42) | 2 | 2 | 1 Jasmine |
| | | Valerie (44) | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| **50s (11)** | **7** | **4** | **11** | **7** | **7** |
| | Pete (59) | Lola(59) | 2 | 1 Pete | 1 Pete |
| | Rodney(55) | Barbara(53) | 2 | 1 Rod | 2 |
| | Ricky (56) | Marsha(59) | 2 | 1 Rick | 2 |
| | Johnny(57) | Dorothy(57) | 2 | 1 Dorothy | 1 Dorothy |
| | Dwayne(54) | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Ed(55) | | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | Mark(50) | | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| **60s (5)** | **1** | **4** | **5** | **1** | **4** |
| | Mr. Willie (80) | Francis(60) | 2 | 1 Willie | 1 Francis |
| | | Kim(62) | 1 | | 1 |
| | | Karen(64) | 1 | | 1 |
| | | Denise(60) | 1 | | 1 |

**Table 4.2  Involuntary Police Contacts**

| Age | Gender | | Involuntary Contacts 22/30=73% | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Men (13)** | **Women (17)** | **Question (21) 12m, 9w** | **Frisk/ Search (9) 4m, 5w** | **Arrests (11) 6m, 5w** | **Mace (2) 1m, 1w** | **Violence (3)** |
| **Below 30 (6)** | **3** | **3** | **5** | **4** | **4** | **2** | **2** |
| | Jeremy(29) | Carla(18) | 2 | 1 Jeremy | 2 | 0 | 1Jeremy |
| | Keith(22) | Crystal(19) | 2 | 1 Crystal | 1 Crystal | 0 | 1Crystal |
| | Steve(22) | Pam(21) | 1 Steve | 2 | 1 Steve | 0 | 0 |
| **30s (5)** | **1** | **4** | **5** | **2** | **2** | **0** | **1** |
| | Terrance (38) | Jackie(34) | 2 | 1 Terrance | 1 Terrance | 0 | 0 |
| | | Tiffany(36) | 1 | 0 | 1Tiffany | 0 | 0 |
| | | Lisa(34) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Felecia (37) | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **40s (3)** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **1** | **1** | **1** | **0** |
| | Travis (45) | Jasmine (42) | 2 | 1 Jasmine | 1 Jasmine | 1 Jasmine | 0 |
| | | Valerie (44) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **50s (11)** | **7** | **4** | **7** | **2** | **3** | **1** | **1** |
| | Pete (59) | Lola(59) | 1 Pete | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Rodney(55) | Barbara (53) | 1 Rodney | 1 Rodney | 1Rodney | 1Rodney | 1Rodney |
| | Ricky (56) | Marsha(59) | 1 Ricky | 0 | 1Ricky | 0 | 0 |
| | Johnny(57) | Dorothy (57) | 1 Dorothy | 1 Dorothy | 1 Dorothy | 0 | 0 |
| | Dwayne(54) | | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Ed(55) | | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Mark(50) | | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **60s (5)** | **1** | **4** | **1** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** |
| | Mr. Willie (80) | Francis(60) | 1 Willie | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Kim(62) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Karen(64) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Denise(60) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**Table 4.3  Voluntary Police Contacts**

| Age | Gender | | Voluntary Contacts/ Service Calls 15/30=50% | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Men (13)** | **Women (17)** | **Satisfied (11)** | **Dissatisfied (4)** |
| **Below 30 (6)** | **3** | **3** | **0** | **0** |
| | Jeremy(29) | Carla(18) | 0 | 0 |
| | Keith(22) | Crystal(19) | 0 | 0 |
| | Steve(22) | Pam(21) | 0 | 0 |
| **30s (5)** | **1** | **4** | **0** | **2** |
| | Terrance(38) | Jackie(34) | 0 | 1 Jackie |
| | | Tiffany(36) | 0 | 0 |
| | | Lisa(34) | 0 | 1 Lisa |
| | | Felecia (37) | 0 | 0 |
| **40s (3)** | **1** | **2** | **0** | **2** |
| | Travis (45) | Jasmine (42) | 0 | 1 Jasmine |
| | | Valerie (44) | 0 | 1 Valerie |
| **50s (11)** | **7** | **4** | **7** | **0** |
| | Pete (59) | Lola(59) | 1 Pete | 0 |
| | Rodney(55) | Barbara(53) | 2 | 0 |
| | Ricky (56) | Marsha(59) | 2 | 0 |
| | Johnny(57) | Dorothy(57) | 1 Dorothy | 0 |
| | Dwayne(54) | | 1 | 0 |
| | Ed(55) | | 0 | 0 |
| | Mark(50) | | 0 | 0 |
| **60s (5)** | **1** | **4** | **4** | **0** |
| | Mr. Willie (80) | Francis(60) | 1 Francis | 0 |
| | | Kim(62) | 1 | 0 |
| | | Karen(64) | 1 | 0 |
| | | Denise(60) | 1 | 0 |

# Vicarious Contacts

As Meacham Park gained national attention around the cases of residents Kevin Johnson and Cookie Thornton, all 30 respondents experienced vicarious police contact. This is indirect police contact whereby citizens acquire knowledge of the police through the experiences of others (Miller and Davis 2008; Brunson 2007; Rosenbaum et. al., 2005; Weitzer and Tuch 2004, 2005; Feagin and Sikes 1994; Browning et al 1994). Research shows vicarious contacts to be frequent among Blacks. They often share and exchange stories of the police as family, friends, and neighbors have experienced them. Additionally, they come to experience policing through observations of police indiscretions and media accounts (Weitzer and Tuch 2002). While these are secondary experiences, vicarious contacts are significant in that citizens often internalize what they hear and see regarding the police. Consequently, second-hand experiences become experiences of their own; hence, shaping their perceptions of the police.

## *Kevin Johnson and Cookie Thornton*

All 30 respondents in this project experienced vicarious contacts through what they heard or saw regarding the cases of Kevin Johnson and Cookie Thornton. Only two of my thirty respondents, both women, reported being present and personally witnessing events as they unfolded between Kevin Johnson and Sergeant McEntee. One was present at the home where the officers were in pursuit of Kevin Johnson. The other was at the scene when Kevin approached Sgt. McEntee, shooting and killing him.

Beyond these two respondents, of those who had only vicarious knowledge of these cases, many perceived the police negatively. All believed that police harassment was a factor precipitating in the actions of Kevin and Cookie. In fact, while discussing Cookie, Ed stated:

> In some ways, I feel he was hassled…I feel more could've been done to solve the problem before it led up to what happened.

However, though many respondents viewed police behavior as having in some way caused these events, seven older respondents did so while also making clear their disdain for the actions of Kevin and Cookie with the shootings and in incidents prior to them. For example, three respondents characterized Kevin as a troubled youth. They talked about his association with other troubled individuals, as well as a history of doing things that were less than admirable. In sum, they believed that Kevin did things that warranted police attention. As for Cookie, one respondent spoke of complaints from neighbors. She suggested that it was Cookie's neighbors that prompted officers' initial ticketing of his vehicles and equipment by calling in and complaining about them being parked on their property and illegally throughout the community. They neighbors thought his vehicles and equipment made the community look shoddy.

Moreover, as the respondents attributed officer's attentiveness to Kevin and Cookie's actions, they did so while at the same time attempting to be fair. They understood why the police sought both men out. But once the police did, the previous respondents made it clear that officers could have handled things differently. In other words, what respondents learned and shared regarding Kevin and Cookie's cases reflected a view of both men, in the end, as having been incited by aggressive policing. This was especially true for the respondents who had experienced involuntary police contacts themselves.

The respondents frequently talked about these two cases. These incidents were significant. Collectively, they defined police-citizen interaction in the community of Meacham

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Park.  One respondent (Francis) described the frequent conversations and the impact of those

cases on race relations, and inevitably policing relations:

> The wounds are still not healed….the citizens, the white and the Black citizens still have
> animosity for each other…The police had animosity…they don't like you and you don't
> like them. The people talk about it a lot.  The residents in Meacham Park talk about the
> incidents and residents of Kirkwood talk about the incidents.  He [Cookie Thornton] was
> a madman, that's what the white folks say…and the Black folks say he did justice.  So,
> that's conflict.

As respondents attempted to make sense of these cases, they discussed what transpired moments

before the tragedies, the role of police harassment in both tragedies, and finally, how they came

to have involuntary police-citizen interactions of their own in the aftermath.


### *Moments Before the Tragedies*

Respondents shared accounts describing what took place in the moments leading up to

the tragedies, and much of the shared information seemed to be about making collective sense of

Kevin's and Cookie's actions.  By the time each incident occurred, both Kevin and Cookie had

established histories with the local authorities.  Kevin was on probation at the time and was

being sought for a violation.  But many of the respondents had similar experiences, or at least

knew someone who did.  Hence, they sought to understand what led to the breaking point for

both men.  These stories were not so much about justifying the actions of Kevin and Cookie, but

rather about humanizing them.

Cookie himself had expressed visible discontent with what he believed to be racism and

failed promises by the local government.  He often picketed and protested in public places, both

inside and outside Meacham Park.  Like other respondents, Marsha had often seen Cookie

protesting:

> We were right there, we saw it…when he wore them signs.  He'd be standing on the
> corner down there by Meramec and everything and you know them signs that go down
> the front and all the way down the back…with a ball and chain on his leg and

everything. I called my husband, I say "Baby, Cookie is standing up here on the corner with a sign hangin' off of him, with a chain on his leg and all that stuff.

Additionally, respondents recalled incidents where he used props and went on what seemed to be long tangents when allowed to speak in City Council meetings.

Every Thursday they had City Hall, he would come up and do demonstrations and talk... you know they have an open mike time. And we could be there for some other reason and here comes Cookie. He had signs and he would hand out bananas and say "If you all act like a bunch of monkeys, I'll give you a bunch of bananas." (Denise)

Similarly, Dorothy often talked with Cookie and attended City Council meetings. She stated:

He targeted the mayor, he had targeted the Commissioner, he wanted the lawyer that was in charge of telling them "you [police] keep ticketing him and doing this and that".

Though he had unquestionably engaged in bizarre behavior, Cookie perceived his own interactions with the police as part of a larger conspiracy by City Hall. As City Hall was the source of his discomfort, it became the location of his revenge. Cookie's actions were about avenging himself against the local government, and he took the lives of government officials and the police.

As for Kevin, most respondents reported being shocked at learning that Kevin killed an officer, but were mostly concerned with the details surrounding the officers' actions. They wanted to know what the police did that pushed Kevin over the edge. Jasmine described her thoughts:

…the day that it happened, I just…I mean, I couldn't believe it. I have heard rumors about McEntee harassing Kevin and other guys. I've heard rumors that he was supposed to been a racist and I don't think I ever had a run-in with him to actually know if that's true or not. I just heard that from others.

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Since Jasmine did not know the officer, she could not confirm whether he was racist or not.

However, she knew Kevin, she knew those sharing the stories, and she admittedly shared the

same accounts with others as she heard them.

Respondents discussed both officers' pursuit of Kevin and their response to the collapse

of his brother.  Others shared the stories they heard:

> Barbara:  What I understood is that he [Kevin] was upset because of his brother and I
> don't know the whole story…but he [Kevin] was saying that the officer didn't pay
> attention to his brother, who had a bad heart and he [Sgt. McEntee] could have saved
> him.  It's very vague, very vague…

> Keith:  I don't know detail-to-detail cause its always different stories.  From
> what I know, I guess Sgt. McEntee came looking for Kevin.  I guess he [Kevin] was on
> house arrest.  Kevin's lil brother Bam-Bam collapsed...the grandma asked them to call
> 911, he [Sgt. McEntee] didn't and when Kevin seen him [Sgt. McEntee], they say he shot
> him.

> Mark:  I wasn't there. But in general, I think about what I know about "Bam-Bam".
> I was told that they [the police] picked him up and shook him and when they put him
> down, he ran back to the grandmother's house and what I was told was that when he
> [Bam-Bam] went in, he collapsed.

It is important to note that details from each of the stories differ in some way.  However,

they are similar in that none of those respondents were present, yet they all drew conclusions and

worked to make sense of things through bits of information shared throughout the community.

So while they readily admit to learning the details of Kevin's case indirectly, they still discussed

the events surrounding the case as if they experienced them firsthand.  Through Ed's account, we

see how many respondents internalized learned information and processed it as if it were their

own.  Ed stated:

> …the police was knocking on the door, tellin' them [the grandmother and brother] he had
> a search warrant. But I guess they figured he's [Kevin] gonna run back to his [brother's]
> body.  I was told Kevin was close by and could see what was going on …[police]
> wouldn't even let them back in the house to make an ambulance call.  They had to make it
> from the across the street.  That was what the big discussion, with how long did it take

them [ambulance] to get there. And then after Kevin saw that, he heard the news that his brother had died. He looked at the time frame to where he sees his family outside the house, he looked at the time frame where the ambulance didn't come. You know I've had a lot of deaths in my family, but to see things happening, to try and protect…that was his younger brother. I don't know how a man could feel…

Despite learning this information from others, as Ed recalled the details, he internalized them, relived them, and consequently, experienced them by comparing Kevin's loss to his.

While 28 respondents came into most of their information through stories shared in the community, two respondents reported actually being at the scenes. One reported being at Kevin's grandmother's, the location for which the officers' search for him took place. The other respondent reported being at the scene and witnessing Kevin approach, shoot, and kill Sgt. McEntee. Kim described the scene:

Started off with the younger brother, McEntee and the other officer…they [officers] were outside looking at [Kevin's] car. He had a warrant for his arrest and they were outside looking at his car…[his brother Bam-Bam] ran up the steps and ran back down and had a heart attack. They [police] were the first ones to respond…we look at too much TV. We think the police should automatically come in and start giving CPR and doing all this, this, and this, but they don't and they didn't. They didn't do any of that. They just called the paramedics, the fire trucks. They [police] called the fire trucks [fire department], they [police] didn't give CPR . The officers were walking through the house searching for Kevin, looking for whatever, and he was watching them do all this.

Kim did not fault the police for the death of Kevin's little brother; she attempted to explain why others did. She attributed part of the confusion to ignorance, arguing that though people expected the police to resuscitate citizens during medical emergencies, they instead called for medical assistance and continued to look for Kevin.

However, the fact that the police continued their search for Kevin as his little brother lay dying was, for many respondents, still inconceivable. Dorothy stated:

I just think it's a tragedy, just an utter tragedy…decency and humanity should stand when

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other things don't… and being a servant, serving in a capacity of being a protector and someone that looked to be a help…but here a child has collapsed in the doorway of his home and he's unconscious but yet you [police] just gone step over him…

While Dorothy admitted to not knowing all the details surrounding Bam-Bam's death, she was certain that the officers should have been doing something other than searching for Kevin. She was also convinced that while there might be two sides to this story, Kevin's family deserved the benefit of the doubt. There is one key difference in these two accounts: unlike Kim, Dorothy has had a number of experiences of direct contact with the police herself. Her "accumulative experience" (Brunson 2007: 72) negatively influences her view of the police, and predisposes her to think the worst. This was a common pattern among my respondents.

### The Role of the Police and Harassment

Despite the fact that seven years have elapsed since Kevin Johnson shot Sgt. McEntee, and four years since Cookie Thornton's shooting rampage at City Hall, respondents remembered the details of each incident. Many respondents even recalled where they were and what they were doing when each incident occurred. While recalling the shooting of Sgt. McEntee, Johnny stated, "…I was over my friend John's house watching TV when the news came on and I said, 'Oh my goodness'." Another respondent, Ricky stated:

[My wife and I] were at the Lake of the Ozarks on vacation and somebody called and told us that the FBI and the officers were using our driveway…

Then as Jasmine recalled the City Hall shootings, she described her whereabouts:

I remember being at home and it was a group of us sitting around the table and we were playing cards…one of my cousins called me and said turn the TV on, it was a shooting at City Hall. But at the time, she didn't know who it was. I turned the TV on and they didn't say any names at the time. So I called my mom and the first thing that came out of my mom's mouth was "Oh it wasn't nobody but Cookie". By the time I got off the phone with her, they [news] said his name.

These are very specific details, and many respondents reported shock when learning about the incidents. While many of them said they knew about problems with the police that Kevin and Cookie faced, none said they could have predicted that those interactions would take such a drastic turn. For example, while discussing Kevin's case, Jasmine stated:

> I mean, I couldn't believe it…I have heard rumors about McEntee harassing Kevin and other guys. I've heard rumors."

Pam also commented on Kevin's case:

> I think personally there was animosity built up in Kevin…they [police] did use to harass him a lot and kind of pick on him and aggravate him."

As Pam commented on what she perceived to be "animosity" on Kevin's part, she sympathized with him. She seemingly understood his problem as if it were her own.

Perhaps even more so than in the case of Kevin Johnson, respondents empathized with Cookie Thornton. Steve discussed what he heard concerning aggressive policing with Cookie:

> …I heard about it. I mean, I figured they [police] was just pickin' on him, to keep givin' him tickets on the vehicles he had and he had his own company. Why keep ticketing him if he trying to do something right? From a lot of people in the community, he was just fed up and went about it the wrong way.

Steve empathized with Cookie, especially as he had an excellent reputation in the community. In fact, all the respondents who knew Cookie Thornton had a positive opinion of him. Felecia stated:

> Mr. Thornton was a nice man...real nice and a respectful man in the neighborhood and community. If he could help you, he would. If he could give you a job, he would. So Cookie Thornton was a good person.

Marsha also commented on Cookie's reputation. She stated:

> We watched him [Cookie] for five to six years before the [incident] up there [City Hall]. But, at the same time, when the lights were out [power outage] and we didn't have lights, me and my husband ran into Cookie in the middle of the night going to give ice to the seniors, to the people that were shut in. See that was the other thing about him. They

[the media] could not dog him out because people loved him.  He had such a wonderful reputation…the whites was crazy about him.  [The shootings] totally blindsided everybody...we watched it on the news how they dug, trying to find some dirt on him.  They couldn't...all them white people that they interviewed, not one of them said anything bad about him.  Not a one.  Cookie just lost it.

Apart from parking violations, Cookie had no criminal history and had been known both inside and outside of Meacham Park as a reputable business man who went out of his way to help people.  Cookie gave back to his community and the residents respected him.  They were shocked to learn of his actions, and the contradictions between the behavior of the man they knew and the shooting at City Hall led them to blame police harassment.  This explanation was more powerful because many of the respondents had experienced harassment in the community, or knew someone who had.  As a result, many believed that Cookie had finally had enough and saw his actions as extreme, but understandable.

Respondents' shared stories regarding police harassment became a theme in helping them to understand why the two tragedies occurred.  Though the two cases are quite different, e.g., while Kevin had been on probation, Cookie had not been, respondents believed that both faced harassment emblematic of poor police relationships in the community.  Terrance stated:

> …look at what they did with Cookie and look at what they did with Kevin...to me, those are the exact same stories…both of them [Kevin and Cookie] the same damn story…regardless, the story ain't different.  You got a 50 somethin' year old man that ran up in the Kirkwood City Hall and shot up everything.  There's a problem...That man [Cookie] always had a smile on his face. So any time you get a man with a smile on his face to let loose on City Hall, I don't care what you say, something else is wrong other than he crazy… it's the same song with Kevin.

As respondents attempted to make sense of the tragedies, they wanted to know and thought others should know what drove the two men over the edge.  Not being able to account for their actions would mean that both men were somehow indifferent, abnormal, inhuman even.  It

would mean that they both were monsters, or rather, "madmen" as some in the media suggested; monsters from Meacham Park.

In a predominately Black community, where the residents and/or respondents already feel stigmatized, not being able to account for the horrific behaviors of those most like them means being further stigmatized. It means that Kevin and Cookie's experiences become the indirect experiences of those in the community. Explaining away their heinous acts humanizes a community where the residents often feel shunned by the white, wealthier residents and local government. Kim described how many residents felt following the shootings:

> Oh yeah, when instantly white folks say, "You're nothing but trash over here". This is what we do…this just how everybody perceived us…95% of the people perceived us, some didn't. People that knew people over here didn't feel like that. But on the average, we were just this lil ghetto community of nothing over here and that's how some people viewed it. And that's just how it came out in the news and everywhere else. But it wasn't so. That was two individual people doing individual things. It had nothing to do with the community or nobody, we just live in the community.

As both cases gained national attention, respondents became familiar with conversations and depictions of their community, locally and nationally. Outsiders viewed their community through the lens of Kevin and Cookie's actions. Consequently, sharing information became a line of defense; the more they knew, and the better equipped they felt they were to deal with the backlash of their neighbors actions.

### *Involuntary Contact in the Aftermath*

Some respondents reported that the way they perceived the police changed following these events. Mostly these were men and those who had previous negative encounters with the police. They reported feeling vulnerable while in contact and interacting with officers, particularly because they were residents of Meacham Park, and thus, neighbors of Kevin Johnson and Cookie Thornton. They believed officers perceived and treated them as if they too were

guilty purely by association.  In fact, they identified the two tragedies as turning points for

increased police aggression in the community.

In the wake of both tragedies, respondents reported increased police presence and

aggressive behaviors in Meacham Park.  Tiffany described changes in officers' behaviors

following the shootings at City Hall.

> Ever since that shooting, it's like when they [police] come out here, it's like get ready for
> war….cause my son, he's one of the boys that hang on that corner and I'm constantly
> tellin him, you need to be careful…I really believe that one of these officers are going to
> kill somebody's kid.  They [police] gonna feel threatened and to me they're gonna have a
> reason why...  They just on high alert.  It's kinda like the old sayin, when you say that
> a person is "trigger happy", right?   It's like they [police] just waitn for somethin
> to happen, but that's just how they act...

Tiffany described officers on edge following the shootings at City Hall.  While the incident did

not take place in Meacham Park, the residents there can see and feel the effects of it through the

way the police behave while around them.  Similarly, Mark recounted:

> ... for the incident with Kevin, that night Kirkwood police was out there, I mean.  So
> many police came from out of other areas. They were walking around with riot guns, they
> were going in people's homes…they overstepped boundaries that day. That night it
> looked like we were in a riot zone.  Those were incidents that I can remember.

Mark described a community under siege.  He then continued by also describing the scene

immediately following the City Hall shootings: "I seen a bunch of cops go out to Cookie's

house…they went out and searched his mom's house and marched up and down the street like

soldiers."  Many residents of Meacham Park believed that, in the aftermath of these events, they

were no longer just stereotyped and scrutinized as criminals, they became the enemy.  In each

instance, respondents had very real memories about the police, what they looked like and the

way they behaved in their community.  Respondents described being treated as if the entire

community stood accused.

While others observed changes in police behaviors and perceived them to be a result of association, Dwayne experienced direct contact. He was questioned by FBI the night of the City Hall rampage, since he and Cookie were close friends. Dwayne described his experience:

> It blew my mind. I couldn't believe it! I had the FBI come by my house, reporters, interviewing me like you doing now. I could not believe it! I could not believe it! You know they're [police and media] asking me "When the last time you saw him?" For a minute, wanting to know if he got the gun from me, you know... that kind of stuff. It's crazy. I couldn't believe it. I never experienced anything like that. You got FBI comin up in yo house, it makes you a lil nervous you know. I couldn't believe it!

This was a devastating experience for Dwayne. Not only had he lost a friend, but he too grieved the lives lost at City Hall. He described being in shock, especially as Cookie had been at his house not long before the shooting. He could not recall anything said or done that would have ever indicated Cookie's plans for City Hall. Nevertheless, he became part of the investigation. As Dwayne shared his account, he was visibly moved. The FBI's questioning was overwhelming; it was frightening. However, while it was FBI agents who questioned him, he did not separate this experience from his perceptions of Kirkwood police.

Understandably, the two tragedies have had long lasting effects. Many respondents described police harassment in the aftermath that they believe was directly tied to hostility toward the community as a whole. Valerie shares her experience:

> The police officer, she come down the street with [Sgt. McEntee's] wife in the car. Ok, you're a police officer…why you out here [Meacham Park] ridin with [Sgt. McEntee's] wife. You showin her where everybody stay, so you makin me think now [the police] getn ready to do somethin. *So you saw them? You saw her [police] riding with her [the wife] in the squad car?* I saw both of them and I told. I made a complaint. *What was your complaint?* I called up the [police department]… He [police] told me that he would get back with me cause when she came down the street, this how it was… she made a U-turn on Alsobrook, …this woman [police] made a U-turn and did me like this [puts up the middle finger]. *Who did that?* The officer…[I'm thinking] "What did I do to you [police]? What did I do to you for you to give me the finger?" *Is [the officer] still on the force?* Yeah, she's still on the force.

Val described retaliatory behaviors. In an already tense environment, such interactions make

police-citizen relationships even more volatile. Val was insulted, angered, and threatened and

wanted to respond.

Another respondent attempted to explain what he believed to be police harassment due to

resentment also. Rodney describes the seriousness of what he perceives Meacham Park young

men to now face following the murders of officers:

> I just understand these lil young cats [young men], what they goin through. *So what are they going through?* They going through some hell of a shit. I'm telln' you since that police [Sgt. McEntee] got killed out here, it's a lot of defenses still you know. It's a lot of, I wanna say hatred.

Rodney is speaking of police cynicism and what that means for young men in Meacham Park.

After all, it was a young man, like them, who killed the sergeant. Thus, he realizes the fallout for

them is cause for concern. Rodney continues,

> Like I can put myself…it's hard to do cause I can't say it, but if I was a police officer and my best friend gets killed, that's a lot of animosity. Even though they got the guy that did it, I'll still have a lot of animosity every time I see somebody.

Rodney attempts to explain and/or make sense of police resentment. He does so by

referencing their loss to that of a best friend, rather than a colleague. He normalizes the police's

emotions and response based on how he would feel if his best friend or partner was killed.

However, as he seemingly empathizes with officers on one hand, he affirms what he believes to

be retaliatory behaviors on the other. Rodney recalled St. Louis County Police intervening days

following the City Hall shootings.

> *County police took over?* Yeah, took over for like a week or two to calm things down cause it was really, you know,…man it could've went any kind of way. It could've went crazy. I mean, cause you already had, with that incident right there, you already had three Kirkwood policemen killed within three years. So I told one [STL County police officer], I said, "It's a good thing ya'll came out here to keep [Kirkwood police] away because the same way they got guns, these lil cats [young men] out here got guns. And

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> now days, these cats [young men] ain't scared to shoot guns no mo.  It's on the news every day, shootin at the police and everything…

In other words, he believed Kirkwood police to be tense, edgy, and ready to respond with force. But some also believed that if pushed, out of fear, not-so-law-abiding residents might be inclined to fire as well.

Consequently, many respondents lacked optimism about police-citizen relationships in Meacham Park.  With negative experiences and feelings shared between both the residents and the officers, a few respondents did not seem hopeful about the relationships improving.  In fact, one respondent stated, "Eye for an eye, it'll never end..."  Many respondents say that until Kirkwood police acknowledge and change their approach, they will remain suspicious and defensive of them.  Hence, the relationship between the police and residents will not improve, but likely worsen.  Val notes:

> Yeah, it's gotten worse and you'd think they would have been woke up by the incident, what happened to [Sgt. McEntee's]...  You would have thought they would have woke up to the situation with Cookie Thornton.   But no, they still harassing...

## Harassment

Involuntary contact is imposed police contact for legal or extra legal reasons.  In such interactions citizens may be stopped, questioned, frisked, or arrested by the police.  By their very nature, involuntary contacts often result in negative experiences and perceptions of the police (Murty et al. 1990; Maxfield 1988; Thurman and Reisig 1996; Reisig and Correia 1997; and Radalet and Carter 1994).  Black citizens are more likely than whites to leave such encounters with negative impressions of the police (Bordua and Tifft, quoted in Weitzer and Tuch 2004). Historically, it has been through involuntary contacts that Blacks come to experience differential

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policing.  Consequently, they are often distrusting of the police, labeling their actions as harassment.

In this project, 73 percent of respondents (22 out of 30) reported having involuntary contact with the police.  Of those 22 respondents, 20 described instances where they experienced what they labeled as harassment. That is, they believed themselves to be unjustifiably surveilled, targeted for suspicion, disrespected or mistreated while interacting with the police. Consistent with the literature, in this study, men were likelier to experience such encounters compared to women, and likewise, younger respondents were more likely to describe such contacts compared to older respondents.

### *Surveillance*

Police surveillance has been associated with differential treatment as historically experienced in Black communities.  It is indirect, involuntary police contact.  Many respondents described being harassed by the police, often in the form of officers slowing down, watching them or tailing them.  Surveillance is a proactive policing tactic aggressively applied in Black communities (Brunson 2007; Brunson and Miller 2006a, b; Smith and Holmes 2003; Bass 2001; Chambliss 1994).  In this study, men, youth, and respondents with a history of run-ins with the police were likeliest to experience surveillance.   Consistent with the literature, young Black men were likeliest to be surveilled by police while hanging out in groups and walking or driving in and out of the community.  Surveillance then increased for them and others who had previous negative encounters with the police.

### *Hanging Out*

Over half of the respondents, mostly young men, reported being watched the police while hanging out – that is, standing in groups in public places.  Studies show that young men hanging

out in groups can lead to police suspicion of them (Brunson and Miller 2006 a, b). Rodney described youth hanging out, particularly late at night as attracting police attention

> … after 11, it's the bewitchin hour cause you got that night squad comin in geared up and ready for whatever. I call them 'the harassers', cause that's when you get harassed late at night. In the summer…everybody out, kids don't go home, tryin to find somethin to do, hangn out in the park…

This account describes hanging out in a particular context; that is, late at night. In fact, the respondents that experienced surveillance realized that being watched increased for them depending on the circumstances in which officers find them. Felecia also recalled being surveilled by the police:

> It could be us sitting out. [Police] keep on riding past, slowing down, and we ain't doin nothing wrong, sittin on our front. So what's all the riding around and slowing down? We ain't having no loud music. We just sitting out… Like an incident we had recently, (laughs) [me and] my friend in there…we'd been taking groceries out the car and the police at the time was comin around and he was lookin so hard, you could see his face like pressed up against the window. Instead of him lookin at drivin, he watchin us. And he [the friend] kinda like, "what are you [police] lookin at?" But that's to me harassment.

Research suggests that as the number of involuntary police contacts increases, so too does citizens discontent with the police. Thus, frequent surveillance became part of the collective memory of the community. While the police did not make direct contact with Felecia and her friends, there was still contact in that they were in their space, watching them as if they were anticipating criminal behavior.

Another woman (Pam) shared accounts of police surveillance as experienced by young Black men while hanging out. While Pam's accounts are vicarious, or rather based on observations, they are still important. She stated:

> but the younger generation are more like, they [police] try to pick at them. Like if it's a gang of young boys at the park and they just sit'n under the pavilion, it's like they'll [police] just like keep ridin past just to see what the boys are doin. Or if they walkin down the street or you know, they'll just keep ridin past lookin.

Pam attributed police surveillance of the young men to officers "picking at them." In other words, she too believed officers to be excessively watching and checking to see what the young men were doing. Pam's observations are consistent with previous studies regarding police surveillance of youth. Fine et. al. (2003) found that when accounting for age, youth are likeliest to come under police suspicion.

Men themselves also reported being followed or tailed by the police when they were walking and driving in and out of the community. Ed recalled coming under police suspicion in his younger years as he and friends, young Black men, exited Meacham Park and entered 'Kirkwood Proper'. He described being followed and closely watched by the police:

> Yeah, it was like a "You don't belong here" attitude. Yeah, that's how we grew up. It was like we weren't supposed to come out of Meacham Park, not even going to school. I always got the impression we were being watched. The police go up and turn around or they go up ahead of us and watch as we're coming or you know just seeing where these guys are going, what these guys are doing…um I just got the impression that they [police] were told we were gonna commit a crime.

As Meacham Park is a segregated enclave, 'Kirkwood Proper' is a label commonly used by Meacham Park residents when referring to the white, wealthier part(s) of Kirkwood. Ed sensed through officers' surveillance that he and his friends did not belong. The fact that officers did not openly communicate with the young men directly did not mean communication between them did not take place. The young men felt unwelcome and sensed it when walking out of Meacham Park.

Other men echoed similar experiences when driving out of Meacham Park. Steve leaves early in the morning driving to work. He described being tailed by the police:

> I know they used to follow me to the highway a lot. I left here one night, they followed me all the way to the highway. They didn't pull me over or nothing. [I would be] leaving out of here [Meacham Park] at like 3 o'clock. Strange thing about it, he stopped at a green light, waited til the light changed and then followed behind. I don't know, I didn't feel right. I felt like he was pickin on me. But he didn't stop me so I really can't say he

was pickin on me. But he did stop at a green light, kinda puzzled me. When he seen me comin' out of Meacham Park, I was makin a right onto Big Bend. He slowed down real fast at the green light. He probably ran my plates, but everything was right on my car so he didn't bother me.

Steve believed he was being tailed due to the suspicious behavior of the police. As he pulled up to the intersection, he observed the officer immediately break speed, stopping at a green light. While he could not state unequivocally that the officer "was pickin" on him, he perceived that he was. For the police, this is routine, proactive policing. However, in Black communities, particularly for young Black men, this is aggressive, differential policing. It is perceived as harassment. Terrance also recalled being tailed by the police as he exited Meacham Park:

> I used to take my cousin to work…I did it for like three months and even she noticed. One day she told me to pull over, six o'clock in the morning. She realized one day cause what they do is they follow me and one of them will then turn off and then another one would take a block or so and then another one, and this was goin on for like four or five days where now we realize and she made me pull over. We pulled over and she got out the car and they pulled up. She asked: "Why ya'll following him?" [The police officer said] "We ain't following him." Every day they sit up here... you can listen to the police scanner and somebody getn pulled over, right here where you come in and come out.

Terrance and his cousin believed the officers' behaviors to be an obvious pattern and eventually confronted them, creating a potentially hostile situation. Again, while surveillance is generally experienced by men, this is an example where a woman also experienced the close surveillance of police. Ed, Steve, and Terrance's experiences reflected the "race and place effect" (Meehan and Ponder 2002) in that police suspicion of them increased as they exited their predominately Black community, entering a predominately white one.

### *Suspicion*

Twenty-two respondents (twelve men, ten women) reported having had direct, involuntary contact with the police. This means that 73 percent of the respondents in this study experienced police-initiated contacts in which they were stopped, questioned, frisked, or arrested

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by the police. A few of those respondents, two women and three men, admitted to having had previous incidents with the local police and the Criminal Justice System – i.e., they had been arrested for crimes they had committed. As a result, they believed the police to be suspicious of them, even when they were staying out of trouble. They attributed officers' continued suspicion of them to their knowledge of past criminal activity. This group had the most frequent contacts and the most extensive interactions with the police, ranging from being questioned to the use of force. For respondents with troubled pasts, their stops ranged from pedestrian and vehicular stops to having police kick in their doors during drug raids.

Seventeen of the 22 respondents who experienced involuntary contact had no previous history with the police. Yet, in some ways, they experienced treatment similar to those who did. In those cases, they experienced direct police contact mostly through pedestrian and vehicular stops. Those stops were then followed up by questions.

Respondents communicated that often they felt like officers believed most of Meacham Park residents to be criminal, particularly since they were Black, disadvantaged, and lived in a community where criminal activity had been known to occur. Theorists refer to this as "unilateral suspicion" (Brunson and Miller 2006a), a term which describes suspicion of citizens regardless of their criminal histories. Black men in the community were likeliest to come under suspicion. Suspicion precipitated stops, which led to questioning, frisks, the use of force, and arrests.

### Stopped and Questioned

Respondents spoke extensively about being harassed by the police in Meacham Park. Twenty respondents reported being stopped and questioned by the police at least once. Thirteen were men and seven were women. Of those one stops, six were pedestrian, six were vehicular,

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and eight occurred while individuals were at home, sitting on porches, in parks, or in other public settings. Additionally, over half of these respondents reported being stopped and questioned by the police more than once. Again, the respondents with multiple stops were mostly men or respondents with criminal records.

Several respondents experienced pedestrian stops, in which they described the police approaching them while walking. Rodney was approached by the police and questioned one night. He described his experience:

> I'm walkin' late at night, they [police] wanna slow down and stop you…like "Where you goin? Can I see some ID?" Like I told them before, "If I haven't done anything, I don't have to tell you who I am. [Police] just comin up to me and sayin 'Can I see some ID.' First you gotta tell me what I done, why you stoppin me, before I give you all this information. As a matter of fact, who are you? I don't know if YOU the police or not."

Rodney experienced proactive policing, or rather, what officers often refer to as a routine stop. Like other respondents, mostly men, Rodney has a history of negative incidents with the police; and more specifically, a history of routine stops. He resisted the officers' questions, refusing to subject himself to what he believed to be unwarranted police scrutiny. While Rodney admitted to negative behaviors in the past, he associated many of those incidents with his younger days. Now 55, Rodney attempted to empower himself in the situation by responding to officers with questions of his own. It was an opportunity to express his suspicion of them in the same fashion as he believed them to be suspicious of him.

Likewise, Ed recalled being stopped by the police and questioned while walking and driving. Unlike Rodney, he had no criminal history. When I asked if he had ever been stopped by the police and how many times, he responded, "Three or four…" and proceeded to describe both pedestrian and car stops as he experienced them:

> *What were those stops for?* I'm not sure…there was never a reason given to why we [several young Black men] were you know being stopped or questioned…*Were you on*

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*foot or in a car?* Both…but we weren't given any reasons why we were being asked questions, you know. *So what did those incidents look like?* I would have to say "hassled". *What would they [the police] stop you and say?* Where you fellas going? What you fellas doing? Where you fellas been?

Ed's experiences with being stopped and questioned by the police occurred while walking in the community with a couple of friends. With no criminal history, Ed's experiences seem to be aligned with Alpert et. al.'s (2005) findings in that in instances where there were no suspicious behaviors, Black men still became targets of suspicion.

This was also the case for Mark as a motorist. He referred to officers' suspicion of Black men as "subtle." He was also stopped and questioned, despite having no criminal record. He described his experience:

> One time I was driving a new truck that I had bought. One of the cops stopped and asked me whose truck I was driving and I pointed to the sign on the side of the truck and said, "That's my name." *Was there any other reason given for your stop?* No, just whose truck is this?

Generally, police suspicion began with motorists and increased depending on the characteristics of the vehicle, the race of the citizen, and community context (Alpert et. al. 2005). In this instance, Mark is driving a brand new truck and he is a Black man from Meacham Park. While Alpert et. al. (2005) reveal place to be a significant factor with how police come to be suspicious, places tend to be racially segregated. Hence, it is likely that place gives way to race, especially as Meacham Park is predominately Black and its citizens come to be targets of suspicion, even in the absence of crime. Likewise, Gelman et. al.'s (2007) stop and frisk data reveals race and place to be significant factors with pedestrian stops. Thus, cases like Ed's and Mark's are common and it is likely that police suspicion of them was more about being Black men in a troubled community than criminality.

*Frisks/Searches*

Of the 22 respondents who experienced involuntary contacts, nine - four men, five women - reported being frisked or searched by the police. Though both men and women reported being frisked or searched, there was a key difference. All four men experienced being frisked, that is, having their bodies searched, while the five women experienced searches of their possessions – i.e., their homes and a purse. When accounting for gender, Black men are targeted more for suspicion as they are likelier to be perceived as perpetrators compared to Black women. Overall, the women in this project were less likely to experience pedestrian and/or vehicular stops than men. Searches for women generally took place in private locales rather than public. Hence, even when they were stopped in public, they were unlikely to have their stops extended to frisks or car searches.

Four women reported searches of their homes. In two cases, their homes were searched while police were in pursuit of young men. For the other two, searches were in the context of drug raids, one woman was a home owner while the other was a resident at the home. Even in this instance, it is likely that the raid was associated with officers' interests in the owner's boyfriend. The fifth woman had her purse searched as a result of a shoplifting incident. As for the men, two frisks occurred during pedestrian stops and two occurred during vehicular stops. In one pedestrian stop, police found drugs and the respondent was arrested. He claimed officers "free-cased" him, i.e., planted drugs on him during the pat-down. In one of the vehicular stops, the frisk was extended to include a vehicular search, resulting in the respondent being maced, physically roughed up, and arrested. I revisit these incidents below in my discussion of police misconduct.

One male respondent recalled being pulled over, frisked, and searched while with his girlfriend and friends. In this study, Black men were likelier to have multiple experiences in

each stop.  Those stops became public spectacles, open displays in which multiple young Black

men are out of their cars, often lined up side-by-side being questioned, frisked, having their

vehicle searched, by the police.  Steve described such an experience:

> They said [my girlfriend's] blinker wasn't working but when we got out and examined
> everything, everything was working. But he [the police] tried to say it was a short that's
> why he pulled us over.  But her car was right and her insurance.  [It was] because we
> were Black and riding four people in the car at the time.  He searched everybody, pulled
> everybody out the vehicle…three [police cruisers] ended up showing.  One [officer]
> stopped and he called two [additional officers]…*What were [police] saying to you?*
> Nothing, they was saying if everything check out they'll let us go.  But the [police] didn't
> have no reason to pull us over.

There were four individuals in the car:  Steve, his girlfriend, and two of his male friends.  While

Steve's girlfriend was driving, she experienced the least amount of attention.  Steve seemed to

believe that was partly due to the fact that she was pregnant.  Additionally, women are least

likely to be targets of suspicion.  In the end, the young men were cleared and sent on their way.

While Steve does not have a criminal record, this incident is one of many he has had with

the police.  In two additional incidents, Steve described being pulled over, and yet again,

searched by the police:

> When I was 17 and I had an older model car…me and my brother got stopped, twice.  I
> was comin' home…they [the police] pulled us out the car and searched, let us go and
> everything checked out.  One time they say the vehicle was loud and then the other time,
> they say they couldn't see the sticker cause my license plates was dirty. That's what they
> say. *And so how did both of those incidents turn out?*  Fine, they let us go.  They ain't
> give us no tickets or nothin'.

Interestingly, in instances in which Steve was driving alone, he only reported being tailed.

Consistent with the literature, police suspicion becomes heightened and even more salient in the

presence of groups of young Black men.

Jasmine described an incident where she was both questioned and searched by the

police. Her home was raided by drug enforcement officers in Meacham Park.  Of the nine

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women who reported involuntary police contacts, she has had the most extensive history, ranging from stops to use of force.   She is one of two women in this study who have personally experienced police use of force and the only one to have interacted with the police under the most aggressive circumstances.  One was a drug raid at her home and the other was an arrest in which she was maced by the police.  In both instances, her boyfriend was involved.  He too was targeted for suspicion in the drug raid and also responsible for the call that led to her being maced.

In no way does the involvement of Jasmine's boyfriend excuse her actions.  However, her involvement in the drug raid lends itself to discussions of Black female criminality to the extent that women's involvements in crimes are often "grounded in exploitation…sexual exploitation, abuse, poverty, and structural inequality" (Chesney-Lind and Pasko, 2004).   More specifically, given what we know concerning women's roles in the drug market, they are often powerless and dependent on men in the industry.  Consequently, when they are involved in drugs, it is generally at the lower levels of the industry, while negotiating volatile relationships (Maher 1997).  Both Jasmine and her boyfriend were arrested in this incident and her interrogation involved questions pertaining to him.  Apparently, the police had been tailing him prior to the raid.  In the end, she was released and he was held.

That said, Jasmine was adamant about her innocence and believed she was unfairly or erroneously targeted for a raid. She described being interrogated by officers as if already charged and convicted of dealing drugs:

> They argued me down saying I was cooking dope and I was supplying dope dealers out here and...This is what they telling me the word was on the street.   And at the time, my gas was cut off and I asked them, "If I'm doin all this, how  can my utilities get cut off, my gas get cut off?"

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Jasmine vehemently denied having any involvement in drugs. In fact, she believed the officers' questions to be illogical; if she was really the drug supplier as they accused her of being, at the very least she should be able to pay her gas bill. Jasmine continued:

> …they kept trying to interrogate me about the money, then one detective said, "Oh don't bullshit a bullshitter, you are a girl of the neighborhood, you know everybody"… kept asking me where the money was and how could I afford the food that was in my freezer and why did I have all the baking soda I had in my refrigerator.

Like Rodney, Jasmine confronted officers with questions of her own. Mimicking their approach, she relied on what she believed to be evidence in her home (e.g., disconnected utilities) to support her innocence in the same way officers relied on what they believed to be evidence in her home to confirm her guilt. While the respondent's innocence or guilt and the officers' motives cannot be unequivocally determined in this situation, it is important to note that the respondent was a definite target of suspicion as was her home. Consequently, she was subjected to a particular line of questions, statements, and behaviors consistent with aggressive policing.

After also having her home searched by the police, Dorothy stated, "They [police] don't think rationally when it comes to Black people…well, they didn't with me." She too was furious following her experience with the police. Dorothy, who had no criminal record, came under suspicion as a result of her son's actions. That is, police suspicion of him not only resulted in her home being searched, but also an officer pulling his gun while in her home, in front of her children. She described her experience:

> …officer came to my door and asked me was he here and I said "no, he's not" and they said "well, can we search the house." I said "no problem." And they went up those steps, that's when all of my kids were still at home, and my boys told me that, my other boys say when they got up there, they had their guns drawn. And I let them in my house in good faith. But my kids are not murderers and killers…[my son] got into a lil scrap but that was uncalled for because they didn't have a search warrant or nothing. I volunteered to let them search my house…I mean, I welcomed [police] in my home and

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um' you know, I tried to be as cordial as I could.  But if I was tryin' to hide my son, I wouldn't let them come in my house without a search warrant.  I'm not stupid. But you gone pull out a gun when you get up the steps and put it back in before you get back down, so I can't see it?

Dorothy experienced involuntary direct police contact through no fault of her own.  When asked about her son's whereabouts, she cooperated with the police by answering their questions.  At that point, Dorothy perceived she too became a target of suspicion.  Officers' asked to search her home, despite not having a warrant and being told that her son was not there.  Such actions were perceived by Dorothy as officers' distrust of her.  She stated, "…I felt when they came to my home ok, but when they pulled guns on my kids looking for my son, I felt violated."  Again, this exemplifies aggressive policing, even when respondents were cooperative.

When asked about how the police handled crime in the community, Tiffany answered, "Very, very, very excessive…"  Tiffany's comment derived from having had her home searched following a police chase.  She described the incident:

> When I came home from work, I went straight in the back and I was getting ready to take a bath… Well, come to find out, he [a young man] had sold [drugs] to an undercover police officer and the police had chased him and he ran in my back door, ran back into my son's room and hid…I heard the police bangn on the door and it was a big ol commotion.  So I had put some shorts and a top on, I didn't even have any shoes.  When I opened the door, the officers were yelling, "Where he at, where he at?"  And I didn't know what they were talking about, so I kept asking, "Where who at?"  And they just started looking around and telling me that if I didn't tell them where he was, I was gone be arrested…I had just gotten home and didn't know what was going on.  So we arguing back and forth, them saying I'm lying and me asking what's going on.  They [police] looking all through my house, up under beds and everything…

Moments before arriving home from work, a young man had run into Tiffany's house attempting to hide from the police.  He knew the back door was unlocked, particularly since he was friends with her teenage children and had been there earlier that day.  Despite not knowing any of this, Tiffany recalled being met with police suspicion right away.  Officers questioned her as if she was eluding them in an effort to help hide him.  As with Dorothy, Tiffany had no criminal

history, but faced scrutiny as if she did.  Tiffany was upset and very vocal.  Like other

respondents when met with what they perceived to be unfair treatment by the police, she became

defensive and openly refuted police accusations.  In the end, officers perceived Tiffany as

defiant, and arrested her.  She described feeling humiliated as officers took her to the county

lockup in skimpy shorts, a tank top, and no shoes.  Tiffany is one of several respondents who

detest and completely distrust the police as a result of experiences like this.

### Arrests

Of the nine respondents frisked and/or searched, four were arrested. Two of those

incidents were men and two were women, all drug-related.  Both men were held and charged

with drug offenses; whereas, both women were released, never facing charges.  In total, eleven

out of 30 respondents I interviewed were arrested.  Six were men and five were women.  Like

frisks and searches, the arrests occurred along gender lines.  The men were all arrested for public

violations, ranging from drug offenses to traffic incidents.  On the other hand, women's arrests

were connected to relationship altercations.  For example, four women were arrested following

disagreements between friends, with a boyfriend, and in Tiffany's case above, the arrest came in

the context of a police search for a teenager.  The fifth was a result of a traffic ticket.  But even

then, the arrest occurred in court versus on the street.  While one woman reported a public

incident, women in general were least likely to experience incidents with the police in public

compared to men.

## Disrespect

Respondents who experienced involuntary, direct contact with the police through stops,

questions, frisks, and arrests also reported experiencing police disrespect.  They described

instances where they believed the police disrespected them, but yet expected and demanded

respect from them.  After having a police officer scold her surrounding an incident with her

children, one woman's (Jackie) take on disrespect is that, "…it's not what you say to a person,

but how you say it…sometimes they [police] just talk to you like you are beneath the earth."

Jeremy who has had several incidents with the police, also reported having experienced

disrespect.  He added, "… it's known out here that they [police] don't respect us and if they

disrespect us, then why should we respect them?"  In other words, he believes respect is earned

and police officers are not the exception.

The respondents in this study did not respond well to what they perceived to be officers'

mistreatment of them.  In fact, in two instances, respondents' (e.g., one man, one woman)

responses to disrespect led to their arrests.  More specifically, in incidents where there was

involuntary, direct contact with the police, respondents complained of being disrespected by the

police in the following ways:  through their initial approach, name calling and cursing, giving the

finger, and being threatened.   These interactions are significant, especially as disrespect furthers

negative perceptions of the police.

### The Initial Approach

Travis had strong feelings about police disrespect.  He has had direct experiences with

the police through numerous stops.  While he does not give a specific example for disrespect, his

statements provide insight into a particular mindset. When asked about police disrespect, Travis

responded:

> I won't allow that [disrespect].  I won't allow that by anyone.  When I've been pulled
> over before by a police officer…when he approach my car, it depends on how he address
> himself to me. If he's respectful, then we'll have a pretty intelligent conversation. If he's
> disrespectful, I pretty much let him have it.

Travis considers himself to be intelligent.  Hence, disrespect to him is having officers approach

him condescendingly.  Travis has had enough experience with being stopped to know when it is

a result of suspicion.  Consequently, he further explained by describing an incident in another

predominately white West County community.  He stated:

> I was stopped in front of a friend's house actually while in Chesterfield.  I was sitn in
> front of his house, waitn on him to pull up and the police pulled up. And me and him got
> into it pretty good.  *So what did the officer say when he pulled up?*  What are you doing?
> And I asked him, "What are you doing?" We both laughed…he [police] just proceeded,
> he questioned me and I questioned him, you know... He said "Well um, you look
> suspicious," I told him "you look suspicious too." So we went at it. By the time we
> finished doing that, my buddy pulled up and he [police] just called me a smart a\*\* and
> went on his way.  I'm pretty cocky I guess or can be (smiling).

While Travis is speaking of the police in general, he is a resident of Meacham Park.  Knowing

both how Travis feels about being disrespected and the likelihood of Black men coming in

contact with the police in disadvantaged neighborhoods make such discussions significant.  It

provides further insight into how and why police-citizen encounters often escalate.  However,

this is one of several instances in this study where citizens make clear their feelings about what

they will tolerate from officers.

Several respondents reported incidents in which the police cursed and called them names.

This happened mostly during routine stops.  Rodney recalled an incident where an officer out

patrolling pulled up to his residence and began interrogating him.  The way officers approach

citizens is important. It sets the tone for what takes place during police-citizen contacts.  Rodney

perceived the officer to be disrespectful and his questioning to be unwarranted.  Consequently,

he refused to answer his questions and instead followed up with questions of his own.  As the

situation escalated, Rodney described a heated exchange with the officer:

> [The officer] told me to shut the fuck up…I said, "You shut the fuck up bitch ass punk.
> Now get off my property." So when I said get off my property…he got in the car and he
> stuck his finger out like this [gives the middle finger].  So I said "Fuck you too, big
> motherfucker," you know and start walkin in the house.  And when I got ready to  start
> walkin' in the house, he jumped out the car, "Come here...you under arrest".  I had
> just shut the door on him and I got in the house and looked at my ol lady and I said, "He

say I'm under arrest."  I said, "Goddamn, now he gone get me for resisting arrest cause I came in the house."

While this was an extremely tense exchange between Rodney and the police, it was just one more in a long string of negative incidents Rodney has had with the police.  So when the officer cursed at Rodney and gave him the middle finger, he responded with name-calling and cursing.  Such responses are consistent with the literature in that when citizens, particularly Black males, are met with degrading police behaviors, they tend to respond similarly (Mastrofski et. al. and Terrill, quoted in Brunson and Miller 2006b).   As a result, Rodney was arrested.  This then created more negative perceptions of officers.  It suggests that the police can engage in inappropriate behaviors with citizens without consequence.  But when citizens respond accordingly, they are punished.

> Mark also discussed disrespectful behaviors he had seen and heard about:
>
> There were instances that I heard about and seen where the police, after things had happened with one of the shootings out there, they would call them [youth] out of their names, give them the finger, flash lights in their face, you know. These days, the youth don't too much respond well to those types of treatments.

As young Black men are likeliest to experience police stops and questioning, they too are likeliest to be subject to police disrespect.  Additionally, the fact that they are often stopped in public, mostly in groups, calls attention to police behaviors in a very public way.  These are negative contacts with young men that take place on corners, in the park, and other places throughout the community.  Hence, respondents who have had similar experiences with the police reported paying close attention when there were police-citizen stops in the community.  Felecia also reported disrespect by the police as a problem in the community.  She explained:

> the problem is respect.  They [police] want us to respect them, but why they don't show us no respect? *Ok and how do they not show you respect?* When they [police] cussin us out, lookin' at you or just get out, askin us what      we doin, you know what I'm saying? We ain't botherin nobody, why question us?  Why talk to us nasty?

Again, respondents that experienced random or routine stops and questioning were likeliest to report police disrespect. Consequently, Felecia's accounts are based on experience, especially as she too has been stopped, questioned, and disrespected by the police. Additionally, she has been in groups with young men when they were stopped and questioned without cause. Those who experience such exchanges see them as harassing and the officers involved as rude, offensive, and inevitably, disrespectful.

Finally, respondents also reported being threatened by the police. Jasmine recalled threats made by officers following a drug raid at her home:

> I heard one of the detectives tell him [her boyfriend], "Well, we'll see you in 90 years." Then I heard them put him in the cell and the detective came to me and threatened me, telling me I was looking at 30 years, I better tell him the truth…and they was telling me, well one was telling me that I was looking at 30 years and he wanted me to give names of who was actually selling and they threw names at me and I was like "I don't know."

Jasmine and her boyfriend were taken to the police station, where she says they were threatened with long prison sentences. Jasmine, she felt powerless, and bullied. Following her interrogation, she was released without having been charged with anything.

Felecia recalled a situation where she learned of police use of threats through vicarious contact:

> ... A guy that used to live out here, he don't live out here no more. They [police] knew him by his name. They just, you know, try to pump him for information and he had a warrant so, if he don't tell them what they wanna hear then they'll take him in. But if he tell them what they wanna hear, they won't take him in. Now I have seen some cops do that.

While these are aggressive tactics often used by the police in order to obtain information, they fuel distrust among citizens. Many respondents believe that the police are "scandalous" and that they engage in disrespectful, threatening behaviors because they have the authority to do so. Barbara stated:

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They'll [police] keep on stopping you...it's legal for them to do it. So how can you say they pickn' on me if they doing it legally? So, it's kind of hard to prove. They [police] can find anything…you can't really fight against them because they keep things…that's just normal with the police.

While she has not personally experienced mistreatment by the police, her son has. Consequently, through vicarious experiences, Barbara is really speaking of discretionary power. That is, commissioned power to stop someone at will, and the fact that officers have been known to extend that power in inappropriate ways. Through personal and vicarious experiences, Barbara and others understand that they can be subjected to mistreatment by the police at any time and it be legally justified.

## Police Misconduct

Twenty-two of 30 respondents reported having involuntary contact with the police, of these, seven of those respondents experienced police misconduct. Police misconduct describes behaviors ranging from physical brutality to the planting of evidence. Four respondents (two men, two women) experienced violent incidents with the police. Those incidents included being slammed, shoved, roughed up or maced by the police. Two other respondents reported false claims made against them by officers, and one reported being "free-cased" (i.e., said that officers had planted evidence on him).

### *Physical Brutality*

Of the 22 respondents stopped, questioned, and/or arrested by the police, two reported being maced (one male, one female). Both respondents have had extensive histories with the police. Consequently, they have experienced police aggression in multiple ways. Rodney recalled being maced by the police. He told a story of what he believed to be police brutality:

I've been handcuffed and maced... I've been maced twice. One time the police pulled me over; I had a warrant. I knew I had a warrant so I got out the car. [The officer] called me

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by my nickname. So he get out the car, I got out the car. He says, "You got a warrant, man." I said "Aw yeah, I know damn, shit." So I put my hands [up]…. He turned me around, then he maced me, strung me in the car...*So were you cooperating?* Yeah, cause I knew I had a warrant. Cause if I wasn't cooperating, I would've ran, you know, I would've ran. But you know, what's the sense of runnin. I'm right here. I ain't never got time to be playin' those games, [them] lookn for me, lookn out the window and all that. If I got a warrant…, I'll turn myself in or whatever, you know what I'm sayin. *And so he maced you?* Yeah, I got maced twice, just on [general principle]. I didn't even cuss him, fight or resist him or nuthin. Cause I thought you get maced when you resist or you fighting or somethin, you know. It's just, police out here [Meacham Park], they kinda'...they young, they scared, they wanna be tough...they scared.

Here, Rodney claimed that he was maced while restrained. He says that he cooperated and did

so understanding the consequences that could ensue if he did not. In other words, Rodney

cooperated trying to avoid what he says happened; that is, unnecessary aggression by the police.

Nevertheless, he told a story of what he believed to have been unjustifiable force used against

him, or rather police misconduct, due to officers' inexperience, fear, and the need to prove

themselves in the community.

Jasmine also spoke of being maced while handcuffed. Her incident occurred during a

pedestrian stop. While walking, Jasmine was approached by the police. She had been drinking

and involved in an altercation with her boyfriend, when he called the police on her. When

officers first attempted to make contact with Jasmine, she was driving, ignored officers and

instead drove home, went in the house, and fell asleep. Later, while walking through the

neighborhood, she ran into officers a second time. Jasmine described her encounter:

She [the police officer] asked me to put my hands behind my back and she was handcuffing me and then the male officer maced me in my face, after I was already handcuffed. *Were you saying anything?* Nope, not at all. *This is after you were cuffed?* This is after I was cuffed… one of my cousins live right across the street. She was sitting on her porch at the time. So she ended up calling my parents to let my parents know exactly what happened. So they [police] took me in and I had to be bonded out and the charge was for disorderly conduct. [Mace] burned so bad…I couldn't tell you what was said. All I know is I ended up in the backseat of the car. And the female officer had me in her car. She put me in her car and transported me to the Kirkwood Police station and all I remember was my eyes burning, my skin burning, and my body was gettin hot. So

when I got there she…she finally took the handcuffs off me and told me to go over to the sink and put my head up under the water.

Jasmine has a history of negative experiences with the police. While the other experiences left her with negative perceptions of law enforcement, being maced trumped them all. As Jasmine recalled the incident, she seemed accepting of the fact that she was stopped by police and clearly understood why she had been stopped. However, what she found problematic was what ensued during the stop.

Similar to Rodney, Jasmine was angered by the fact officers maced her after she had already been subdued. As Jasmine shared her story, she was visibly moved and angered. She recalled very descriptive, detailed information about how she felt after having been maced. That is, the burning of her eyes, her skin, heating sensations felt all over her body. As she recalled, and to some measure relived this experience, she wanted to make clear the agony of being maced and how that experience continues to be very real for her.

While only two respondents reported personally being maced in this study, another respondent reportedly witnessed someone being maced. Felecia shared an account in which she witnessed a young Black man being maced and beaten up by police:

Well, you see it a lot. I seen a boy there on the corner. He was watchin the police arrest somebody else. He was just standin' there, they [police] maced him. *How did that happen? Tell me how that went down.* We all was standin' out. He [the young man] was standin' on the corner. They [police] was messin with some other people on the corner and the police was tellin him to get off the corner. I'm like, "for what?" [thinking to herself]. He's just standin here. He's not doin nothin…that cop just wanted him off the corner, but he wasn't doin nothin. So they had got kinda aggressive with him. They maced him and everything.

While this is an observation, it is equally significant. The respondents in this project internalize what they see and hear regarding the police, especially those with negative contacts of their own. They are more inclined to take notice, particularly since they understand firsthand the negative

turn police-citizen interactions can take.  Additionally, they do not trust the police to be fair as many of them feel they have not been treated fairly. Hence, whether directly or indirectly involved, cooperative or non-cooperative, respondents reported police using force excessively. In this project, this occurred with respondents who had extensive histories with the police.

Three respondents reported other forms of physical brutality.  Of these three incidents, two were reported by men and one was reported by a woman.  Jeremy had experienced police brutality.  He has had multiple incidents with the police.  He described what he refers to as a "jump down":

> …this how it go.  They'll [police] jump down on you, beat you up, lock you up, then just hold you for 24 hours for no reason. And then, they'll put it in a report as if you did somethin' to make them react like that…they always jumpin' on somebody.  They pull you over, put you against the car, put you in cuffs, search your cars without permission and when they can't find nothin in the car…and the average person gone speak up on it. And when you speak up on it, now they wanna hit you with resistin arrest or jump on you, when you ain't had no type of physical aggression…yeah, they bruise you up real good.

Jeremy has a history of negative encounters with the police.  That is, a history that has resulted in having negative perceptions of the police, and likewise, the police negatively perceiving him. Jeremy communicated strong dislike towards the police and perceived everything they do negatively. He has been "beaten up" by the police, and thus, speaks from personal experience. Additionally, he knows others that have similarly been beaten up by the police.  This is especially common given that they are all disadvantaged Black men.  Nevertheless, he views both himself and them as defenseless targets.  That is, targets that are preyed on, beaten on, and then lied about by the police.

Crystal shared an account where she claimed to have been mishandled by the police. She discussed what happened, following an incident between her and her mom.  She stated:

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I walked out the back door and I hadn't even made it half way up the street and the police officer, he came out of nowhere and just like slammed me on the car. It was just how he had slammed me on the car and I was jerkn away from him like you know, get yo hands off of me…I was already mad. But he didn't have to do it [approach her] like he did it.… I kept jerkn away from him…just the way he kept grabbin my arms. You [police] know I'm already mad and I was real young then and it was just how he did it...he didn't have to do all that.

This is the second account where female respondents recalled excessive use of force being used against them, one maced and one physically mishandled. Crystal's complaint, "he didn't have to all that," suggests that it was not the stop in itself that she had a problem with but rather the actions that proceeded the stop. She perceived it as unnecessary and excessive. Like other respondents who experienced police violence, they believed police actions to be misconduct in the sense that it is unnecessary aggression. That is, unwarranted, unjustified force used against them.

Both Jasmine's and Crystal's cases differ from the trend in that women in general, often do not recount direct police aggression or brutality. These behaviors are commonly experienced by men. In fact, Brunson and Miller (2006a) suggest that even in instances where the police interact with men, they act less aggressively when women are present. That said, these women tell a very different story. Though few in numbers, their experiences are invaluable in that they are often not accounted for when discussing police brutality. The women felt violated and as though they were being treated "like men;" after all, these were behaviors they observed happening to men. For example, another woman witnessed a police-citizen encounter where violence ensued. Pam described two young men being chased, and one in particular, being caught and roughed up:

They [police] tried to run him into the gate. They couldn't catch him and I guess he was tryin to hop the gate so they tried to pin him to the gate with the car, but they were going too fast…when they chased this other boy and when they finally caught him, they had

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their knee in his chest, just yankin on him to get up off the ground…they have too many officers for one person.

Pam found the number of officers to be excessive, especially as they were all engaged.  Like other eyewitness accounts, the physical aspect of the encounter itself creates concern.  In this situation, Pam perceived the officers as bullies; that is, too many, too involved.

Meanwhile, Barbara spoke of an incident where a young man was slammed to the ground by police.  She is a friend of the young man's father, and thus, learned of the incident from the father.  She described the police using unnecessary, excessive force against him, and the police being reprimanded for having done so:

> They [police] accused him [the man] of doing something and the police slammed him to the ground, said a lot of different things, and locked him up.  The Chief came back and reviewed the tape and reprimanded the officer, apologized to the family, and everything else.

Again, Barbara did not personally witness this event.  However, when asked about policing behaviors and misconduct in the community, she found this incident important to discuss for the sake of fairness.  Meaning, her experiences with the police have been positive, despite knowing and hearing of incidents in the community where many suggest otherwise.  Thus, she did not want to discount bad policing behaviors, but rather, provided an instance where leadership in the department learned of it and addressed it.

### *Falsified Reports*

Two respondents (one male, one female), both of whom had previous negative contacts with police, reported incidents where they personally encountered police falsifying reports.  Ricky, who generally had favorable views of the police, recalled an instance where he was mistreated by them.  He believed an officer to have engaged in misconduct by deliberately falsifying his accident report.  He described the incident:

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We were sitting here one night, we were playing cards. I drunk one beer, got up, took a bath, and she [wife] wanted a pizza so I was gonna go to get a pizza and the guy next door was coming home. So when I got to the stop sign I stopped and he short cornered me. Well, he runs into my car but he says I ran into his. To make a long story short, I said, "Don't move your car." So he moves his car anyway…officer came to the scene and then another officer came to the scene. She smelled my beer, "You're drunk and you're under arrest." Took me to the police department, made me blow, it blew zero, they had to let me go. When she wrote up the police report, she wrote it up entirely wrong. She wouldn't even take the witnesses...the white guy across the street saw the whole accident. She wouldn't even put his name on the report. So we went up there one night. I says, "I don't want anybody to make me right or wrong but I want an accurate report and I want my witnesses on it." When I got the accident report, I read it and I told my wife, "This lady [police] is terrible. She's just not telling the truth here"… and she even had on it that I was drunk fallen out the car when she got on the scene. That's what she told me and my wife in front of her supervisor. So I told him, I said sir, "Your officer is lying and first of all she was not the first officer on the scene and you can question the other officer" and I said, "You can also ask the other people that were there." So to make a long story short, they went and did an investigation, found out that I was totally correct…So they made her tear up that report and rewrite it the way it should've been with the witnesses and everything…I think it was misconduct what she did to me.

While there have been times where Ricky came in contact with the police involuntarily, he reported that more of his contacts occurred through service calls. In these instances he was pleased with their service. However, with this incident, Ricky was angered by the officer's actions. After reporting this to the officer's superior, the original report was thrown out and a new, corrected report was drawn up in its place. Despite the problem(s) being fixed, Ricky believed he was mistreated. He believed the officer's behavior to be nothing short of police misconduct.

In a similar incident, Jasmine described her son as being erroneously ticketed for failure to show proof of insurance. She explained:

…my son had left my house and he had got pulled over in my car… I had gotten everything registered, the insurance, the plates was right…He [police] asked him for his insurance, my son showed him his insurance and he gave him a ticket anyway…somebody saw that my son was pulled over and gave me a call. One of my girlfriends took me to where they was at and my son was telling me that he gave him a ticket anyway and I asked him [police] "If he showed you proof of insurance, why did you give him a ticket anyway?" So the officer told me "Well, we can't block traffic here,

let's go down to Quick Trip."  And I'm like ok and I got in the backseat of my car and we [she and her son] rode down to Quick Trip.  We were right  behind the officer.  Instead of the officer pulling over at Quick Trip, he turned like he was going to Quick Trip but he kept going…We pulled on Quick Trip lot, we sat there thinking he may turn around and come back.  He never did come back.  So the next day, I called the Kirkwood Police station to ask for his Sgt, to talk to his Sgt.  The Sgt told me "Yeah, he told me about it" and for me to come and bring the ticket up to him.  And when we got there, he took the ticket and tore it up in front of me.

As young Black disadvantaged men are disproportionately targeted for surveillance, they are

often met with harassment and other aggressive tactics used by the police towards them (Brunson

2007; Brunson and Miller 2006a, b; Smith and Holmes 2003; Bass 2001; Chambliss 1994).  Had

the young man in this case challenged or questioned the officer's actions, he could have easily

been perceived as resistant or possibly combative. While the situation clearly did not escalate to

that point, it is still serious in that a stop occurred and a false ticket was issued, both of which,

according to Jasmine, seemingly went unexplained.


### *Planting Evidence*

The final case of misconduct involves an account of planting evidence. One male

respondent reported direct experience with having an officer plant drugs on him in the

community. Terrance described his experience with evidence planting:

We standing outside of one of my friends houses… and they [police] just pulled up on a general search…just pulled up, got out and started pattin' people down, it was two police officers.  But the original [first] police officer patted me down. I remember I had on some gray sweat pants and some red shorts. I had some red shorts on and I didn't have nothin in my pockets.  My sweatpants, didn't have nothin in my pockets. They searched me…the first cop that pulled up searched me, searched me and sat me on the car, then searched my two friends and then Roberts [officer] pulled up and I'm sittin on the front of the car already searched and Roberts walked up to me and said, "let me search you again," patted me down and I'm sittin on the bumper, the parking bumper, you know what I'm saying…goes down, he pats me, and comes back up with an ounce of marijuana. Gave me a ticket, took my boy to jail…that was a bad day. Where the marijuana came from, I don't know, that's just straight up square business.  He patted me down and came up and just pulled out an ounce of weed and said, "This is yours."  "No it ain't" [Terrance talking to officer]…I didn't even fight it.

Terrance's account is reflective of police suspicion, particularly in instances where young men are visibly congregating and hanging out in the community. As the police are suspicious of them, they then involuntary approach them and question them, which may inevitably lead to pat downs, or in Terrance's instance, "free-casings".

Meanwhile, Jeremy has been beaten up by the police and also claimed officers planted drugs on him. While Jeremy is a Meacham Park resident and has had several negative incidents in the community, his experience with evidence planting occurred in a different community. Nonetheless, he does not trust the police and believes running from them is a way to avoid evidence planting. He explained, "…see here's the thing, when they [police] jump on you, you better run cause if you ain't got nothin on you, you will." Jeremy's statement is significant in that it provides a plausible explanation for why many young men run from the police. Running for him is not about guilt per se, but rather about avoidance. As a result of previous encounters, Jeremy believes that the consequences resulting from running still fare better than those of not running. Not running could mean being "free-cased" (planting drugs) and possibly beaten up.

Crystal witnessed a police pursuit and possible free-casing in the community. She described the scene as she and others in the community looked on:

> … they [police] kept tellin people to stay back and it was just like five or six police officers down there on him and he was yellin "somebody help me, they tryin to put somethin in my pocket." He just kept yellin "they tryin to put somethin in my pocket!"

While Crystal could not prove whether or not officers actually planted drugs on the gentlemen in custody, she seemed inclined to believe him. Due to her negative experiences with the police, she is distrustful of officers and believes that the man being subdued would not have been yelling for citizen intervention, except he was genuinely concerned with being "free-cased."

While each of these accounts are shared by respondents and referenced as one of many reasons for why they distrust law enforcement, they do not prove guilt or innocence for either the citizen or the officers involved. However, they are significant accounts and worthy of discussion, especially as respondents believed the police in their community to have planted evidence and are able to recall instances where they perceive them as having crossed the line. Consequently, they do not trust them. Hence, these too then become additional areas or accumulative experiences by which citizen-police relations become and remain tense (Brunson and Miller 2006 a, b).

## Service Calls/Voluntary Contact

While most of the respondents in this project came in contact with the police involuntarily, some reported coming in contact with them through voluntary service calls. Of the 30 respondents, fifteen respondents (eleven women and four men) experienced direct voluntary contact. All of these respondents were 30 years old or older. Hence, in this study, women and older respondents were likeliest to call the police, while men and the younger respondents were least likely to call.

Of the fifteen respondents who placed service calls, eleven respondents (seven women and four men) were satisfied with the police and four were not. The eleven satisfied respondents were over the age of 50, and seven of them reported having had no previous negative experiences with the police. The four dissatisfied respondents were below 50 years of age, and all reported having had previous negative contacts with the police.

When respondents called the police, they usually did so as a result of an emergency situation or out the fear of victimization (Reisig and Parks 2000; Reisig and Giacomazzi 1998; Sampson and Bartusch 1998; Cao et al 1996; Davis 1990; Murty et al 1990). The way in which

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police engage in reactive policing, or policing following a service call, is significant.  It can have significant ramifications on how respondents come to perceive the police, and as a result, determines how they interact with them.

### *Satisfied with Service*

Of the eleven satisfied respondents, seven were women and four were men.  Six calls were for home burglaries, reported by three men and three women.  Four were for various disturbances (i.e., noise, park/street lights, prank calls), reported by four women and one man.  A woman reported property damage.

The respondents in this project called the police mostly in response to home burglaries. They shared details surrounding those burglaries and then followed up with whether they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the way police handled things. Dwayne explained:

> I went home to change shoes or something and this lil guy was tryin' to break into my house. When I pulled up in the driveway, I saw him walkin' on my property leanin' over on my back sidewalk…he had a sawed-off shot gun…I called the cops and they were there just like that…caught the guy a couple of days later.  We hadn't had any break-ins since they arrested that guy. But they caught the guy and come over with a line up and I had to go through this line up and pick this guy out…so they [police] handled it all the way through the process until it got over to Clayton.  They handled it, I was very impressed with the way Kirkwood handled the situation.

In Dwayne's case not only did the police catch the burglar, but Dwayne seemed satisfied with their overall attentiveness to his case.

Francis also called the police to report a burglary.  In this instance, it was not her home, but that of her neighbor.  She described the incident:

> Somebody broke in [my neighbor's] house.  She came home and someone was in her bedroom and they jumped up and ran out the door.  She ran over here and I called.  She called the police and I called the police and they came right away.  They tracked their footprints all the way out her yard and everything…We [she and her husband] were satisfied with their response and she was too.  She went on and got an alarm on her house.

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Both Francis and her neighbor were pleased with the police response, particularly as "they came right away." Minorities often believe the police to not care and/or to be incapable of protecting them when they do not show up right away. This is consistent with the literature in that by comparison, police response times are longer for Black populations compared to white (Robinson and Chandek 2000; Frueudenberg et al. 1999; Anderson 1999, 1990; Klinger 1997; Walker et al. 1996; Homant et al 1984; Koenig 1980; Furstenberg and Wellford 1973). Though the previous cases reflect immediate police response, increasing respondents' confidence in the police, there were also instances reported where police response times decreased respondents' confidence.

Dorothy also expressed satisfaction about an incident when an officer extended himself in helping her. While recalling an incident where she was helped by officers following a service call to her home, she referenced the actions of one officer in particular as "commendable." She explained:

> I had an instance where somebody was callin' my house and I found out who it was. They were hangin' up and stuff like that all day long and I called the police department and talked to them about it and they told me what to do and I did it as far as contacting AT & T. Then they sent an officer out and I was explaining what was going on and there came this one nice gentleman [police], older fellow, and he was so nice about it and he actually, literally, went to that person's house, knocked on the door for me and told them they need to stop calling my house. That a police report had been made and if it didn't stop, they would have to be dealt with legally, you know. And I thought that was pretty good…he's always been a nice person, that particular officer. I can't remember his name, but I know him when I see him. He really took out time to address the problem and I thought that was pretty commendable.

Dorothy has had several negative experiences with the local police, one of which was at her home. Additionally, she has had negative experiences in the City of Kirkwood, many of which she attributes to racism. Consequently, she shared numerous accounts, past and present, where she had unfavorable interactions, ranging from issues surrounding annexation to the local police.

Hence, this account is important because it is one of few stories concerning Kirkwood, and the police especially, where Dorothy smiled and spoke nicely. Generally, her accounts of the police were negative. However, she identified this officer as treating her nicely, acting as a "gentleman" and extending himself in an effort to solve the problem. Despite the previously negative experiences, simply "being nice," that is, nice enough to address and solve her problem spoke volumes for Dorothy. The calls stopped.

### *Dissatisfied with Service*

Four respondents reported making service calls to the police in which they were dissatisfied with the results. All four were women, and all had previously experienced negative encounters with the police. Additionally, some of the women made numerous calls to the police, where they reported issues ranging from incidents with the police to property damage. As the service calls varied, so did the reasons for why respondents came to be dissatisfied. The women reported delayed responses, no responses, no resolutions, and/or name-dropping with anonymous reports.

As respondents called the police, one of the things they reported being dissatisfied with was the amount of time it took them to show up at the scene. Jasmine spoke of police response time in Meacham Park compared to what she believed it to be in Kirkwood Proper. Based on observations and accounts from others in Kirkwood Proper, she stated:

> I think it's not just me…because it's like when nothing's going wrong we're Kirkwood, but as soon as something happens, we're Meacham Park. And they, to me, the police act in a different way when they come out here…[for example] they're responding to a kid fight or they're just riding through, they just act totally different than they do on the other side of the tracks [Kirkwood Proper], they respond, like they come quick. But they don't come quick out here. This is something I've seen for myself.

Jasmine believed officers to be slow to respond when answering calls in Meacham Park compared to Kirkwood Proper. While she cannot prove this, she is convinced based on observations and knowledge obtained as a result of knowing people in "Kirkwood Proper." Additionally, Jasmine's sentiments also reflect the fact that she has made several service calls in which she believed officers to have been slow to respond.

At least one respondent reported that the police did not respond at all when she called. Lisa stated,

> Music blasting at 2 o'clock in the morning…and when I call the police, they don't come. I don't see 'em. I don't see 'em come and I just think it's sad. It's sad.

Lisa was bothered by the fact that the police never showed up, and as a result, lacks confidence in them. She is one of two respondents who have contacted the police numerous times for assistance. Of those times, there was only one instance where she was satisfied with the police. But even then, she did not call them, but rather they contacted her for assistance during a heat wave. However, in times where she actually sought them out, Lisa stated unequivocally that they did nothing to assist her. For example, she described being at the scene of a fight involving her teenage daughters. Lisa needed and requested EMS service for her one of her daughters. She explained:

> I said, "Can you [the police] call the ambulance, my daughter has seizures." They [police] told "me" to call the ambulance…a lady says, "Tell one of those police to call the ambulance, they right there." I called on my cell phone four times for an ambulance for my daughter, nobody would send me an ambulance. I'm getting pissed and I started cursing. *So the police told you to call for an ambulance?* Yes and um' my daughter was sitting on the sewer shaking really, really bad and that's what I'm worried about. I'm shaking too and I'm worried about me being pregnant and no ambulance coming. And so, it had been at least 25 minutes passed and I came back to the house…and I called on the house phone..."Can you [911] send me an ambulance…I think my daughter having a seizure"…and then they sent one.

Lisa was furious as she recalled this incident. Two of her daughters had been jumped on at the

bus stop, one of whom had a history of seizures. Concerned about her daughter and surrounded

by the police, Lisa asked an officer to radio in for an ambulance thinking that might get them to

the location sooner. Instead, the officers told her to do it. Again, these accounts are consistent

with dissatisfaction often expressed by disadvantaged residents in minority communities when

calling on police for assistance.

Lisa's account reveals that even when the police are present, respondents still

experienced delayed responses or no responses. Thus, respondents' distrust of the police also

hinges on their dissatisfaction with how they resolved offenses committed against them or the

fact that they often do not. Jasmine called the police for an incident at her home and was

dissatisfied with the way they handled it. She explained:

> There were some boys in the neighborhood that paint-balled my house and I called
> Kirkwood police. Two officers showed up. The side of my house was orange, but my
> house is blue. And they [police] told me that it was not property damage and that all I
> had to do was take a water hose and wash it off. It wasn't property damage or destruction
> of property I was told. They [police] asked me did I know who it was. And there was a
> young lady who had just left my house, one of my daughter's friends. And her car was
> paint-balled. She ended up going to the car wash and called the police to let them know.
> And she knew who it was and she told them [police] who it was. And a minute later,
> after she left, I heard a noise outside and so when I opened my side door, from my back
> yard they were just shooting the paintballs and I hurried up and shut my door so I
> wouldn't get hit.

Like Lisa, Jasmine has had a history of negative interactions with the police. As a result, she has

no confidence in them. Additionally, the police's assertion that they could do nothing to address

the paint-balling of her house only worked to further her distrust of them. She had been told and

believed there to be several paint-ball incidents reported, where the boys responsible had been

identified. Nevertheless, she believed the police did not care, and as best as she could tell, did

nothing to stop it from reoccurring. Later, Jasmine continued by stating,

Right now, the way I feel about the police, there's no love lost between me and them. I could care less and do my best to stay out their way…because I don't trust them after all the stuff I been through and things I've called them for and I felt like I didn't get no satisfaction, no results, I just don't trust them.

In another incident, Valerie recalled a time where she filed a complaint with the police and was waiting to receive follow-up from them. She said she spotted the officer who was to have followed at another incident. She stated:

And one day, I did see him [police] cause it was an incident out here [Meacham Park]…Anyway, they [police] was out there and I ran into [the officer]... I said, "Do you know who I am?" I said I made a complaint and you never got back with me. He said, "Right now I can't deal with that and I have to get back with you"… ain't got back with me yet…it was a year ago when that incident happened.

When approached by Valerie, it may have been that the officer was too busy with the current situation to address her old one. However, Valerie expected him to do what he promised to do, which was to follow up with her long before the new incident occurred. When she saw the officer again it was clear to her that he remembered her, and that he had failed to follow up on her complaint. These kinds of exchanges between officers become reasons for why respondents do not trust the police to do what they say and often believe them to not care about their problems enough to address them.

## Officer Friendly

Finally, respondents reported other positive voluntary contacts with officers. Respondents did not feel all police officers were bad. While many had unfavorable experiences and attitudes towards them, in general, they did not believe every Kirkwood officer to be unethical and often made clear times where they were satisfied and appreciative of them. Thus, despite strong feelings of the police and many accounts of negative experiences with them, 87 percent (26 out of 30) of respondents acknowledged or admitted to at least one friendly or helpful experience with the police. This went for respondents with both negative and positive

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police encounters. The four respondents that did not report having friendly experiences with the police, were the respondents who had the most frequent and most aggressive experiences with the police. Generally, they had nothing positive to say about them.

So while more respondents reported having friendly experiences with the police compared to those who had negative experiences, it is important to acknowledge, understand, and analyze those responses within a particular context. In other words, while the respondents acknowledged times where the police was helpful and/or friendly to them, most of them did so vaguely. For the most part, they were dismissive and reluctant when discussing positive experiences with the police when comparing to the manner in which they shared the negative. For instance, many of them offered negative accounts of the police even when they were not asked or prompted to do so. Thus, those accounts often resulted in numerous negative experiences freely shared per respondent versus one positive account per respondent, reluctantly acknowledged as a result of very direct questioning.

Nevertheless, this section is equally significant in extending race, place, and policing dialogue. It provides a balance and a platform from which we can gain greater insight into the occurrence and deviation of policing, from good-to-bad or bad-to-good, as Black citizens perceive and understand them. In other words, limiting the literature to solely knowing where and how policing has and continues to take a turn for the worse does not advance discussions, except that we too can account for where and how policing becomes positive. As this is the case, respondents reported positive experiences with the police in interactions, ranging from waving and speaking while out patrolling to community participation.

When asked about friendly or helpful experiences with the police, some respondents shared accounts where officers waved, said hello to them, or engaged in very brief exchanges

while out patrolling.  Most respondents thought positively of the police when they waved or greeted them while out patrolling.  Ed, when asked about police friendliness, stated, "… just saying hello or waving, you know…pull up and 'How you fellas doing?'…They [police] aren't all bad."  For Ed, salutations show common courtesy, and having officers acknowledge him, made him feel important and respected in his community.  Jasmine also described brief moments where she and officers engaged in friendly exchange.  She states:

> There's a couple of them [police] I can speak to and I can joke around with. I might run into them at Walmart or Quick Trip and they know me by name and we speak.

These instances are brief, but yet very meaningful exchanges between the police and citizens. Jasmine welcomes being able to joke around and share a laugh with officers.  For her, being able to interact with the police in that way normalizes them.  It levels the playing field, in the sense that for a moment, they seem more citizen-like rather than authority-like.  Dwayne, on the other hand, felt safer in the community.  He stated,

> …in the mornings I see them [police].  You know, "How you doin?", "Happy Fourth of July", you know, I'm really impressed. I feel safe, they're out here.  I feel they're more accessible on a personal basis. You can almost for sure wave one down at anytime and they'll stop and talk to you.

Being able to greet one another during patrols meant a lot to Dwayne.  Those exchanges suggest several things for him.  One, officers' greeting him represented personal acknowledgement, which translated into personal "accessibility."  That is, if the police are personally available to speak to him; then, so too are they then likely to be available to him in other ways beneficial to him.  While Dwayne does not know for fact how available the police would be to him, the fact that they take time to personally address him spoke volumes.  In those instances, he perceived them as being kind, and as a result, believed them to be approachable.

Lisa also shared an account where she believed the police were kind. She described a friendship forged with an officer in which he was nice to her and her children. She stated,

> …there's one police officer, he's such a sweetheart, he checked on us over the summer when our air was down… He used to come by check on the kids, talk to us, he came by brought James [her son] a flashlight. He [police] was James's buddy. I don't even know his name. I just call him my friend. He was just real close with the family.

These gestures were important to Lisa, especially as she is a single mother. She believed the officer acted out of genuine concern for her and her children, especially as his actions were not precipitated by service calls. In other words, in a community where the residents tend to be very distrusting of the police and often questioning their motives, Lisa embraced this officer as a friend. His actions were not due to 911 calls, which for her meant, being nice was a reflection of his character, rather than his job.

With regards to youth, respondents often spoke of them as having very tense exchanges/relationships with the police. This is consistent with previous literature, in that young people are likelier to be surveilled compared to other age groups and likelier to oppose authority figures (Fine et.al. 2003). However even Carla, the youngest respondent in the project, provided a positive experience with the police.

> They [police] wave at us. I mean, they cool…It's no sidewalks for real so we walk in the street. And they told us to get out the street. And we talked and they told us like, "You can't be in the street, you have to be on the sidewalk cause cars fly up and down the street so many times." *Were they nice about it? How did the conversation go?* They just said "will you please not walk in the street, cars do fly up and down the street. It's only 25 mph, but they do like 90. So can you walk on the sidewalks from now on." And that was it.

This conversation about walking on sidewalks versus walking in the street is especially interesting. It is one of many areas of controversy in terms of how the police deal with the residents in Meacham Park. Many respondents referenced this issue or complained about the

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police handing out tickets to children for walking in the streets. Tiffany told a somewhat

different story:

> … like a couple of our kids got tickets for walking in the street.  We never had sidewalks around here until they [Kirkwood] annexed, so a lot of people, especially the older people and like young people, they never walked on sidewalks so that took a minute to adjust.  But officers were giving people tickets for walking in the street… not just warnings, they were just giving them tickets…my brother ticket was a hundred or two. The police they would give you a lil ticket…I think it was loitering.   I don't know what it was, so it would seem like the laws that they would never enforce was the ones that they would, you know, would enforce in order to mess with people.

As the complaint has been that officers do not warn youth but issue tickets, Carla described

officers acting differently.  He went the extra mile explaining the issue as a safety concern.  This

approach made a huge difference in how youth perceived him.  Instead of perceiving officers as

harassing her and her friends, she understood this as officers being concerned about them -

concerned about their safety, by not wanting to see them hit by speeding cars.  This is an

excellent example in that it shows how very little effort on behalf of officers can make a huge

impression on citizens.

Two of the respondents I interviewed reported no negative experiences with the police at

all.  They shared friendly and helpful stories with ease.  Francis was one of them.  Having had

only positive experiences with the local police, she thought highly of them and stated:

> Well, when it comes to the Kirkwood Police Department, I've had nothing but plus relationships with them.  I've not had anything that I could identify negative personally with my family or myself or my close neighbors....They've stopped and when we had the night out, they come here and they have lemonade and they have barbeque with us, you know.

Respondents embrace officers getting involved and attending community events.  As Meacham

Park has several throughout the year, respondents discussed having positive interactions with the

police at those functions.  Travis explained:

Well, I met the Chief of Police at the area parade they have every year and he was pretty cool and he introduced me to a couple of officers and they were ok and I even got pulled over by one and just because of that, he let me go…gave me a warning and no ticket.

Travis felt good about meeting the Chief of Police and having him introduce him to other officers. After all, this changed the circumstances for how many men come to know the police in Meacham Park. In general, men spoke about knowing officers and becoming familiar with them through involuntary contacts. Nevertheless, in this instance Travis was introduced to them, and as a result, he believes this set a precedent for future chance meetings. He perceived his warning over a ticket to be a direct result of having previously met those officers under positive circumstances.

Keith, on the other hand, spoke of officers actually assisting with set-ups for community events. He stated, "…when we set up for the Meacham Park Homecoming, they actually helped us take stuff out the car." Additionally, Denise discussed the role of the police at monthly community meetings. She stated:

The policemen come to the meetings and make a report about what's happening in the community…that's a good thing, because in many communities, there is not a regular monthly communication between the police and the community.

In both cases, respondents thought it wonderful to have the police involved. For them, it showed interest; it showed them engaging differently in the community apart from the all too common traffic stops, pursuits, and other activities many of them are used to seeing and  hearing about. For that, they communicated gratitude.

Accounting for times where respondents had positive experiences and views of their local police is necessary. It affords opportunities for improvement with police-citizen relationships. In fact, some respondents discussed areas where they identified positive changes in policing. As Meacham Park, and the entire City of Kirkwood, had to face very tragic situations, partly

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resulting from poor police-citizen relationships, several thought it important to state what they liked or saw as improvements with them since those occurrences.  Ed, for example, stated:

> …seems like the police been reaching out more…even the police chief has been here talking…trying to form some kind of relationship.  That's good.

Marsha also weighed in by saying,

> I've seen more of an effort since the [officer's death] and the city massacre.  I've seen more of an effort and I contribute all that to the chief.  I contribute every bit of it to him.

While Ed and Marsha's comments described and/or identified improvements made following the two Kirkwood tragedies, Dwayne's comments slightly differs in that he identified improvements since the annexation.  Meacham Park had not always been policed by the City of Kirkwood.  Prior to annexation, they were under the jurisdiction of the St. Louis County Police Department.  Remembering the transition, Dwayne said:

> …sound crazy to you when I say it. I think from what I see, they're [police] doing a much better job than I've seen them do since they've taken over this place… better than I've ever seen it. They've been personable.

While respondents identified and acknowledged improvements by comparing them to policing following annexation or policing prior to and following the two tragedies, it is important to note that improvements have occurred with policing in Meacham Park.  So while there are often tense exchanges in disadvantaged minority communities, there too can be positive exchanges, hence, creating and shaping positive attitudes towards law enforcement.  After all, the residents of Meacham Park are not opposed to policing and do not believe all police to be bad.  In fact, despite negative experiences with them, some were empathetic toward them and worked to understand and be fair in their views of them.

With everything else, respondents recognize that there are good and bad police, which really equates to good and bad policing.  Nevertheless, their stories depicting bad experiences do

not mean they would rather be without police.  These stories, taken together, make clear that they

are interested in a kind of policing that reflects what they believe to be genuine concern and

considerate exchanges, if even, in the simplest ways.   Jackie sums up this view:

> …whenever you dealin with the public, you gone have good cops, you gone have bad
> cops, but you can't put them all in the same category.

# Chapter 5 - Conclusion and Discussion

The literature suggests that attitudes toward the police are often shaped by citizens'

experiences with law enforcement.  Black citizens often have unfavorable attitudes toward the

police that have historically resulted from negative interactions. The literature suggests that

Blacks experience differential policing; they are likelier than whites to come into contact with

the police in unwanted circumstances.  As a result, they are likelier to have negative experiences

with police and unfavorable attitudes towards them.

## Key Findings of This study

The race, place, policing literature (Brunson and Miller 2006 a, b) generally reflects the

policing experiences of Black, disadvantaged citizens in urban communities; this project

provides insight into similar experiences as they occur in a suburban community. In this study,

all of the respondents experienced policing through vicarious contacts.  They recalled shared

stories and observations surrounding the cases of Kevin Johnson and Cookie Thornton. Through

such experiences they came to identify, define, and explain contentious police-citizen

interactions.  They sought to make sense of police harassment in relation to Kevin, Cookie,

others in the community, and inevitably themselves.

A smaller proportion of respondents experienced direct contact with the police that they

believed took the form of harassment.   They experienced this contact through surveillance,

stops, questions, frisks and searches, and arrests. These interactions occurred through involuntary contacts with the police and were more common among men compared to women and younger respondents compared to older respondents. Additionally, such interactions were likeliest to occur with respondents who had previous negative encounters with the police than respondents who had not. Respondents with previous negative encounters also reported more acts of police aggression with each encounter.

Men and younger respondents who reported harassment described the police as surveilling them and others. Such behaviors are consistent with aggressive proactive tactics often employed by police in minority communities. Respondents reported that surveillance was likeliest with young Black men in groups hanging out in the park, on corners, and on porches. Young Black men thus experienced surveillance while stationary, so too while moving. They reported being tailed by the police while walking and driving, regardless of age. In this study, men reported police surveillance as leading to officers stopping and questioning them often without any discernable cause. They spoke of being tailed, and in some instances, stopped by police when venturing in, out, or near Kirkwood Proper. This is the race-and-place effect described by Meehan and Ponder (2002). Men reported being tailed late at night and in early morning hours, often near the intersection where they entered and exited the community. Men also reported being tailed and then stopped when several young men were in the car. Respondents who were stopped and questioned by the police reported officers interacting with them as if they were criminals, scrutinizing them even in instances where they had no criminal history and there were no crimes being committed.

In accord with the findings of previous studies, I also find that Blacks are policed in ways often disadvantageous to them. Historically, Blacks have been relegated into certain spaces and

aggressively regulated and policed within those places.  Meacham Park is a very segregated, isolated annexed community.  Policing in this community is different than in surrounding white areas, respondents believe.  Respondents who reported being harassed by the police believed that they were as a result of being disadvantaged, Black, and more specifically residents of Meacham Park.  In sum, respondents who reported being harassed, with previous negative police encounters, felt they could never redeem themselves.  They believed that despite change or the absence of wrongdoing, officers only "hassled" them because of knowledge of their past. For respondents who had no history with the police felt officers prejudged them and policed them in ways that did not afford them the benefit of doubt, but rather criminalized them.

Being stopped and questioned without cause reflects police suspicion as often experienced by Blacks living in disadvantaged communities.  This is consistent with the literature in that race and neighborhood context matters.  Hence, the police are often suspicious of Black citizens in such neighborhoods, even when residents exhibit no suspicious behaviors.  More specifically, the literature suggests that Black men are likelier to be targeted for such suspicion.  In this study, Black men and youth were likelier to be targeted for police suspicion that resulted in being stopped and questioned.  In instances where women were targeted for suspicion, it was due to their associations with men.  Even then, the men were the initial targets.

The literature shows disadvantaged Blacks in urban areas as subject to police suspicion and harassment, despite being separate and distant from white places. It also shows those experiences as heightened when Black, disadvantaged populations travel near or into upper class, white communities.  While this study does not compare urban experiences to suburban experiences, it makes available interactions from which comparative analysis can begin.  Hence, when accounting for race-and-place effect and racial threat theories, this project creates a

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platform for analyzing urban police-citizen interactions in urban versus suburban areas.  It

affords opportunities for looking at how Blacks come to have contact with the police and what

transpires during those contacts while living separate and at a distance from white communities

versus actually living in them.

Additionally, this study also lends itself to future comparisons for disadvantaged, white

populations. What do police-citizen interactions look like for disadvantaged white populations

that live near or in white wealthier communities?  Do disadvantaged whites in troubled places

experience aggressive policing similarly? Or do they benefit from having close proximity to their

wealthier counterparts as a result of being white?  Overall, the data obtained from this project,

and more specifically from this community, allows for additional dialogue and analysis where

community context may dictate differential policing.

This study also found that both men and women experienced police frisks and searches

and they did so differently.  Men with previous police history or who were grouped together at

the time of a police encounter were likelier to be stopped, questioned, and then frisked and

searched in public places.  They experienced pat-downs or body searches, as well as vehicular

searches in the open.  The women I interviewed who were stopped and questioned by the police

did not have their bodies searched, but rather their possessions (i.e., their homes and purses).

Their searches occurred in private, mostly out of the public's view, and resulted from

involvement with men who were initially targeted by the police and had previous encounters

with them.  Overall, men were targeted for suspicion, then frisked and searched.  Women mostly

experienced searches as a result of their associations with men.

When frisks and searches resulted in arrests, they did so due to suspicions of drug-related

activity.  Though both men and women reported being arrested following frisks and searches, for

women, suspicion and their arrests was usually connected with police suspicion of men they knew. Not all police stops, inquiries, frisks or searches led to arrests in this study. At minimum, not all police stops resulted in tickets. When that was the case, it gave credence to respondents' beliefs that they were being harassed. Both men and women who experienced involuntary contact with the police also reported what they described as police disrespect. Respondents who experienced disrespect reported officers being condescending, cursing, name-calling, (in one case) giving them the middle finger, or threatening them. For the men and women who encountered such experiences disrespectful exchanges by the police became a part of their accumulated experiences and worked to further their negative perceptions of the police.

Men and women differed in their responses to what they viewed as disrespect. More specifically, men who had a history of negative involuntary contacts with the police were more likely to resist verbally compared to women. Such interactions often led to escalating exchanges with each police encounter. At times, those encounters even lead to arrests. Respondents who experienced disrespect described officers who engaged in such behaviors as creating tension rather than working to prevent it or eliminate it. They felt officers precipitated poor police-citizen relations by behaving disrespectfully, while at the same expecting them to respectfully accept their authority. Respondents who experienced police disrespect believed they did so because the police were empowered, and thus, able to mistreat them without cause or consequence.

In a few cases, respondents who experienced police disrespect also reported police engaging in unethical behaviors to what they perceived to be outright misconduct. In this study, police misconduct consisted of physical brutality, falsified reports, and planting evidence. While both men and women who experienced multiple involuntary contacts with the police reported

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police misconduct, men accounted for the most incidents. Men reported the use of excessive force, for example, force used while they were handcuffed and compliant. Respondents who experienced physical brutality described being slammed, shoved, roughed up or maced by the police while they were cooperating and already subdued. They believed the police acted aggressively towards them as a matter of grandstanding, showing off their authority, and reminding them who was in charge. Two women in my study also reported experiencing excessive force by the police. As women with previous negative contacts became subject to physical aggression as men, it could be argued that perhaps they did so because they were just as aggressive, and thus, threatening to the police as the men. I believe that they were not, especially when considering the circumstances by which they came to have numerous police contacts. Their contacts were generally precipitated by relationship issues, while the men who experienced excessive force did so as a result of police suspicion and warrants. Two men, none of whom had prior contact with the police were reported as having had falsified police reports against them. One man with a long history of negative contacts with the police, reported being "free-cased," or having drug evidence planted on him.

Fifteen of my respondents experienced policing through voluntary contacts. In these cases they came into contact with the police as a result of calling them or otherwise seeking assistance. More women reported voluntary police contacts than men. In this study, respondents who placed service calls to the police did so seeking their help with home burglaries, various neighborhood disturbances (e.g., noise, park/street lights, prank calls), and property damage. Women and older respondents were likelier to place such calls, be satisfied with police responses to their calls, and thus, have favorable perceptions of them. This was especially true for

respondents who only reported voluntary contacts; that is, their only experiences with the police were when they sought help from them.

Meanwhile, younger respondents and those who reported negative experiences with the police were least likely to be satisfied with them following a service call. They reported delayed responses or no responses or resolutions following their calls. Additionally, the literature suggests that it is in these experiences that voluntary police contacts, like involuntary contacts, can lead to negative perceptions of the police. Since citizens often call the police in emergency situations, the way officers respond can significantly affect their perceptions of them. Additionally, citizens may hold officers responsible for the occurrence of crime in their community or they may hold officers responsible for acts personally committed against them. In this study, younger respondents and those with previous negative experiences were generally dissatisfied with how police handled their calls and negatively perceived them. It is likely that their experiences and perceptions stemmed from involuntary contacts. Moreover, those respondents were unchanging in their perceptions of the police, and therefore, very critical of them. Hence, the experiences they gained from calling on them only exacerbated their negative perceptions of them.

In general, I found that most respondents agreed that not all police were bad. While there were many reports of negative experiences, most respondents related stories of times when they were satisfied with police and thought favorably of them. The few respondents who did not share such sentiments were those who experienced the most frequent and aggressive of police contacts. In general, they had nothing positive to say about the police. Additionally, they were the younger respondents.

Consistent with the literature, there was a relationship between the age of respondents and their perceptions of the police (Miller and Davis 2008; Brunson and Miller 2006a, b; Nihart et al. 2005; Fine et al. 2003; Taylor et. al., 2001; Hurst and Frank 2000; and Browning et al. 1994). The younger respondents in my study were more likely to perceive the police unfavorably. Older respondents were more likely to have favorable views of the police as well as recall more instances where they had positive encounters with them. In fact, as respondents' related their lifetime of experiences with the police, the older respondents sad that they too disliked the police in their younger years. However, as they aged, becoming more mature, they had more favorable opinions about law enforcement and more frequently embraced their presence in the community. Hence, it is possible that while the younger respondents dislike the police, as they age, they too may come to perceive them favorably.

When asked, most respondents, men and women, shared at least one friendly encounter with their local police. This occurred with respondents who experienced the police involuntarily, as well as voluntarily. Respondents reported friendly experiences with officers who greeted them by waving and saying hello to them, held casual conversations and joked with them, helped and assisted them without being called, explained and expressed safety concerns for them, and attended and participated in community events. Also, respondents were pleased with and expressed confidence in the police when they extended themselves by checking on them when they were knowledgeable of difficulties and displaying a willingness to address, solve, and resolve their problems when called upon. As every problem may not be solvable, knowing that the police cared enough to pursue the solution(s) they desired made a difference in how respondents felt about them.

# Connections to the literature

Race and community context is essential in that it shapes racialized policing for Blacks in the suburbs similarly to urban settings. In the suburbs, Blacks experience differential policing through involuntary and voluntary contact (Decker 1981), vicariously, indirectly, and directly. It is through those contacts that they come to experience and form perceptions of the police.

## *Vicarious Contacts*

As a result of the two tragedies surrounding Kevin Johnson and Cookie Thornton, vicarious experiences deeply affected how the respondents in this study perceived the police. Through learned and shared information pertaining to Kevin and Cookie's experiences, all 30 respondents implicated harassment as having fueled the actions of the two men. Consequently, all 30 respondents experienced police harassment vicariously and did so in this community. As the disadvantaged, segregated Black population in Kirkwood, they then used those experiences to defend themselves in two ways. One, the respondents with the least amount of police contact implicated police harassment as a means to nullify or explain away the "heinousness" of past indiscretions (e.g., Kevin, Cookie) in their community. Two, the respondents with negative police contacts of their own reverted to vicarious experiences in an effort to affirm or validate their own experiences of police mistreatment and misconduct, past and present. In both instances, vicarious experiences were significant in that they became tools of empowerment in this community. Such experiences became leverage for the respondents in that they could arm themselves against additional stigmas as well as prove the persistence of differential police treatment. Hence, this project afforded an opportunity for us to understand the importance of vicarious experiences beyond their role in working to shape citizens' perceptions of law enforcement (Miller and Davis 2008; Brunson 2007; Rosenbaum et. al., 2005; Weitzer and Tuch

2002, 2004, 2005; Feagin and Sikes 1994; Browning et al 1994). In Meacham Park, respondents used vicarious contacts and experiences to construct or reconstruct the perceptions of outsiders towards them.

This project also extends the literature by allowing for insight and analyses into a community where police-citizen interaction occurred with officers from several law enforcement agents/agencies, local and federal. In general, previous studies account for "accumulative experiences" and their effects as they occur for Blacks under the jurisdiction of one police department (Brunson 2007; Brunson and Miller 2006 a, b). However, this project accounts for the collective experiences of Blacks as they came to experience jurisdiction or police exposure under several departments. Prior to annexation, Meacham Park was originally under the jurisdiction of St. Louis County Police. Once annexed, policing in that community changed to Kirkwood Police Department. Then following the slaying of Sgt. McEntee and the City Hall rampage, the community was further exposed to policing from neighboring precincts (e.g., Shrewsbury, Crestwood), as well as, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). All respondents experienced local and federal levels of policing vicariously, meaning through what they heard and saw regarding the shootings. More than half of the respondents recalled being under the jurisdiction of St. Louis County police, as well as the transitional process to jurisdiction under the Kirkwood Police Department.

Consistent with the literature, frequent contacts as vicariously experienced by multiple police agencies shaped and furthered negative perceptions of the police (Alpert et. al. 2005; Browning et. al. 1994). If negative police contacts at minimum lead to negative experiences and perceptions, then we can conclude that as those contacts increase while under the jurisdiction of multiple agencies, so too does the tension with police-citizen relationships. What respondents

saw and heard presented different dynamics with regards to policing experiences in this community prior to the shooting incidents and after. Consequently, there were and continue to be different effects. That is, increased police contacts for respondents, regardless of the cause for such contacts, and heightened police-citizen exchanges for those with negative police history.

### *Involuntary Contacts*

Through annexation, not only did the respondents of this study come to be subject to vicarious contacts and experiences under the jurisdiction of multiple police agencies, but they (e.g., 22 of 30 respondents) became more susceptible to direct, involuntary contacts as well. As Meacham Park's governance changed so too did its ordinances. Some of the regulations that residents were used to living under as an unincorporated community changed once annexed to the City of Kirkwood. Consequently, as the rules changed, becoming stricter, so was the case with policing efforts and sanctions. Again, this increased police contacts for some respondents, and to some measure, introduced a process of assimilation. The residents of Meacham Park needed to now become "Kirkwoodians" by adopting new rules, while simultaneously disassociating themselves with the former ones or the lack thereof. Failing to do so could result in tickets/fines, which really translated to additional unwanted police contacts or harassment.

In the case of Cookie Thornton, violating new ordinances became the vehicle through which he faced police harassment. He had over $20, 000 in fines from parking and other code violations (Deere and Moore 2008). All 30 respondents reported such violations as justification for the police to harass him and implicated such instances as fueling the rage that led to the shooting rampage. Additionally, the younger respondents in this study reported being harassed by the police. They reported being stopped, warned, and ticketed by police for walking in the streets rather than on sidewalks. For decades, Meacham Park did not have sidewalks. Therefore,

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walking in the streets was common; it was expected.  So while the police worked to enforce

Kirkwood ordinances over the previous ones, aggressive policing ensued.  Again, this is

consistent with the literature, especially as citizens' attitudes towards their local social and

political structures are often reflected in their attitudes toward the police (Dawson 1994; Benson

1981).  Political relationships significantly affect local police-citizen relationships. If there is

dissension between a community and its local government, it is probable that too will be the case

between the residents of that community and its agents (i.e., the police).

Moreover, as police work to protect Kirkwood's interests, this project then supports race-

and-place effect (Meehan and Ponder 2002) as well as racial threat theory (Smith and Holmes

2003).  Meacham Park is physically and socioeconomically characteristic of a disadvantaged

inner-city community.  It has been identified as troubled and subject to criminal activity.  When

disadvantaged Blacks are closer in proximity to wealthier whites, meaning their spaces overlap,

studies show that fear and safety become very real concerns for whites (Anderson 1990).   As

such is the case, Blacks are targeted more for police suspicion, and thus, subject to more

aggressive policing when closer to whites than they are when at a distance.

As this project reveals race-and-place effect (Meehan and Ponder 2002) and racial threat

theory (Smith and Holmes 2003), Meacham Park is a one-way in, one-way out community. To

some degree, it is as if the residents of that community have been "quarantined" from the larger,

more affluent parts of Kirkwood (Websdale 2001: 37-39).  The entrance and exit to the

community is also the intersection where the Black and white populations meet.  Additionally,

this is the intersection where men and women reported seeing police cars regularly parked and

where Black men reported being tailed and stopped as they entered or exited the community.

Consequently, this study extends race-and-place effect in that the respondents are not just Black

motorists passing through a white community (Meehan and Ponder 2002), but they have the same residential status as the neighboring middle class whites. They are all residents of the City of Kirkwood, an affluent St. Louis suburb, and yet, this enclave remains very segregated. Through this project, the significance of race and place is affirmed in that place can mean very different things for different people. Suburban status does not afford the same luxuries to the Blacks in Meacham Park as it does to the whites in Kirkwood Proper. Hence, in this study, the respondents were not protected by suburban status, but rather became more vulnerable as a result of it.

Overall, this project contributes to the literature by providing a case study in a community where race, place, and policing intersect, creating somewhat of a perfect storm. There is a long standing history of tense race relations in this community, a contentious history that begins with the local government. Hence, over half of the respondents reported that they do not trust the local government in Kirkwood. For them, being annexed has meant manipulation, broken promises, and losing property (i.e., most of their community) to a white wealthier community. A strip mall, Kirkwood Commons, now sits on two-third of the original community.

## Implications

In accordance with a congressional mandate as issued by the United States Department of Justice, Community Relations Service (CRS), a mediation agreement was drafted between the City Team of Kirkwood and The Community Team of Kirkwood in 2010. This agreement was to bridge gaps and mend relations between Meacham Park and the larger part of Kirkwood. In essence, this agreement was to unite the City of Kirkwood, Black and white, advantaged and disadvantaged. Consequently, a significant portion of that agreement proposed program

extensions and initiatives that would work to foster better police-citizen relations in Meacham Park.

However, over two-thirds of my respondents in this study did not support the mediation process, as they did not feel that their views were represented. More than half of the respondents I interviewed had not read the report that came out of the mediation effort. This was particularly the case for the younger respondents, men and women, and those with a history of negative police contacts. The seven respondents (two men, five women) most interested in this process and who had read the agreement were older, more educated, owned homes in the community, and were socially and politically active in the community before the 1991 annexation. They too were split in their views about the process, however. Four of those respondents (one man, three women) did not support the process and did not support the final agreement; three did. Lack of support hinged on respondents' distrust of the local government and the belief that promises would be made on paper, or rather in theory, but not in practice. As this is the case, my suggestions for improving police-citizen relations in the community rely on the respondents' reports, particularly as two-thirds of the respondents did not feel their voices were well-represented in the mediation process. While committees were formed and forums were held, there continued to be a sense of apathy and disconnect between the larger part of Kirkwood and Meacham Park.

Hence, my suggestions for ways police-citizen relationships may be improved in the Meacham Park community draw from my respondents' perceptions about what would create immediate improvements in police-citizen relationships in the community.

## *Police Courtesy*

Regarding police courtesy, officers should work to be friendlier while out patrolling the Meacham Park community. While this solution may seem superficial, it is an immediate response in an often contentious environment. Consequently, officers should make an effort to greet members of the community by waving, simply saying hello, or pausing for a casual conversation. Respondents reported feeling favorable of officers who engaged them in this way. This is important, especially in a community where there has been a history of tension between officers and residents. Hence, part of changing negative perceptions to positive means taking time to be nice through simple, kind gestures. This means extending one's self through greetings and casual conversations as a matter of practice. Even in some instances where stops occur, being courteous or considerate offsets police disrespect as experienced by some men in this study. In fact, research suggests that courtesy "strengthens in the public's mind the image of the police as a positive force" and is likely to be reciprocated by citizens (Wadman and Ziman 1993). As male respondents complained about officers initial approach of them, they did so making clear that officers' voice tones and choice of words were offensive. Conversely, they also made clear that when officers approached them with a greeting and friendly tones, they felt respected. So while all stops may not allow for such simple words, gestures or acts of kindness, doing so as a matter of practice, pose officers in a different light than does slowing down, suspiciously gazing at individuals, without speaking.

## *Increased Community Involvement*

Additionally, community involvement works to improve police-citizen relationships. Therefore, police officers should continue to involve themselves in community programs and increase their involvement where and when possible. This should be done in three ways:  by

continuing participation in pre-existing programs; increasing involvement by enacting new programs or with additional existing programs; and increasing involvement by helping and assisting residents when visibly needed or as a matter of practice.

Respondents who frequently attended neighborhood association meetings embraced police presence and took pleasure in their community reports. It is through such reports they felt connected and aware of activities as they occurred in their community. Other instances where respondents reported police involvement were at local parades and celebrations, as well as the hotdog program for children in the park. In these instances, the police were reported as helping, assisting, and conversing with community members. In one instance, a respondent was thrilled with having met the Chief of Police at a parade and then having him introduce him to other officers. It made him feel important. Consequently, the police should continue participating in such venues and increase their participation in programs where they have not. Doing so may provoke immediate change in police-citizen relationships.

As respondents embrace police participation in existing programs, the department should involve itself by enacting or following through on newly proposed community programs and activities. Per the Mediation Agreement (see Appendix C), increasing foot patrols, when possible, was proposed. This would be advantageous to police-citizen relations in Meacham Park. Research shows that foot patrols work to decrease citizens' fear of crime, which translates to favorable attitudes toward police (Police Foundation 1981). However, male and female respondents, young and old, reported only seeing officers patrolling in vehicles but not on foot in Meacham Park. Because many respondents, mostly those with no negative history or the least amount of police history, embrace the idea of improving relations through increased community

involvement and the use of foot patrols, being consistent and following through on proposed ideas is crucial.

Additional programs or efforts by the police department, as suggested in the mediation agreement (see Appendix C), are: increase minority recruitment for the Police Explorer Program; work with local agencies and volunteers to help youth attend college, gain internships, or employment; assist volunteers and schools with getting expelled students involved in volunteer work; partner and coordinate with local agencies and youth to creating a local court for high school youth; create new initiatives to extend and attract more participants to the "Ride Along Program"; place more emphasis on the Police Chaplain Program by forging relationships through the churches in the community; participate in the city's automatic complaint program; increase the number of Block Captains, extend Night Out Events and the Police Pancake Supper; provide speakers for events and school tours of the Department; increase the weight on Department evaluations regarding discriminatory behaviors; review Departmental policies with all employees; work with citizens on diversity issues/events when asked; committing to hire qualified personnel indiscriminately; increase efforts to fight crime through two-person car patrols, establishing a satellite office on a trial basis, and providing more training for Block captains with regards to diversity.

Though numerous actions have been proposed through the mediation agreement, there seems to be no real accountability in insuring the creation, continuation, or extension of those programs – at least so far as my respondents are aware. Though the agreement calls for oversight by both the Advisory Committee and ultimately requires the Kirkwood Human Rights Advisory and Awareness Commission (HRC) to annually report and publish actions taken with the previous programs, such reports can be subjective. Additionally, though the residents of

Meacham Park are most affected by the implementation of proposed programs, they are unlikely to read about actions taken with them in an online report. Residents in Meacham Park are most interested in tangible actions as they see, hear, and know them to take place in their community. So for instance, reporting that the Explorer Program increased from two youth to three means very little and is likely to have little impact on residents in a community where many are leery of the local government and its promises. Given the amount of distrust and apathy with regards to bureaucratic meetings and reports, relying on such approaches is indicative of a cultural disconnection. That is a detachment in which parties continue to respond in ways contrary to knowing and understanding the community the agreement is supposed to serve.

While reporting actions taken with programs may provide some transparency, it does not account for impact. There is no real way of measuring the success of implemented or continued programs, which goes back to the very heart of accountability. As programs take place, the City or the HRC may state the number of participants, but the agreement in itself does not call for or detail a specified course of actions for measuring the effectiveness of having had those participants. Beyond stating that the committee "may convene at any time and choose to modify, amend, or dissolve the agreement" (e.g., Advisory Committee and Dispute Resolution Process section), there is no outlined plan for assessment, and thus, no "real" way of knowing whether the programs are doing what they were intended to do.

Another area of concern is suggested diversity training for Block Captains. While participating in such training programs might be useful and advantageous in forging relationships, it seems that such programs would be equally beneficial if specified and mandated similarly for the Kirkwood Police Department as well as all other city employees and committee members. As there is a history of strained relations between Meacham Park and the City of

Kirkwood government, hence the reason for the mediation agreement, diversity training should first be proposed and mandated for all Kirkwood City officials and employees. In fact, previous tragedies (e.g., Kevin Johnson and Cookie Thornton) do not reflect contention between Meacham Park and its Block Captains but rather tension with the city government and its officials. Therefore, diversity training should not be proposed on voluntary basis for those least likely to contribute to poor community relations, but instead, it should be mandated for those likeliest to be implicated in persisting conflicts in Meacham Park.

Other areas where the police might involve themselves more would be with assisting members of the community who may be in potential distress. Such instances may or may not warrant a service call, while others may simply require more time or effort subsequent to one. Respondents reported satisfaction with the police when they checked on them during heat waves and in other instances where they did not place calls. They also reported favorable feelings towards them when they vigorously worked to resolve their issues following calls.

In sum, police-citizen relationships may benefit tremendously from police courtesy and departmental training that encourages it along with it attention to diversity; increased community involvement through actual programs or the enactment of new ones; government consistency and commitment by following through on proposed activities and ideas; and a show of genuine concern by officers extending themselves to help, assist, or explain things to residents. While some of these projects and activities may have already been proposed through the mediation agreement, this project found that many of those have not occurred as previously suggested, or have not been adequately publicized in the community of Meacham Park. Hence, it is very important that the Kirkwood Police Department, and the City of Kirkwood government in its

entirety, follow through on proposed courses of action.  Not doing so undermines the City of

Kirkwood's commitment to change and affirms distrust among the residents of Meacham Park.

Moreover, attention should also be given to broader sociological issues and implications

in Meacham Park.  As low-income communities are often conducive to crime (Websdale 2001;

Anderson 1999, 1990), improving the economic status of its residents could translate to a

decrease in crime, and thus, better relations with the police.  After all, research shows crime or

the fear of crime as significantly influencing citizens' perceptions of the police.  Hence, as crime

or the fear of crime decrease in a community, favorable attitudes towards the police increase

(Cao et. al. 1996).  Additionally, research shows that the choices and experiences of Blacks in

marginalized communities often hinge on survival (Websdale 2001).  Hence, tense relations with

the City of Kirkwood are not the only reasons for struggle and conflict in Meacham Park.

Consequently, tackling issues such as unemployment and a lack of relevant youth programs and

facilities in the community are equally significant in changing and improving the overall culture

of the community.

Therefore, employment training programs and opportunities should be made available to

the residents of Meacham Park.  As there are proposed programs targeting youth employment

(see Appendix C), so too should there be programs made available for adult employment.

Additionally, there should be a plan in place that addresses youth recreation.  The youth in

Meacham Park may benefit from having a recreational center with structured programs and

supervision actually located in their community.  While there are recreation centers or other

facilities for youth to access in the larger part of Kirkwood, Meacham Park youth often do not

take advantage of them due to the distance and a lack of transportation.  Thus, they are more

inclined to "hang out" locally.  Hence, to keep youth from hanging out on corners, violating

curfews, and potentially engaging in other inappropriate activities that attract police attention, programs and activities like midnight basketball in a structured, supervised setting should be made available to them.  Since all youth cannot and may not work for various reasons, having a neighborhood facility and activities for youth would work to decrease possible improprieties as a result of idle time.

And last, as many Meacham Park residents are unemployed, low-income, and thus, disadvantaged, they often do not have transportation to events (e.g., Police Nights Out) in the larger part of Kirkwood.   Consequently, including them in events proposed in the mediation agreement may mean publicizing them in their community and making transportation available to those interested in attending.  In other words, Meacham Park residents may attend regularly scheduled events if they know about them, have in some way(s) been included in them, or have a way to get to them.  Ideally, this is about eliminating reasons for why residents may not attend by providing numerous outlets for why and how they can.  This should be the logic to follow with all programs and activities where the goal is to promote unity and inclusion among Kirkwood citizens.

Some of the implications of these findings are limited by my research design, however. While qualitative research of this kind can produce depth, the sample size and respondent population limits any conclusions I can draw.  More diversity by age - particularly the inclusion of those under eighteen – would be useful in that research suggests that negative contacts and negative perceptions of the police often occur with youth.  Similarly, it would be interesting to compare the experiences of the few whites in such communities to determine whether their experiences mirror those of Black residents.  And finally, as five respondents reported wanting to see more Black officers added to the force, none of the respondents discussed officers' race as

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making a difference in their experiences or perceptions.  In other words, the respondents in this study did not communicate whether they preferred Black officers over white or vice versa.  In general, they merely seemed to want fair, respectable policing in their community, regardless of officers' race.  Hence, in future studies, it would be helpful to know whether that is the general consensus among Black populations or if the race of officers matter in how Blacks interact with them and perceive them.

Even so, this study provides insight into Black relationships with the police in the suburbs.  It offers details of what those relationships look like, how they came to be formed, and how they are maintained through everyday interactions.  By relying on interview research, I extended the literature by affording disadvantaged Blacks an opportunity to describe their experiences with the police in an annexed, suburban community where there has been a history of racial tension.  It is my hope that the findings discussed here will become applicable in ways that will make for better police-citizen relationships in the Community of Meacham, the City of Kirkwood and other areas where tense police-citizen relations persist.

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# Appendix A - Informed Consent Form

**PROJECT TITLE:**        Meacham Park:  How do Blacks Experience Policing in the Suburbs?

**APPROVAL DATE OF PROJECT:**        **EXPIRATION DATE OF PROJECT:**

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**        Dr. Dana Britton, **Associate Professor of Sociology**
Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work
213 Waters Hall
brittn@ksu.edu
785-532-4968

**CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):**        Andrea S. Boyles, **Co-Investigator**
Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work
drea2dst@ksu.edu
Cell (573) 230-0180
Home (573) 415-5846

**CONTACT NAME AND PHONE FOR ANY PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS:**  Dr. Dana Britton, 785-532-4968

**IRB CHAIR CONTACT/PHONE INFORMATION***:*

Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS  66506, (785) 532-3224.

Jerry Jaax, Associate Vice Provost for Research Compliance and University Veterinarian, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS  66506, (785) 532-3224.

**SPONSOR OF PROJECT:**  Kansas State University, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work

**PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:**  The purpose of this project is to collect and analyze data of Black adults residing in the Meacham Park/Kirkwood area of St. Louis, MO.  The objective is to gain a greater understanding of how Blacks experience policing in the suburbs, particularly in the Meacham Park/Kirkwood area.

**PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE USED:**  In an effort to understand the aforementioned relationships and experiences, I will utilize in-depth interviews. This method is particularly well suited to eliciting the stories of Black adults, whose experiences are often ignored and/or lost in the larger social debate over citizen-police relations.

Interviews will be conducted individually and privately.  The identities of each respondent and all others, especially police officers, inadvertently mentioned will be kept confidential.  Consequently, pseudonyms will be used and I will ask that you avoid using 'real' names as much as possible while taping.  Interviews will then be transcribed with the use of Nudist software.

**ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES OR TREATMENTS, IF ANY, THAT MIGHT BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO SUBJECT:**  N/A

**LENGTH OF STUDY:**  Interviews will occur one time per interviewee.

**RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS ANTICIPATED:**  N/A

**BENEFITS ANTICIPATED:**
Previous studies suggest a serious correlation between race, place and police.  As this is the case, the idea here is to provide in-depth information into the often complicated and tense experiences and relationships between Black citizens and the police.  Again, while such experiences have been accounted for in urban settings, this project affords

an opportunity to extend previous findings into a predominately white middle class suburb. In the end, the hope is that such information will provide additional resources towards understanding and ultimately improving minority relations, more specifically Black relations, with the police in the Meacham Park/Kirkwood area, in the St. Louis Metropolitan areas, and within society-at-large.

**EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY:** All interview materials and signed consent forms will be held separately. Interview tapes will be coded with NUDIST Software and kept in a locked file cabinet. Consent forms will be held for three years and then destroyed. Tapes will be destroyed after transcription.

**IS COMPENSATION OR MEDICAL TREATMENT AVAILABLE IF INJURY OCCURS:** N/A

**PARENTAL APPROVAL FOR MINORS:** Interviewees are all adults.

**TERMS OF PARTICIPATION:** (Include the following statements or one minimally modified) **I understand this project is research, and that my participation is completely voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled.**

**I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.**

**For additional questions or concerns, I may contact:**

> Dr. Dana Britton, **Principal Investigator**
> Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work
> 213 Waters Hall
> brittn@ksu.edu
> 785-532-4968
>
> -or-
>
> Andrea S. Boyles, **Co-Investigator**
> Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work
> drea2dst@ksu.edu
> Cell (573) 230-0180
> Home (573) 415-5846

Andrea S. Boyles,
(Remember that it is a requirement for the P.I. to maintain a signed and dated copy of the same consent form signed and kept by the participant

**Participant Name:** _____

Participant Signature: _____  **Date:** _____

**Witness to Signature: (project staff)**

_____  **Date:** _____

**TERMS OF PARTICIPATION: (**Include the following statements or one minimally modified)   **I understand this project is research, and that my participation is completely voluntary.  I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled.**

**I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.**

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> Andrea S. Boyles, **Co-Investigator**
> Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work
> drea2dst@ksu.edu
> Cell (573) 230-0180
> Home (573) 415-5846

(Remember that it is a requirement for the P.I. to maintain a signed and dated copy of the same consent form signed and kept by the participant)

**Participant Name:** _____

Participant Signature: _____   **Date:** _____

**Witness to Signature: (project staff)**

_____   **Date:** _____

# Appendix B - Interview Guide for Meacham Park (MP)

## BACKGROUND

1. Can you start by telling me a little bit about yourself?

> How old are you?

> Are you married?

> Do you have any children?

>> **If yes:** How many? How old are they? Male/female? Do they live with you?

>> Do you currently work?

>> **If yes:** What kind of work do you do? Do you work in Meacham Park/Kirkwood?

>> **If no:** Are you trying to find work now? Can you tell me about the last job you had?

## MEACHAM PARK NEIGHBORHOOD

2. How long have you lived in your present home?

> Do you rent or own your home?

3. And how long have you lived in Meacham Park?

4. Can you tell me a bit about Meacham Park? How would you describe it to someone who doesn't know much about it?

> What are the things that you like about living in Meacham Park?

> Are there things that you dislike about it?

**Question 5 is for individuals who have lived in MP since 1990**

**For those who have lived in MP for 15-19 years, go to Question 6**
**For those who have lived in MP for less than 15 years go to Question 8**

5.  You were living here when Meacham Park became part of Kirkwood, is that right?  Can you tell me about that?

> Was it something you supported at the time?  (Why/why not?)

> Have your views changed over time?  (How so/why not?)

> How do you think becoming part of Kirkwood has affected Meacham Park and its residents?

> Do you think there are ways that it's been beneficial?  (How so/why not?)

> Do you think there are ways that it's been harmful?  (How so/why not?)

6.  You were living in Meacham Park when part of the community was taken over to create the Kirkwood Commons, is that right?  Can you tell me about that?

> What did you think of those changes at the time?

> And have your views changed since then?  (How so/why not?)

> How do you think the commercial development has affected Meacham Park and its residents?

> Do you think there are ways that it's been beneficial?  (How so/why not?)

> Do you think there are ways that it's been harmful?  (How so/why not?)

7.  The commercial development was meant to bring a lot of funds back into the residential areas of Meacham Park, for improvements to homes and the community.  Do you feel like that's happened?  (How so/why not?)

> What changes have you seen take place?  (Anything else?)

> Are there things you wanted to see change that haven't – or haven't to your satisfaction? (Anything else?)

> Are there things that changed that you wish hadn't changed?  (Anything else?)

8.  What would you identify as the biggest problems or largest challenges faced by the Meacham Park community now?  (Anything else?)

>How do community members deal with these challenges?

9.  Have you ever worked with individuals or local groups to solve a community problem?

>**If yes:**  Can you tell me about it?

>>***Probes*:**    -the nature of the problem
>>-the type of group involved
>>-what strategies they employed to address it
>>-how successful the interviewee thinks they were in doing so

10.  Are there local groups or associations in Meacham Park devoted to strengthening the community?

>**If yes:**  Can you tell me a bit about them?  (Group's mission?)  Any others?

>>Do you belong to any of these groups?

>**If yes:**  Can you tell me a bit about your involvement?  (Why involved?  Level/length of involvement?)

>**If no:**  Are there any reasons why you haven't been involved? (Anything else?)

11.  Have you ever volunteered or participated in any community service or charity work in Meacham Park or Kirkwood?

>**If yes:**  Please tell me a bit about it.

12.  Aside from the police, what has been your experience with local government in Kirkwood?

>How responsive do you think they are to the needs of Meacham Park residents?  How so?

>Can you give me any specific examples? (*Probe for details*)  Any other examples you can think of?

13.  Have you had any specific interactions with local government officials or agencies in Kirkwood?  Can you tell me about those?

>How do you feel you were treated?
>Did they address your concerns?  (*Probe for details*)

## CRIME AND SECURITY

*Now I have a few questions about crime and safety in Meacham Park.*

14.  Do you usually feel safe in your neighborhood?  Why/why not?

>    Are there places where you feel more or less safe?  How so?

15.  What kinds of crime problems does Meacham Park face? (Anything else?)

>    How serious do you think these problems are for the community?

>    How do Meacham Park residents deal with crime problems in the community?

>    Do you think these strategies are effective?  How so/why not?

>    What do you think should be done to help address crime in Meacham Park? (Anything else?)


## EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE POLICE

16.  How well do you think the police are dealing with crime problems in Meacham Park?

>    What kinds of things to they do to address crime in Meacham Park?

>    Do you think these strategies are effective?  How so/why not?

>    Are there things you think they should be doing that they're not?  (Anything else?)

17.  How often do you see police officers in your neighborhood?

>    What are they usually doing when you see them?

>>    ***Probes:***    Are they in their vehicles, on bicycles, on foot?
>>    Are they interacting with residents?  How so?

18.  Since you've been living in Meacham Park, have you ever called the police for help or reported a crime?

>    **If yes:**  Can you tell me about what happened?

>    Were you satisfied with their response?  Why/why not?

19.  Has anything ever happened in your neighborhood where you could have called the police but decided not to?

    **If yes:**  Why did you decide not to call the police?

20.  How likely do you think it is that other residents will call the police when a crime occurs?

    Why do you think that's the case?

    If residents are unlikely to call the police:  How do people deal with crime when they don't call the police?

21.  Has a police officer in your neighborhood ever been helpful or friendly towards you?

    **If yes:**  Can you tell me about what happened?  (*probe for details; attempt to determine race/gender of officer*)

22.  In general, how would you describe the relationship between Meacham Park residents and the police?

    Do you think it's different for older versus younger residents?  Women versus men?

    How do you think most people in Meacham Park view the police?

    Why do you think that's the case?

    Do you think the relationship between the police and Meacham Park residents has changed over time?  How so?

23.  How do you think the relationship between the police and people in Meacham Park compares to the relationship between the police and people in Kirkwood?

    Why do you think that's the case?

    Do you think the race of the officers makes a difference?  How so/why not?

    Do you think the gender of the officers makes a difference?  How so/why not?

24.  Have you ever talked with other people in your neighborhood about the police?

    **If yes:**  What kinds of things have you talked about?

25.  What about with young people in Meacham Park – have you ever talked with them about the police?

    **If yes:**  Who have you talked to?

What kinds of things have you talked about?  Why?

26.  When you were a teenager, did your parents or other adults talk to you about how to deal with the police?

**If yes:**  What did they tell you?

*Now I have a few specific questions about experiences with the police.*

27.  Have you ever seen a group of residents gather when an officer stops a resident on the street?

**If yes:**  What happened?

*Probes:*        Did any bystanders attempt to intervene?  What did they do?
                 How did the encounter end?

28.  Have you ever been stopped by the police in Meacham Park?

**If yes:**  How many times?

Can you tell me about what happened? (*if multiple times, ask questions about two most recent incidents*)

*Probes:*        When did it happen?
                 Where were you?
                 Who else was there?
                 How did other people respond?
                 How did the incident end?

29.  Have you ever been stopped by the police in other parts of Kirkwood?

**If yes:**  How many times?

Can you tell me about what happened? (*if multiple times, ask questions about two most recent incidents*)

*Probes:*        When did it happen?
                 Where were you?
                 Who else was there?
                 How did other people respond?
                 How did the incident end?

Do you think there was a difference in why you were stopped or how you were treated in Meacham Park versus other parts of Kirkwood?  How so?

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30.  Have you ever been mistreated by the police in any way?

    **If yes:**  How many times?

    Can you tell me more about that? (*if multiple times, ask questions about two most recent incidents*)

        *Probes:*      When did it happen?
                          Where were you?
                          Who else was there?
                          How did other people respond?
                          How did the incident end?

31.  Has anyone you know ever been mistreated by the police in any way?

    **If yes:**  How many times?

    Can you tell me more about that? (*if multiple times, ask questions about two most recent incidents*)

        *Probes:*      Who did it happen to?
                          When did it happen?
                          Where were you?
                          Who else was there?
                          How did other people respond?
                          How did the incident end?
                          Were you there when it happened?

    **If yes:**  How did you react?

    **If no:**  How did you hear about it?


## POLICE MISCONDUCT

*Now I have a few specific questions about police harassment and misconduct.*

32.  In some places, the police have been accused of stopping people on the street without a good reason for doing so.  Is that something you think is a problem in Meacham Park?

    **If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?

    Have you witnessed them doing that?  Why do you think it was without a good reason?

Has it happened to you?  (**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?)

33.  In some places, the police have been accused of treating people in a disrespectful manner.  Is that something you think is a problem in Meacham Park?

**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?

Have you witnessed them doing that?  (**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?)

Has it happened to you?  (**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?)

34.  In some places, the police have been accused of using excessive force against citizens.  Is this something you think is a problem in Meacham Park?

**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?

Have you witnessed them doing that?  (If yes:  Can you tell me more about that?)

Has it happened to you?  (If yes:  Can you tell me more about that?)

35.  In some places, the police have been accused of engaging in corrupt practices like accepting bribes, stealing money, drugs or other things from residents, or letting suspects go in exchange for sex or for something else of value.  Is this something you think is a problem in Meacham Park?

**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?

Have you witnessed them doing that?  (**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?)

Has it happened to you?  (**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?)

36.  Have you ever seen or heard about the police in Meacham Park engaging in any other kinds of misconduct?

**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?

Have you witnessed them doing that?  (**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?)

Has it happened to you?  (**If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?)

37.  I know there have been several highly publicized cases involving Meacham Park residents and the Kirkwood police and city government.  Do you mind talking about them a little bit?

**If yes:**  What are your thoughts about the Kevin Johnson case?

*Probes:*       Do you know Kevin or his family?

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Did you know Sergeant McEntee?

Were you around when the incident took place?

Do you think Mr. Johnson received a fair trial? Why/why not?

What are your thoughts about what happened with "Cookie" Thornton?

*Probes:* Did you know Mr. Thornton?

Were you around when the incident took place?

What do you think caused it?

Do you think these incidents have affected the relationship between Meacham Park residents and people living in other parts of Kirkwood? How so?

What about between Meacham Park residents and the police? How so?

## POLICE REVIEW AND REFORM

*My last set of questions is about police policies and reform.*

38. Have you ever felt like you had a reason to file a complaint against a police officer?

**If yes:** Can you tell me more about that? What happened?

Did you file the complaint?

**If yes:** How did you go about filing the complaint? (Where? With whom? What did you do?)

Was the incident resolved to your satisfaction? What happened?

**If no:** Why did you decide not to file the complaint?

**If no:** Do you think you would file a complaint if you had reason to? Why/why not?

39. Do you know how the Kirkwood Police Department handles complaints against the police?

**If yes:** What do they do?

Do you think their approach is effective? Why/why not?

Do you think it can be improved? How so?

40. Who do you think should be responsible for handling or investigating complaints against police officers? Why?

41.  Have you ever attended a community policing meeting?

> **If yes:**  Can you tell me more about that?

>> ***Probes:***      How often do you attend?
>> What takes place?
>> Do you think these meetings are effective?

42.  What kinds of changes would you like to see in policing in Meacham Park?  (Anything else?)

> What about in Kirkwood generally?

43.  What do you know and how do you feel about the Mediation Agreement?  Do you think the Mediation Agreement will bring about change between Meacham Park and the City of Kirkwood?   (If so, in what way(s)?  If not, why not?)

44.  Are there other things you would like to see changed in the relationship between Meacham Park and the city of Kirkwood? (Why?  Anything else?)

45.  Is there anything else you'd like to share, anything I forgot to ask you about, or anything you think people need to know about the experiences of people in Meacham Park?


Thank you.

# Appendix C - The City of Kirkwood Mediation Agreement

# Mediation
# Kirkwood, Missouri
# January 22, 2010
# The Community Mediation Team

**MEDIATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN**
**THE CITY TEAM OF KIRKWOOD**
**AND**
**THE COMMUNITY TEAM OF KIRKWOOD**

This Mediation Agreement (Agreement) is executed on this 21st day of January, 2010, by and between The City Team of Kirkwood, Missouri represented by Kirkwood City Administration and designated elected officials (hereinafter referred to as "City Team"), and The Community Team of Kirkwood, Missouri, on behalf of the Kirkwood community (hereinafter referred to as "Community Team").

This Agreement is consistent with the United States Department of Justice, Community Relations Service (CRS) congressional mandate as detailed in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. §2000g). CRS provides assistance to communities and persons therein in resolving disputes, disagreements or difficulties related to conflicts and tensions based on race, color and national origin.

CRS provided its assistance to the Kirkwood community in the aftermath of the shooting incident that occurred on February 7th, 2008. Due to the incident, a number of Kirkwood community meetings and dialogues were held and after CRS offered their services, the City Council and community members of Kirkwood invited CRS to meet with them for assistance. It was determined that CRS would assist in resolving perceived racial issues in the community, including but not limited to the Meacham Park resident complaints and grievances with the City of Kirkwood.

In a series of meetings with CRS, a formal resolution process of mediation was decided on and CRS, along with the City and community, requested the resources of Washington University School of Law to aid in the process.

Prior to any meetings between the City and Community Teams, a comprehensive process first took place to carefully choose team members to represent the City Administration and the community using specific criteria and qualifications. After a lengthy selection process, methods, guidelines and suggestions to help direct the mediation process were formed, and for approximately three months beginning December 11, 2008, the Community Team focused and identified the issues to be brought to the joint-committee. The first joint meeting of the City and Community Teams was held on April 21, 2009.

In the first several meetings the respective Teams extensively and comprehensively discussed and prioritized what issues would and should be addressed in this process; and after careful consideration, the Teams began discussing the issues carefully and thoroughly until agreements were reached.

Informational documents regarding this process and its formation may be found as attachments to this Agreement.

WHEREAS, this Agreement is the result of concerns expressed during discussions between representatives of the City and Community Teams including but not limited to the Meacham Park resident complaints and grievances with the City of Kirkwood and residual effects of desegregation and past discriminatory practices;

WHEREAS, this Agreement is the result of many meetings between representatives of the City Team and the Community Team, including the Mayor, Police Chief, clergy, City Council members, the City Chief Administrative Officer and community stakeholders of Meacham Park and Kirkwood;

WHEREAS, the Kirkwood City Council passed Resolution 70-2008 (found herein under Appendix A), formalizing and endorsing this mediation process to "improve community spirit, communication and involvement" and committing City officials and community members to a "team-oriented resolution process";

WHEREAS, the City and Community Teams affirm that this mediation process enabled the parties to come together and express their concerns, share their thoughts and emotions, gain a greater level of trust, break down barriers that existed, and find common ground and reach agreement on issues;

WHEREAS, the parties to this Agreement determined that all decisions reached under this Agreement shall be made by consensus;

WHEREAS, this mediation process involved many joint-committee meetings with the City and Community Teams present and many sub-committee meetings with members of both City and Community Teams present;

WHEREAS, the express intent of the parties to this Agreement is to offer a means for improving and building positive relationships within the Kirkwood community, specifically between the Kirkwood City Administration and Kirkwood citizens with a special emphasis on

the minority community. All parties have voluntarily agreed to participate in this Agreement in the spirit of community reconciliation, requesting the services of CRS and the help of Washington University School of Law and a law school intern;

NOW, therefore the parties agree as follows:

## Issues of Agreement

The following summarizes the consensus and agreement by the parties to undertake specific actions in an effort to help resolve differing racial perceptions and to promote community relations.

**A. Empower the Human Rights Advisory and Awareness Commission with the tools necessary to establish itself as a more active and responsive servant and leader in the community and to increase transparency, efficiency and public confidence in the citizen complaint/request process.**

The objective of the Human Rights Advisory and Awareness Commission of the City of Kirkwood ("the HRC") is to inform, educate, advocate and provide assistance to resolve complaints, and report information and findings regarding discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodation in the Kirkwood community to the City Council.

The HRC is dedicated to opening doors of access, to eliminating discrimination and promoting positive human relations within the community of Kirkwood.

In the past, there were systemic problems that did not enable the HRC to meet the community's expectations that it would serve as an active and responsive public body addressing complaints of discrimination in Kirkwood and educating the community regarding discrimination. More generally, the community felt a need for the City Administration to be more responsive and to provide more information regarding the status and disposition of citizen complaints and requests.

In order to resolve these issues the City Team and Community Team agree to the following:

1. The City Council (hereafter, "The Council") should review the existing ordinances relevant to the goals of this agreement and should make changes to the ordinance consistent with and in order to effectuate the terms of this Agreement as it relates to the HRC.

2. The Council should clearly define the attributes, experience and commitment required for appointment to the HRC. A new HRC citizen application form will be developed. This form will seek more information to help insure that the applicant meets appointment requirements and will make clear the commitment of time and effort required of an HRC member. Areas of ambiguity in the current ordinance should be clarified.

3. The Council should authorize staff to create a new process for placing matters of concern or service requests before the HRC and other areas of city government. This is expected to benefit the entire community on a range of resident issues. The design of the process will be an on-line, automated tracking system which will log and process written and oral communication from citizens; it will document and manage all aspects of the process from the initial entry to work request to final resolution or disposition of the matter; and it will be accessible via the internet 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. A key element in this design will include date and time stamped documentation of issues presented and prompt acknowledgement and follow-up. The system will have city-wide applicability for the handling of requests, suggestions, complaints, questions, or comments and will include a periodic evaluation of this process.

4. The Council should amend the HRC ordinance to provide stronger incentives and requirements for HRC member's attendance at HRC meetings. The purpose of such an amendment is to provide guidance regarding attendance requirements and consequences of non-attendance sufficient to eliminate the need for the Council to intervene, and to make clear the need for the HRC and its members to demonstrate and ensure its on-going availability to and interest in serving the community.

5. The Council should amend the HRC ordinance to require the HRC to establish a fixed day, time and location for the HRC public meeting to be held on a monthly basis. The City Clerk will be directed to post such notice as is posted for all other public meetings at City Hall and on the City's website.

6. The Council should allocate a reasonable amount of funds (+/- $3,500 for the first year and $2,000 each subsequent year) for training and support as deemed necessary by the HRC.

7. The Council should amend the HRC ordinance to require that a list of resources be developed and made available to assist citizens needing information regarding conflict resolution or cultural differences. It will be the responsibility of the City's administrative staff and the HRC to maintain and update such resources to keep them expansive and current.

8. The Council should amend the HRC ordinance to require the HRC to conduct an annual symposium to provide education and dialogue on HRC issues. Such symposium will be publicized through multiple means throughout the metropolitan area and guest speakers will be sought.

9. The Council should amend the HRC ordinance to require the HRC to develop a strategic and work plan, to be reevaluated every three (3) years.

10. The Council should amend the HRC ordinance to require the HRC to prepare and publish a written annual report describing the activities of the prior twelve months by December 31 of each year.

11. It is agreed and understood that the HRC will serve as a body to accept comments and concerns of citizens given at HRC meetings. At this point the HRC will not serve as an investigating or mediating body. Such a role would require advanced skills, education and training which volunteer citizens may not be reasonably expected to have and for which the City has no resources to provide. In addition, a well-established legal process at the state level exists to address discrimination complaints.

12. It is agreed and understood that the HRC will not serve as a body to address employee personnel matters. The Council does not have the authority to grant the HRC such powers, and it is unclear whether or not authority could be sought and granted by the State of Missouri; regardless, a well-established legal process already exists to address these issues.

13. It is agreed and understood that the HRC will not serve as a review or investigatory body regarding Kirkwood R-7 issues or matters of private businesses. The Council does not have the authority to grant the HRC such powers and it is important to preserve, support and refer to the already-established dispute and grievance processes within the

School District and available to the Kirkwood business and consumer community through the Better Business Bureau and community mediation organizations. The HRC is encouraged to support staff, students and parents of Kirkwood School District R-7 in their efforts to increase understanding among racially and culturally diverse groups.

Information regarding community dispute resolution resources will be provided to concerned citizens.

14. It is agreed and understood that the HRC shall serve for the purpose of assuring that the parties to this process have made every attempt in carrying out this Agreement. The HRC shall continue to review the progress and implementation of the terms of this Agreement every year for a period of three (3) years from the date of execution. The HRC shall also prepare and publish a written annual report from the date of execution describing the activities and progress of this Agreement and shall refer to a four-person advisory committee as needed, as referenced below.

15. The timeline projections for implementation of these specified actions relating to the HRC are:

HRC Sub-Committee Timeframe Projections from the Date of Execution

| Priority Issue | Who | Estimated Time * |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Commission Member Profile | I.Yuan | 3 weeks |
| 2. Create application form | M. Brown | 1 week |
| 3. Funding for resolution software | City Council | 4 weeks |
| 4. Install software and train | IT Dept. | 8-12 weeks |
| 5. Draft new ordinance including the following** | M. Brown | 8 weeks |

       a.) attendance
       b.) meeting frequency
       c.) training funds
       d.) resident resources
       e.) symposium
       f.) strategic plan
       g.) annual reports
       h.) reviewing the progress of this Agreement

| Priority Issue | Who | Estimated Time * |
|---|---|---|
| 6. Legal and Council review City | Attorney/City Council | 6 weeks |
| 7. Pass ordinance | City Council | 4 weeks |

* - Estimate time based on Community/City committee formalizing recommendation.
* - Time assignment is a best case scenario for each issue.
* - Some implementation steps can/will run concurrently.
** - Ordinance draft will include the following provisions.

## B. Create, expand and/or focus on specific Kirkwood Police programs and joint programs administered by the Kirkwood Police and specified community members.

The City and Community Teams, pursuant to this Mediation Agreement, provided analysis and recommendations concerning the relationship between the Kirkwood Police Department and its citizens with a special emphasis on the minority community.

The City and Community Teams believe that the community has felt a need to promote a more positive relationship between the Kirkwood Police Department and Kirkwood residents, and that the community has perceived such relationship as necessary in order to minimize conflict and encourage communication.

In an effort to build this relationship and to further the positive practices and policies of the Kirkwood Police Department in providing quality services in a non-discriminatory fashion, the Police Department has agreed to the following creation, expansion and/or focus on specific programs to be administrated by the Police Department and specified community members under the supervision of the Chief of Police:

CURRENT PROGRAM

1. Increase efforts to recruit minorities for the Police Explorer Program, a program that will receive greater emphasis. This effort will begin January 2010.

EXPANDED PROGRAM

2. Continue the Friday Hot Dog Lunches in the Park in the summer in Meacham for children up to 18 years. This will be expanded to other neighborhoods and other youths in the Kirkwood area beginning 2010. This has been a very popular program started in the summer of 2009 and is an annual program that begins at the end of the regular school year.

EXPANDED PROGRAM (MIDDLE SCHOOLS)

3. Work with the Kirkwood School Resource Officers and school principals to help those youths that are in trouble with the police. The Kirkwood Police Department along with the Kirkwood School District have developed this program starting with an officer at the High School and this year an officer is assigned to the Middle Schools. The School District and the Police Department have found this positive contact with the students has reduced the youth crime situation at the schools and in the community. The Resource Officer in the Middle Schools is new as of 2009.

NEW PROGRAM

4. Work with the Block Grant Funds, Hope Unlimited, Sprog, and the Police Chaplains to find jobs for youth of school age. The effort will be for the Police Department through the Chaplains to coordinate these efforts. The Police Department along with Chaplains in the Summer of 2009 provided five (5) paid internships for high school students. This program is new as of 2009. Efforts will be made to aid the First Baptist of Meacham Church's program to help youths over 18 years attend college or secure jobs. The program will be fully developed and functioning on June 1, 2010 in order to maximize the number of internships in place prior to the end of the school year.

NEW PROGRAM

5. Work with volunteers to develop jobs for minority youth and other youth expelled from school. In partnership with the School Resource Officers and the Kirkwood School District, these students will be given community service projects to help prevent these students from being unproductive during their period of expulsion. The planning and development of this particular program will be labor-intensive. Although the program will be a work in progress, it will be implemented by September 1, 2010.

NEW PROGRAM

6. The creation of a local court which will attempt to provide a partnership with area youth in the administration of justice by their peers. It will be a voluntary program and it is anticipated that it will be sanctioned by the Family Court but administered by the Kirkwood Police Department under the Chief of Police. This program will be available for High School youths. This program will be the most ambitious of the programs noted and will require considerable coordination with other agencies in the area. The program

is expected to be in place by January 1, 2011.

CURRENT PROGRAM

7. Emphasize the "Ride Along Program" to improve relationships with police. This program would be available to youth as well as adults and would be advertised on the web site and through the Block Captain Program, the Kirkwood School Resource Officers and the Police Chaplains. Although this program already exists, a new initiative will be developed to attract more participation. This new initiative will begin January 2010.

The Kirkwood Police also agree to increase communications with citizens in order to eliminate negative perceptions and encourage trust, respect, cooperation, partnership and collaboration between the Police and the community. In order to work toward these goals the Police agree to:

EXPANDED PROGRAM

1. Place more emphasis on the Police Chaplain Program as an important element in reaching citizens. The Chaplain Program is a relatively new initiative begun by the Police Chief in order to partner with local churches and their leaders in the work of the Police Department and to cooperate with them in addressing local needs. The Police Chaplain Program has new goals and intends to bring together churches throughout the community in an effort to create partnerships touching virtually every segment of the community. Although the program has been in place for a number of months, the Chaplains will be a valuable resource in many of the programs noted.

CURRENT PROGRAM

2. More walking patrols when possible. Over 1000 of these walking patrols were performed in the Meacham neighborhood last year.

NEW PROGRAM

3. Participate in the City's automated citizen complaint program. It is estimated that the system will be available in 2010.

NEW PROGRAM

4. Make pamphlets available to instruct citizens how to file a complaint against the police. The pamphlet will be available after April 1, 2010.

CURRENT PROGRAM

5. Continue efforts with Block Captains and the Night Out Events. In these efforts, the Police will work to increase the number of Block Captains throughout the City and

provide Block Captains with more training. The Night Out Program increased to 65 participating neighborhoods in 2009, an increase of 30%. Over 1000 people were involved.

CURRENT PROGRAM

6. Continue the Police Pancake Supper in February. Over 400 people attend each year.

CURRENT PROGRAM

7. Provide speakers for schools and organizations that want to learn more about the Police Department and its work. Continue school tours of the Department. This will be coordinated by the Community Service Officer.

The Police Department will also continue its efforts to be non-discriminatory by:

EXPANDED PROGRAM

1. Increasing the weight of a category on Department evaluations regarding discriminatory behavior, reviewed twice a year. Along with the Department's continued effort to emphasize discriminatory issues, the Department commits to increase the weight on evaluations regarding discriminatory behavior as of January 2010 (the next round of Department evaluations).

NEW PROGRAM

2. Requiring supervisors to review Department policies with every employee and require each employee to sign off on the Department policy regarding accepted practices to be used in their relationship with community citizens. This program will begin immediately with new employees and will take effect January 2010 for existing employees.

CURRENT PROGRAM
3. Participating and working with citizens on diversity issues when asked.

CURRENT PROGRAM

4. Upholding the Department's commitment to hire qualified personnel without regard to race or gender as required by law.
Further, the Police Department has worked to eliminate crime and drugs from the Kirkwood community and agrees to continue its efforts to provide Kirkwood with safer neighborhoods. In this effort and in order to provide better police presence specifically in the Meacham Park neighborhood, the Police Department agrees to:

CURRENT PROGRAM

1. Utilize two person car patrols whenever possible.

NEW PROGRAM

2. Establish a satellite police office on a trial basis in the Meacham Park Neighborhood. The creation of the office will provide higher visibility of law enforcement in the area. While the office will not be staffed, it will provide a safe location to meet with officers regarding neighborhood concerns. It is anticipated that the satellite office will be established by March 31, 2010.

EXPANDED PROGRAM

3. Work to establish more Block Captains for better street awareness and provide additional training on a number of issues, including diversity. This is a program led by the Community Service Officer and is a voluntary program funded through the Police Department. It does not require a fee from the participants. The additional emphasis on this program will begin February 1, 2010.

The implementation of the above-stated Kirkwood Police programs and joint programs administered by the Kirkwood Police and specified community members are currently in progress.

**C. Address the perceptions and misconceptions of the TIF process.**

In the past, a Meacham Park Tax Increment Financing Program ("TIF") was established to help with community development in Meacham Park, and TIF is no longer in operation and cannot serve as an avenue for neighborhood improvement.

What is TIF and how was it created?

TIF is an economic tool created by the State of Missouri for the purpose of generating funds to make a development possible. The funds generated by the TIF are used by the developer to make the project economically viable. In this case, the developer was DESCO. The TIF funds can be used for private or public development within the TIF area. In the case of Meacham Park, the funds were used for home improvements, parks and street improvements. The area where the money was generated (Kirkwood Commons) became the engine that helped make such improvements possible.

The process of creating the TIF is the development of a plan. A nine-member TIF Commission was created and selected by the City Council and charged with making a recommendation on whether a TIF district was needed. The Commission was required to hold a number of public hearings and meetings before making a recommendation to the City Council. To create the TIF, the Commission and the City Council must find that "but for", the TIF development, neighborhood improvements could not take place.

Why was TIF proposed in the first place?

The City proposed the TIF concept as a way to reestablish a neighborhood that needed help by improving housing, streets and parks. The hope was for TIF to help with neighborhood stability and quality of life. TIF funds available for private purposes could only be used for certain projects to benefit residents, such as home improvements.

Why was TIF addressed in the mediation process and what agreement was reached?

The City and Community Teams engaged in a series of discussions to review the outstanding TIF issues concerning the limited funds used for home improvements in Meacham Park. Specifically, it was brought to the attention of the Teams that some homeowners who participated in TIF had issues with the quality of the workmanship and the number of times they had to request that work be re-done.

The concerns of twelve homeowners who had previously submitted complaints were reviewed as well as all related documents. To insure that due diligence was given to the process, the Teams also met with Beyond Housing at which time the concerns were again reviewed and discussed.

After many meetings and discussions, the City and Community Teams determined that TIF is not an avenue to continue to develop the community. All funds for the TIF Program have been expended with the Program ending in 2005 and the City cannot legally expend non-TIF funds (governmental funds) on private property for any reason. Participants in the TIF Program were also advised at the outset that on completion of the Program, homeowners would be responsible for repairs, upkeep and general maintenance of their property. Further, the extensive record showed that Beyond Housing had met its legal contractual obligations and, in doing so, had or at least tried to address the concerns of these residents.

The Teams agree that there is no viable way to go backwards and that the time has come for a new future-directed approach to work toward insuring the preservation and viability of the community's neighborhoods. Such an approach should take place outside the mediation process and be shaped in a partnership with the affected residents.

In an effort to now move toward a new future and strengthen specifically the Meacham Park neighborhood, the City and Community Teams agree to a process to envision a new sense of identity, growth and involvement for the residents.

Members of the City and Community Team commit to engage in a series of focus groups with Meacham Park residents in order to identify the current cultural composition of Meacham Park, what issues are important to the community and what issues must be addressed to effect change for the future.

With this information, additional steps will be taken by interested Meacham Park residents and others to bring about the change desired by the Meacham Park community. Participating City and Community members commit to engage in this effort outside and beyond this mediation process.

The implementation of this process is currently in progress.


## Voluntary Agreement and Ethics Disclaimer

This Agreement is the result of voluntary mediation between the parties and is not a result of duress, coercion, or undue influence. Nothing in this Agreement should be taken as an admission of wrongdoing by any party and the terms and conditions contained herein are noncontractual and create no independent contractual obligation and/or duties upon any of the parties hereto. It being distinctly understood and agreed that no party to this Agreement shall institute or prosecute any judicial or administrative proceedings of any kind or nature to enforce any of the terms and conditions herein.

## Terms of Agreement

All of the aforementioned tenets of this Agreement shall be reviewed for progress after six (6) months from the date of execution. The HRC shall serve for the purpose of assuring that the parties to this process have made every attempt in carrying out this Agreement. The HRC shall continue to review the progress and implementation of the terms of this Agreement every year for a period of three (3) years from the date of execution. The HRC shall prepare and publish a written annual report from the date of execution describing the activities and progress of this Agreement and shall refer to a four-person advisory committee as needed.

## Advisory Committee and Dispute Resolution Process

A four-person Advisory Committee consisting of Arthur McDonnell and Michael Brown from the City Team and David Bennett and Cynthia Isaac from the Community Team is established. If the designated representative is unwilling or unable to serve as the City Team representative, then the City Team shall select a new City Team Advisory Committee member. If the designated representative is unwilling or unable to serve as the Community Team representative, then the Community Team shall select a new Community Team Advisory Committee member. The Advisory Committee shall serve as a resource as needed to review the goals and outcomes of this Agreement, and may review the HRC Annual Reports and other related projects to this Agreement. The Advisory Committee and signing members of this Agreement may convene at any time and choose to modify, amend or dissolve the Agreement. The Agreement, however, shall not be modified, amended or dissolved in any respect except by a written instrument executed by all signing members to this Agreement. The Advisory Committee shall remain in existence for three (3) years unless otherwise dissolved or extended by the respective Teams.

It is understood that the parties of this Agreement agree to work in earnest and convene

themselves, if necessary, in order to uphold the tenets of the Agreement as described herein.

The U.S. Department of Justice CRS will also serve as a resource, as needed, during the implementation of this Agreement.

If at any point the Advisory Committee or the signing members determine by consensus that the tenets of this Agreement are not being achieved, the non-complying entity shall be requested to prepare and publish a written report describing how it has made every attempt to implement the goals of this Agreement and why the entity is unable to satisfactorily implement the recommendation and goals articulated in this Agreement.

**Confidentiality**

Although the terms of this Agreement and the Agreement itself are anticipated to become public record, the parties (including all signing members and mediators) are reminded and agree that any oral or written statements (including minutes, draft proposals and commentary) made by such parties and/or any third parties who served as resources during this process, in the course of any discussions or preparation of such discussions relating to this process and this Agreement shall remain confidential.

**Party and Third Party Rights**

Nothing in this Agreement is intended to create, nor shall anything in it be construed as creating any rights by any third party entity or person that would not exist independently of this Agreement.

**Consummation and Ratification**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed and delivered this Agreement as of this 21st day of January, 2010 and the signatories hereto personally represent that this Agreement is executed pursuant to legal authorization by the parties on behalf of which they are signing:

CITY TEAM OF KIRKWOOD                    COMMUNITY TEAM OF KIRKWOOD
By:

_____         _____
Arthur J. McDonnell                      David Bennett

_____         _____
Iggy Yuan                                Lois Bliss

_____         _____
Michael G. Brown                         Vernon Gundermann

_____         _____
Georgia Ragland                          Ronald Hodges

_____         _____
Jack Plummer                             Charles Howard

                                         _____
                                         Cynthia Isaac

January 21, 2010                                        January 21, 2010
Date                                                    Date

**Witnessed By:**

_____

**William Whitcomb**
**U.S. Department of Justice,**
**Community Relations Service**

**January 21, 2010**
**Date**