

The Detroit Geographical Expedition and Institute

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Special Acknowledgement for the publication of this issue of Field Notes are extended to the Geography Department of the University of Western Ontario, under the Chairmanship of Victor Sim. A grant of three hundred dollars was obtained through the Department for this publication. The Department also housed the cartographic effort, several explorers from Detroit and opened its private homes and kitchens to the explorers. Most appreciated is the talented labor contributed by Donald Janelle, Barbara Janelle, Ruth Ranger, C. Langman, T. Hinckley, K. Lowndes, R. Maher, T. Ward, B. Sangal, J. Overton, K. Storey, H. Mills, A. Memon and Marg Chambers.

". . . if you went down 12th Street or down Mack, or any such place, and you saw that street, what would we be able to read in that landscape that you couldn't?"

Anonymous

Field Notes is a series of discussion papers, the official publication of the Detroit Geographical Expedition and Institute. Field Notes is published occasionally as research is completed. Any persons desiring to join the Society for Human Exploration (the DGEI's parent body) and receive thereby Field Notes on an annual basis should channel such requests to:

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Annual membership dues are \$5.00 post paid. Comments are welcome.

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Preface

The new significance of the word 'relate' has been blasted into our vocabulary from bullhorns and newspapers, from the incarcerated and the exiled. Our methods of research and reporting may appear unorthodox to some geographers, but these pages exhibit our quest to relate. If we must assign a term to our work, we may call it 'revolutionary'. For anything to be relevant to Black people, it must be revolutionary. Historically, any change brought about in this nation was brought about through revolution. Education is a means. We must relate it to our people. They must no longer train our people for mere tools in this society. We must make geography relevant. We do make geography Black.

Yvonne S. Colvard

Section I - Administrative Reports

Report to the Council of the American Association of Geographers

The ad hoc committee on
relations with the Detroit
Geographical Expedition and
Institute

The committee met in Detroit on November 27, 1970 during the National Council of Geographic Educators meetings. It has based its recommendations to the Council on the following summary, which is our understanding of the activities of the DGEI thus far.

COMMITTEE FINDINGS

In 1968, under the guidance of Bill Bunge, a group of ghetto residents began to explore and map the geography of the city. They combined geographic concepts and methods with personal hypotheses and definitions of problems. The result was a series of innovative studies of health hazards, income flows, traffic flows, death rates, and other variables of concern to the students. Faculty from the University of Michigan geography department participated; college credit was arranged.

The initial efforts led to a need for cartographic instruction so that the maps from the first studies could be refined for publication. Hence, a second credit course was organized, in cartography, through Michigan State University. Geographers from other institutions also donated instructional time at this stage.

Professional geographers who have contributed substantial time and effort to the DGEI, in addition to Bill Bunge, include John Nystuen, Ron Horvath, Gerald Karaska and Allen Philbrick. Others have been involved, also.

Since the summer of 1969, the academic ties have been with Michigan State. Course offerings and faculty have increased in both number and variety to cover a wide range of basic skills and subject matter. Some senior faculty have volunteered their time, and some of the instruction has been provided by paid graduate assistants. The Michigan State extension division has handled accreditation and related administration; registration at Detroit has been largely the responsibility of the DGEI; Wayne State has provided the classrooms. Thus, the educational enterprise appears to have become a kind of experimental community college, in which geography is only one component.

Meanwhile, DGEI members, with guidance from professional geographers, produced a study of the school redistricting problem in Detroit. The findings and recommendations of this study appear to have had intellectual and political impact, and it is an important geographic work for (1) its substance, (2) its method, and (3) its use as an instrument to train citizens to research their community problems and to use the research findings to stimulate and guide community action. The study was published as Number 2 in the Field Notes series of DGEI. It is anticipated that future issues will expand upon the topics covered in the early studies - health hazards, income flows and mortality, for example.

The committee feels that the research and field work of the DGEI is important for both geography and our society in two ways. (1) It is an instance in which geography students have been drawn from outside the formal school or college population and taught experimentally, with materials structured entirely empirically to meet immediate needs of the students and their community. (2) It is a use of the geographic method, with professional geographic assistance, by a citizen action group. In almost all previous cases, work of this kind has been done for public or private corporate agencies. The committee agreed that this may represent a direction in which much more effort will move in the future, and it is useful that this experience be documented.

It should be noted that the community college component has grown much bigger than geography, although it is an interesting spin-off from the initial DGEI work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) A grant should be made from the AAG General Research Fund to the Detroit Geographical Expedition and Institute.
 - a) The grant should be the maximum possible under constraints imposed by both Council action at San Francisco and the balance actually in the GRF account.
 - b) This would be a one-time grant, consistent with the normal use of the fund.
- (2) The grant should be made without any specific restraints being placed upon its use, in accord with custom for grants of this type. However, the committee asks that it be informed of the use of the funds and hopes that it will be possible for the DGEI to publish more about the method and substance of its work along the following lines:
 - a) publication of its early, pioneering geographical studies and maps;

b) a review and evaluation of the relevance, the impact, and the fruits of its method and "citizen action" concepts, and a look ahead at the practical and feasible continuing role of such studies.

(3) The grant should in no way constitute AAG endorsement of DGEI actions in the public or political or any other areas. It is an expression of interest in the wider and faster diffusion of DGEI substantive geographical work.

Director's Annual Report

Basically, the "Report to the Council of the American Association of Geographers" was a good report but there were a few invalid points. One was that the program was under the guidance of William Bunge and another was that a group of ghetto residents were exploring the geography of the city.

The Expedition is split into two sections; one is educational and one is research. Under the research part, Dr. Bunge is in charge until the time when we have students who are to a point where they can take over the research side, which means the research is not under Dr. Bunge's guidance. He is working hand in hand with the community to exchange skills, some of which Dr. Bunge does not have and others of which the people in the community do not have.

The second objection is that we do not like being referred to as a "ghetto resident." It is patronizing, the "slogan of the day." It is almost like comic relief. You expect to see some "ghetto resident" pop up from some place - raggedy, ignorant, fumbling, drooling at the mouth, this poor underprivileged kid, when it is not necessarily so. We have proved that these "ghetto residents" can take college credit courses and do community research and they do not fit at all the definition of a "ghetto resident" as used in the country. They are the Black people of Detroit. I think everyone would prefer to be known as that, just who they are, the Black people of Detroit, without any social connotations to it at all.

A lot of support for the Expedition came out of the AAG. We got a thousand dollars for research which we are using to pay students and community people who are working on the project because one of the basic points of the Expedition is that the people are paid for the labor that they do. We are not going out to hire people to do this kind of work. Basically, what happens is that you get people around who have lived and experienced these things. The people who are there are the people who want to work or they would not hang around. You find that if you talk to these people, they have the experience. So basically, the little money that we do get we use for support of students. It would be virtually impossible for us to have been able to put out this report without the support of the AAG. In terms of finances, you have to eat. No matter how dedicated, a person must eat.

The AAG is a good example for the students. Just being aware that the AAG is involved with them gives us sanction. We are coming up with things that we feel and that we see, and think are necessary. Geography is a science. The AAG is telling us that we have taken another step. The AAG is not

just saying "this is what is happening to us" but "this is what we are going to do about it" and "this is the method we are going to use." In short, the AAG is saying "All right, go on." It is a good thing.

The Expedition has contributed a great deal to the AAG in terms of real experiences from people who are saying, "we all want to work together to change things," and this is where we are coming from and the AAG is listening. It's hard some times, but we'll get it together.

The research part of the Expedition has reached into the community, like the school decentralization plan. One point that was mentioned in Field Notes, Number Two, focused upon gerrymandering: super-majorities and super-minorities. This discussion paper had a lot to do with the black political scene in Detroit. When the school decentralization idea was introduced and we were asked to become involved, it just spread out, not only from Congressmen and State Senator Coleman Young, but people everywhere became concerned. The League of Revolutionary Black Workers and the West Central Organization supported it. What happened was that many community organizations were raving around it: Parents and Students for Community Control (PSCC). I do not think it would be possible for PSCC to be doing what they are doing now if it was not for that report. And the things PSCC have done with the report have been tremendous. They took the report and broke it down into black language, made posters, made signs, set up community meetings and went out disseminating the information all over the community, which was exactly what we wanted.

I think this report on the Geography of the Children of Detroit will have impact on the community, especially the section on traffic "accidents." What we plan to do, and have talked about this in Directors meetings, is that Frank Truesdale will take up any further action in terms of talking to Congressman Conyers, State Senator Coleman Young, going to the Michigan Civil Rights Commission, going into the community, talking to the League, whoever it is - that even is necessary - and he will just tell them what is happening. That is his job. The most important point about research is that the people in the community are going to be involved in making the changes. Whatever research does come out can be related to the community since they are involved in doing it. We do not do silly research. The research accomplished or in progress includes Robert Ward Jr.'s review of Rev. Hubert Locke's book, The Detroit Riots, 1967, and the effort by the Center for Urban Affairs, headed by Dr. Green who sent down a research team last summer. These were Black students from the University working with Black people in the city which

was exactly what we wanted.

On the education side of the Expedition, during the last year, we have run forty-seven classes involving about fifteen hundred students at Michigan State University Extension. We had a program that enabled each student to carry a full load, from twelve to sixteen hours a semester. We tried to offer enough classes so the student could go full time in the program. The program ranged through everything, not just geography. Only three departments, horticulture, agriculture and engineering, did not offer courses. After a year of extension work with good grades, students enter regular campus life as sophomores. Last fall, we had seventeen students enter Michigan State University; eleven went to Wayne State University and two went to the University of Michigan. A variety of other students applied for other universities. At present, we do not have any statistics for them, however; these will come out in the next Field Notes because we are going to track everybody down and find out where they went.

I have been with the program the longest. I am a senior in Honors College with a 3.75 grade point, the top five percent of students at Michigan State University. Next fall, I have an appointment as a teaching assistant in Social Psychology. The way things appear now, I am going for a doctorate in community research.

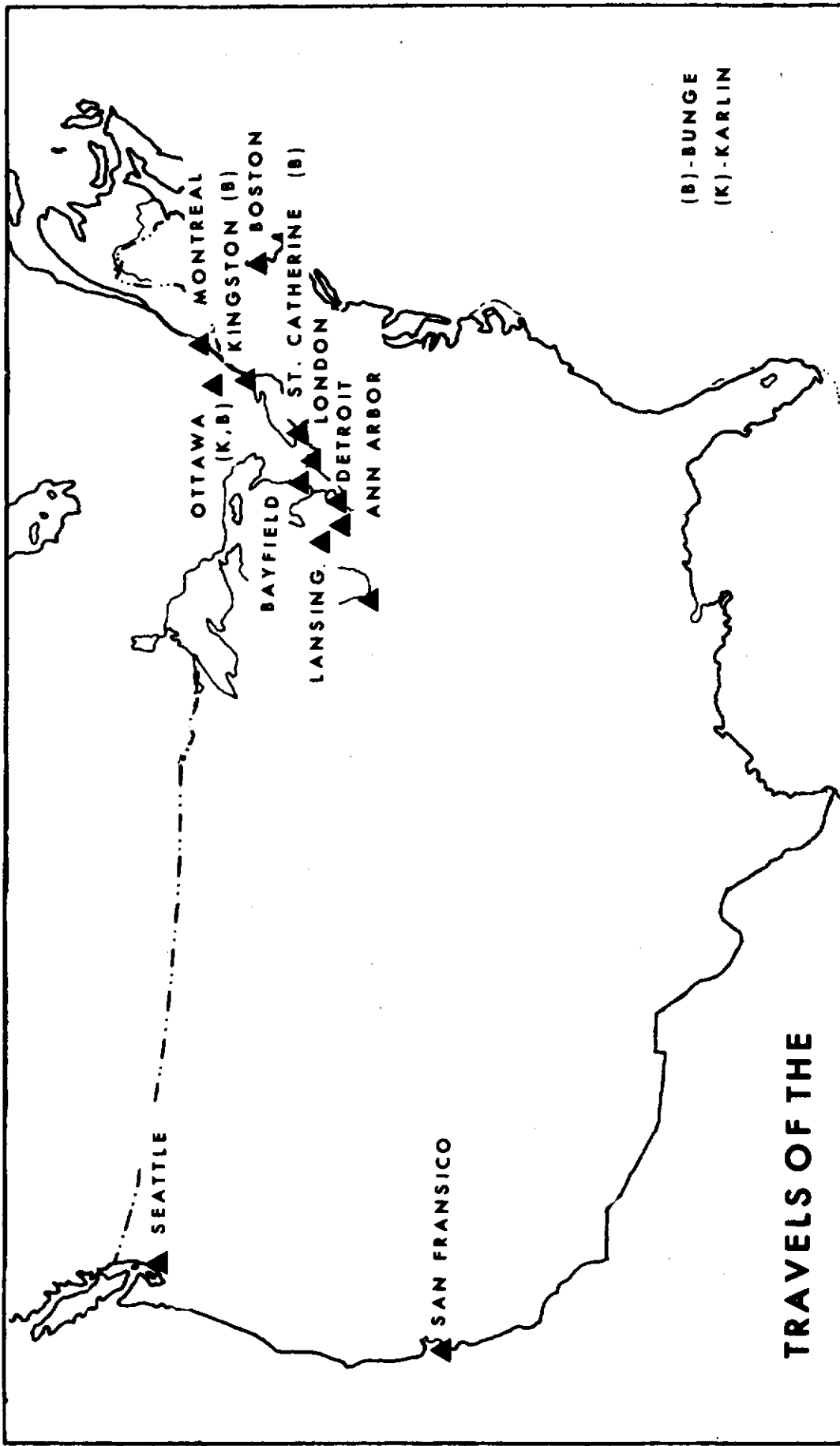
The point that the Expedition is trying to make with Geography, Natural Science, Sociology and others is in offering our classes and our research to the community. These fields are not specific areas of study. Rather, it is that these are some sciences on one hand and these are some problems on the other hand, and you can pick one of these departments and someone has got something that you can use. So far, it has been geography a lot. What we hope to get into is a lot of mathematics and natural sciences, sociology, psychology, when we talk about the Expedition and a Community Research Center. We need a Law Center, a Social-Psychology Center and a Health Center. I hope that The Society for Human Exploration (SHE) will be doing this. We will set up Expeditions in other cities, but not only geographical Expeditions but sociological Expeditions and biological Expeditions to deal with some of the physical needs of people instead of just spatial needs. This is why we branched out into a bigger organization, SHE, so we could encompass all these things.

Under SHE, we hope that in the United States and other countries, people will set up expeditions of their own. In California, Clark Akatiff has set up the San Francisco Bay Area

Expedition. John Shepherd is setting up an Expedition in London, England. To encourage such growth, during the year I attended the Bayfield Conference on the Geography of the Future and a similar conference in Waterloo, Ontario; also, the San Francisco meetings of the AAG and subcommittee meetings of that organization; The National Council of Geographic Educators in Detroit, and several meetings with the French Canadian geographers, both in Detroit and Montreal.

When the French Canadians came to Detroit, they came down to learn how we operate an Expedition and what it was about and if it was possible to take our model and take it back to Montreal and establish an Expedition of their own. I am sure they would have different problems. The Expedition in Detroit is centered largely around the Black City because that is what Detroit is, but you take another city and it would not necessarily be the same. The problem they had up in Montreal was with French community people. They were being split up and divided because of urbanization and they were being moved out. They wanted to start a program for these people in the university. One of the problems we run into is that whenever we try and describe what an Expedition is, for somebody who wants to establish one, they always ask "Would you send us some information about how you operate your expedition?" and no such material is available. It will be our next field note.

The Expedition is very flexible. It comes right from the problems. Whatever happens, we try and solve the problem by whatever means necessary. We are going to identify the problems which might be encountered such as finding support for the students, the kind of people you have to find - cab drivers, bus drivers and people who live in different parts of the city. There is no way you can sit down and write it all out. You can write basic principles and you can invite people down to the city and go around with you, or just sit there and informally talk to them about some of the experiences you have had. If they ask you questions, you try and solve some of those specific questions. What we did in Montreal was to tell them why we started an Expedition and why one was needed. What happened was that four of five students came to Detroit to talk to us and when they went back they tried to talk to other students in the department and community to get them interested in setting up an Expedition, but they did not have sufficient information. All they could say was, "We saw this, that and the other thing and we should really go ahead and do it." So, when they were really thinking about the idea and some of the people were brought together, they called us up and we just rapped with them about what we were going into and some of the basic principles, such as, nothing-but-the-best facilities, the best faculty,



**TRAVELS OF THE
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN EXPLORATION**

SPRING 1970 / SPRING 1971

(BY GWENDOLYN WARREN UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED)

community commitment and community control. You begin with these basics because, naturally, the things that they will have to do - as long as you have the basic concepts of dealing with the community - in setting up your own expedition are going to be totally different from what was setting up in Detroit. Montreal may not have the problem with the school system and the political system in Detroit or of black and white in Montreal, Waterloo or wherever. Some people are dealing with Appalachian whites, farmers, immigrants, but basically you want to give power to the people. If you want to save the lives of the children, in order to do that you have got to give them the best that you have, including dignity; then you go from there to solve the rest of the smaller problems.

One of the things we have decided to do is that the women in the Expedition will form a Woman's Army. This Woman's Army came out of one of the basic ideas of the Expedition to save the children. This summer, we are all going to be in Detroit and everyone is going to take different sections of the city where they are going to live. We are going to get women in the community to join this organization and we will do things like setting up community health centers, day care centers, including getting support for food stores to feed the children in the neighborhood. It is going to be a Woman's Army.

You have a few stable people in geography who will say one thing and they will go out and do it. The Council of the AAG is coming across a little bit, but I do not think our basic position with them has changed. There are the people who have been committed to the Expedition and they are still there, which is really good. The problem of more support is "legitimacy." People do not accept that SHE or the Expedition exploring the human space needs of the people living there is legitimate. I do not think the profession or anyone else is willing to accept this point, namely, that some small person in the community is equal to some professional sitting up on some college campus. So we have "Your whole thing is not legitimate because you don't know what you are talking about. You're no professional." What should have happened a long time ago is that the Expedition should have been accepted for what it was and for what it was doing. We should be the official research side of the AAG. We should be on the Council. I do think racism and overt oppression has a lot to do with it.

The geographer should try and work with the people around him: He should use the knowledge that he has from school and apply it to real life situations. He can take up from where he is and move to an area where he could be more valuable such

a big city, which is where most of the problems are found. Field Notes, Number One, pointed out that geographers have explored every part of the world except where human beings live. If he wants to really work at his profession and really make it work, then he should start dealing with the people.

Gwendolyn Warren, Director
Detroit Geographical Expedition
and Institute
May, 1971

About the Work in Detroit*

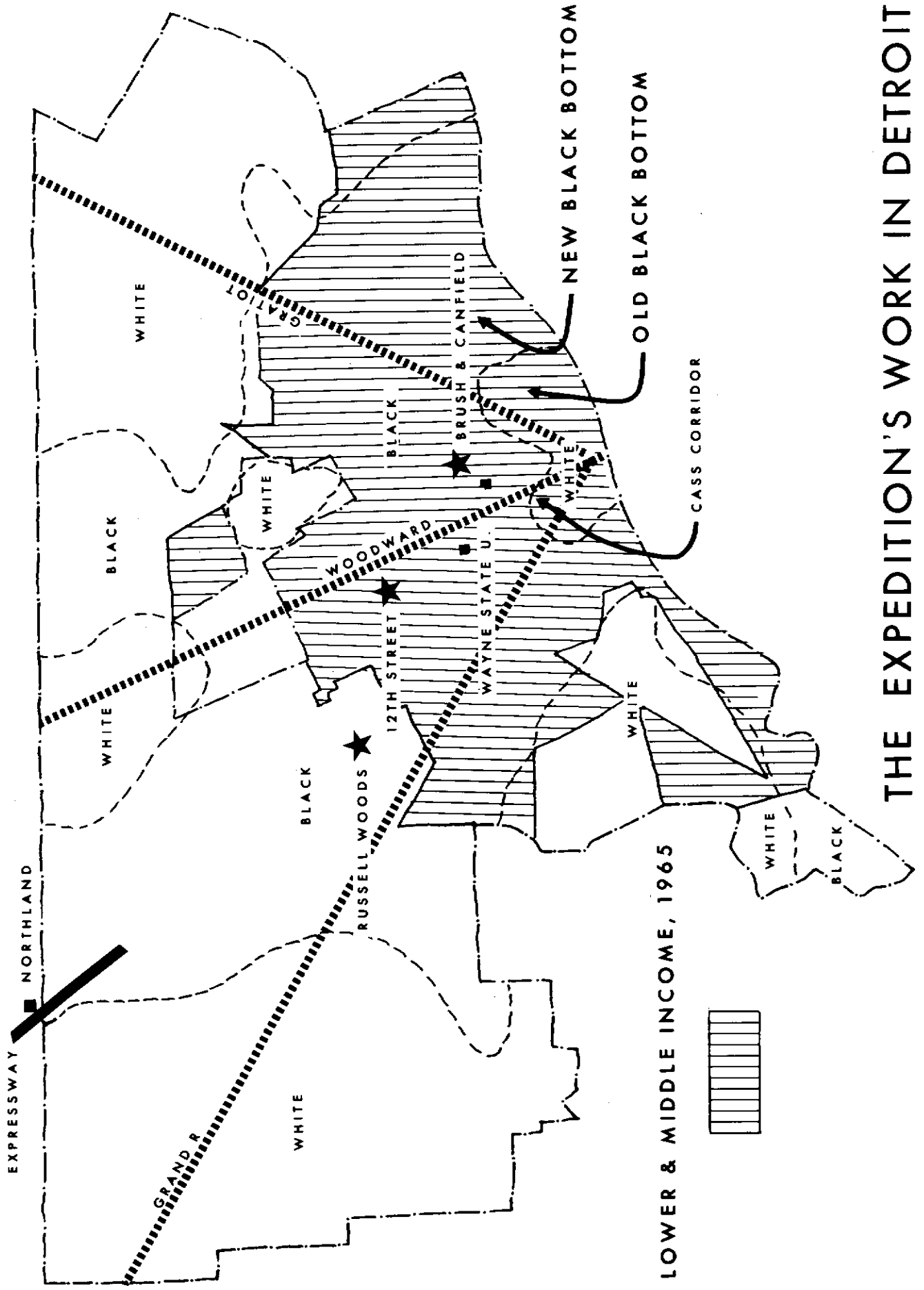
Gwendolyn Warren

We are new into your thing. We have never been there before; we never wanted to go before until some one of your people, Bill Bunge, whether you want him or not, was telling us about geography and what it could do for us. He showed that geography could be meaningful and it could be useful to our thing. We did not believe him. Then he brought out maps and we still did not believe him. "What in the Hell is a mountain doing in Detroit?" That is what we thought about it, all those funny little things geographers do.

Out of all the stuff that they were saying to us, we wondered how we could take a little bit out of all that "bull" and make it useful. We did not go through all those readings getting into Von Thunen, Christaller and all the rest of those people and I doubt very seriously whether anybody you know is very well read in geography. Basically, what needs to be said is, we took your science and we are using your science in our everyday fight to survive in the City.

The biggest problems we have taken on are death, hunger, pain, sorrow and frustration in children. One time, we went down on Brush and Canfield, just a bunch of students - about four or five white students and myself and two other Black students - and after we went back to Wayne State University and we were sitting down on the grass and we talked about what we saw. Everybody was talking in terms of how everything was bad; the garbage was not picked up; the place looked bad and things of that nature. I got mad. All of these students failed to see one of the deadliest things. I saw there were no candy wrappers, that the children in that area were starved for candy and that they were hungry and that when the popsicle man came down the street all the children looked out the windows but nobody went for the truck. In the middle class neighborhoods, everybody is running all over that truck. You see Cracker Jack boxes and Tootsie Roll papers, half-eaten lollipops and everything along the streets, but there were none in that area. There were empty beer cans and whiskey bottles, but there was no "litter for children."

*Remarks of Miss Warren at the Conference on the Geography of the Future, Bayfield, Ontario, October 18, 1970.



THE EXPEDITION'S WORK IN DETROIT

In East Lansing where I am living right now and going to school, all up and down the block you see bikes, tricycles, skateboards and baseballs. I think that in Inner-city of Detroit you see none of these things. You never see toys laying around the street. You never see them because there aren't any.

In the future, we want to do an atlas of human needs: dentistless and hospitalless regions. It is a very real fact - a dentistless region. I found out that most of the students, the Black students, who go to Michigan State, all go to one dentist. He happens to be a Black dentist that they have on campus. And because this dentist happens to be a trustee of the university and is Black, he gives a discount to all the Black students who come in. He told me that 75% of the Black students who attend that university have never been to a dentist before they got to his office. Never. And most of these students come from the Inner-city of Detroit. It's just a fact. It's common knowledge that unless you go into the army or unless you go away to a completely different place, another institution, you never go to the dentist. I was nineteen before I ever saw my first dentist. I wasn't embarrassed because I knew nobody in my neighborhood went to a dentist unless you were getting a tooth pulled that had rotted death. It wasn't the thing. My eyes have been bad for years. I didn't get glasses until this year. Unless the welfare gives you glasses or fixes your teeth or unless you're in the service and get your teeth fixed, these things aren't done.

Food, a certain kind of food: Every child in America looks at T.V., buys bubblegum, except the kids in Black Bottom. They don't have that stuff. Have you ever went into a ghetto store? The wine and beer and things of this nature is plentiful but they may have two little bitty boxes of candy and then it's so stale and mouldy because the kids won't come in there and buy it because they don't have any money. It's just a particular type of food.

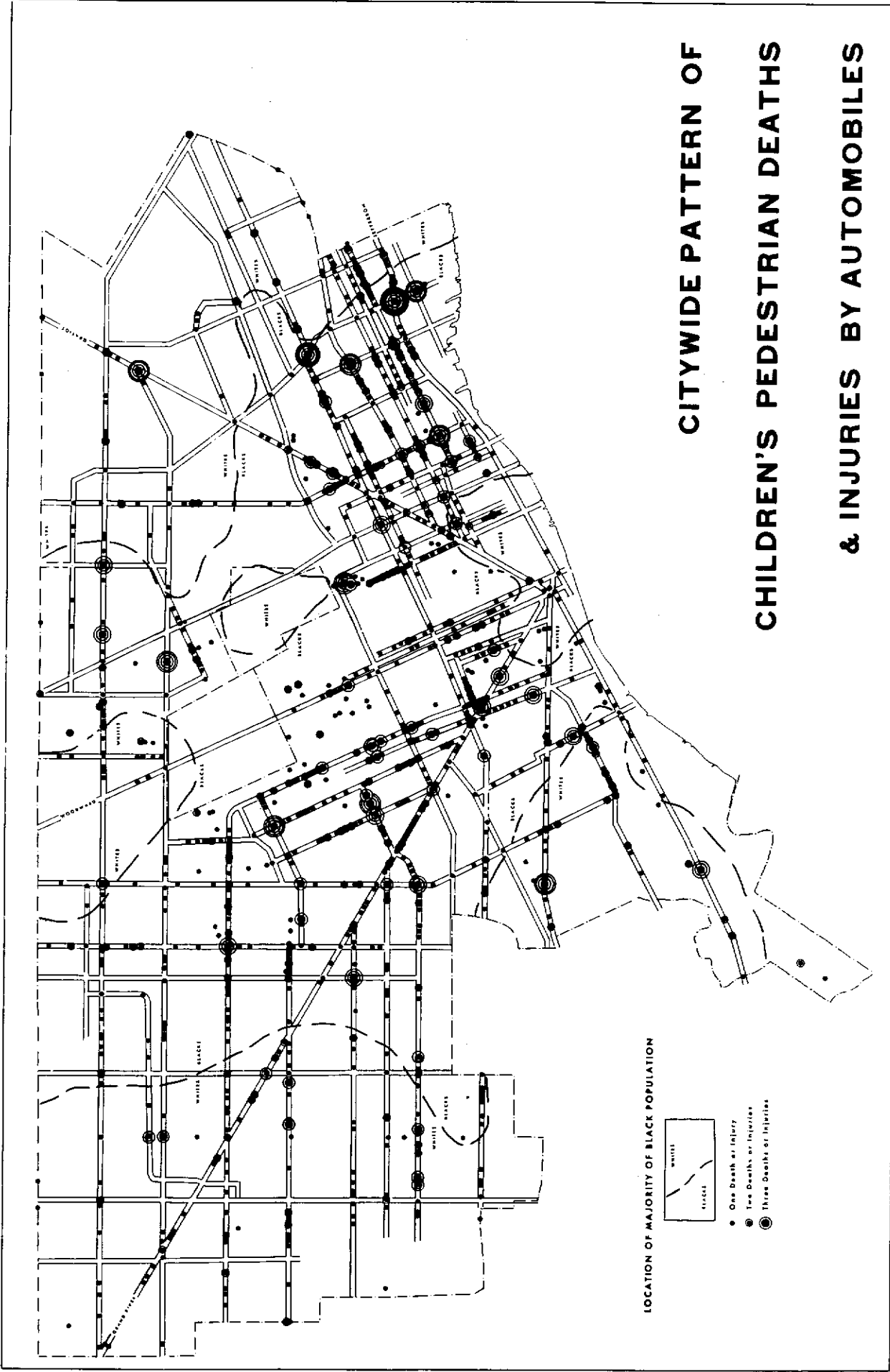
The whole thing about the rat region of Detroit: The earlier part of '69 when we went down to the medical complex, which is a combination of all the hospitals in the central part of the city, they were going to divide one up to service children, another one for men and women; a whole big medical complex which is a hookup of Wayne State University. We were down in Harper trying to look into some of their information that they had in terms of children coming in there as emergency patients. And since my mother worked there, I was talking to one of her friends who happened to work upstairs in the library. I was walking around and I saw where they keep the books on children if they've been bitten by a dog or rat and has contracted or developed an infection, or whether or not he's been beaten by his parents. Anything in the environment of that child (the reason why the child

was ill), they don't put in. They may put it down as "neglect" or "abuse." The system allows a two or three year old child to be bitten by a rat, which in some instances causes that child's death; then they record it as "child abuse" instead of the environmental reason. They're covering up actually what's happening. And so, what we are going to do is go down and pull all the information that they have on child abuse. We figure if we could get any of the files from Detroit General Hospital, we could map what happens to these children. The area around where Rod Shepherd lives, right down there on the other side of Wayne State University; he's been living there all his life. He knows everybody in every apartment. He knows about every kid who ever got hit by a car, whoever had chickenpox - anything. If he's assigned that specific area he can dig out information that is there which we couldn't find by going downtown to the City-County Building.

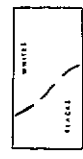
The whole thing about the transportation; the commuter traffic. The way the city is situated, there is the central place downtown and then there are rings which go outside of that and the big ring right outside downtown Detroit is the Black community. All the area about a mile going out from downtown Detroit is one-way traffic and runs right through the heart of the Black community. And on one specific corner in six months there were six children killed on one corner by commuter traffic. But, naturally, these deaths of these children or the injuries or whatever it happened to be were disguised as something else. They never said that a certain business man who was working for Burroughs downtown who was on his way to Southfield went through the Black community by way of this commuter traffic and killed my people - Black children. Even in the information which the police keep, we couldn't get that information. We had to use political people in order to use them as a means of getting information from the police department in order to find out exactly what time, where, how and who killed that child.

The fact that it actually establishes a pattern proves it is not "accidental." Are the expressways which are right in the heart of the city built for the people in the city? From the outside, it is obvious that they aren't. You discover other sorts of information like, why was a specific expressway put in a certain direction instead of another? Because Northland Shopping Centre was out here and the Black community was over there, but it was more economical to send it to Northland. And then other facts like, you have commuter traffic, one-way traffic, which deals right to the ramps of the expressway. Then on the expressway in rush hours, you have stop and go lights on the ramps in the Black community and they end when you get in the White community. Which means that between the hours of three and five in the after-

CITYWIDE PATTERN OF CHILDREN'S PEDESTRIAN DEATHS & INJURIES BY AUTOMOBILES



LOCATION OF MAJORITY OF BLACK POPULATION



- One Death or Injury
- Two Deaths or Injuries
- Three Deaths or Injuries

noon, Blacks cannot get on the expressway because the executives from downtown are rushing from downtown to the suburbs. Nobody's ever looking at this. You can actually sit there in the city and you can see Black people waiting on those ramps behind those stop signs, which tells them one car each minute can go on the expressway, and traffic is rushing from downtown, straight out of the city and the Black people are sitting there on those ramps; they can't get on the expressway and they won't go through the lights because they think the law says so. Is this in the best interest of everybody? No, it is not. When Black people actually start looking at these kinds of things, what does it mean if the buses are slowed down or if their rate goes up? Say, if it goes up from 30¢ to 35¢, how many people can afford that? What does it mean when central buses like the Gratiot bus line, Woodward, Hamilton, Grand River, when the buses slow down 15 minutes? What does that mean? People are kept from work. It could set the unemployment rate out a mile. All the factories are located in the suburbs. I think that if we actually dealt into some serious research about that we'd be able to prove that beyond a doubt that this is actually what happens when the D.S.R. decides that they're going to go up on their rates or slow down their buses, because nobody uses them but Black people in the city. In our first class which we had at the University of Michigan Extension, there were a number of factory workers in the class and in subsequent classes we've had after that, and one of the remarkable things is that these guys work in the factories which are located in the suburbs and have to use the transportation system of the city and people are standing on the bus line three hours. If you had to be at work at 7:00 a.m. and you have to catch a bus, you may have to catch two or three buses to work; at night the buses slow down to hours a piece; it means that you may be on those bus lines for three to four hours. You have to leave home at three o'clock in order to get to work at seven. This is a fact. I don't doubt that a geographer from Harvard, University of Michigan or Michigan State University could actually look at it theoretically, but can they look at it in a real sense, in a human sense, and then take that information which they've gotten and apply it in a way where it can be useful? I don't think so. The answer is go into the Black communities and into the universities and recruit Blacks into the Geography Department. Anybody who is really sincere in what they're saying should go down to Detroit and come there as a servant of the people. You can sit down and write a book about the problems and even though you may come up with the exact same answers as Black students would, your book would go to the library, and other people in your profession and other professions are going to read it, but it may never ever get down home. You may solve the transportation problem, but we

may never know about it. What I'm saying is what you should do is if you've got a theory, if you know a bit of information that would be helpful to bettering other people's lives, not just Black people, minority people "period," because Black people in Detroit are the largest majority of the minority race and therefore we holler the loudest. I think the poorest people in Detroit would be the Mexican-American or the Appalachian area in the Cass Corridor, but if you have something, go down there and share it with the people. Tell them that, "I have this, can you use it?" And you should explain that it would be useful in this way and that way and then leave it up to them to decide whether or not it would solve a problem of that immediate time. There are also groups in Detroit who can think in terms of the future. That's their specific job, to deal with not only what's going to happen to us now but what's going to happen to us tomorrow. Well then, it's your duty as a scientist to go down there and give that information so that those people themselves can use that information and their own knowledge and put it in the best way that they think would be able to change the situation so that they will be able to survive. I think that that's the whole reason why we're here, why we keep coming to these meetings to just relate that message. We do need you in the city but we need you in a specific role. We need you in a certain way. I think that it would be valid to say that ten geographers or five of you out of this room could come to Detroit. Take ten students a piece and do nothing the whole time you're there but be with those students and train them into doing a specific thing. And I'm sure that what they could teach you may be even more valuable than what you teach them. But just the fact that those skills will be exchanged and then what they in turn would do would be to go back to the community and relate that message and do the changing themselves. These are the kind of things that we have been trying to ask the professions to get into, which is coming down home and talking to the people. You would be the master of the problem for a second but pretty soon they would take over because they can see a lot of things that you can not see, but yet and still you know a lot of things that they do not know. And all of these things put together, is deadly. You can do a lot of serious things, a lot of serious things.

The research side of the expedition was formed in order to establish Black planning for that city. And what we wanted to do was to exchange skills. The people in the community had no knowledge of their community. The professors had the skills. Then what you do is give the skills to the people in order to let them change their own environment. That is the basic principle. What I'm saying is that it may be very well able that a person who is sitting in

Boston, or wherever, could have come up with a theoretically almost identical plan to what we have. The people who did the report went to the schools and lived in a community so that they could get information concerning certain school districts and certain feelings in schools that was not on census data. The census data was dealing in just Black and White races in the schools. And there were certain people who were working on "The Schools Decentralization Report" knew that there was black, white and a black middle class which is not put down in those census data. There are certain types of people who live in certain types of areas of the city who come from certain different places. I don't think that on the census data it states that the area which is now Lafayette Towers used to be Old Black Bottom and that a certain kind of Black person lived there as in relationship to the kind of Black people who lived in Russell Woods, which is a closely connected part, if you look at the city map, of the Black section of the city. But this mile by mile area called Russell Woods is where darn near every Black politician, every Black doctor, and every Black lawyer lives and stays right on the brim, on the break, of 12th Street. And the children who live in that area come from a completely different environment than the other students. You do not collect this kind of thing on data.

This whole thing about the Cass Corridor: The census data may have captured our life but I don't think the actual feel of that neighborhood. Cass Corridor is an Appalachian area in Detroit. Sue Cozzens found all sorts of weird things that she got from the City-County Building and then she came up with a lot of information which she collected by just living there and she stayed there for a year. I think it is important that you collect the information but yet you should also collect the basic feel.

In terms of looking at political regions, one of the valid things that came out of the research was just the fact of the way voting districts change in relationship to power. That whole thing about superminority or supermajority in relationship to the loss of power: One of the reasons why Congressman John Conyers is going to stop his push to expand his district is because of our plan. John Conyers is one of the Black congressmen out of Detroit and everybody in his area is Black and so he had 99.9% of the vote every election. And what he was going to do was expand his district again to pick up even more Black votes which would have been stupid. He could have made his majority as small as possible and still won and then cut his district up so we could have more Black voting districts. And that is one of the reasons why the whites can actually have less people than we do and

still win because they know how to use their voting districts to their advantage. The moment they get 1% over, 51% in a vote, they form a new district and add it to a smaller district in order to get more votes out of their district. And the students that we are talking about are going to give attention to those kind of issues in order to make Black political districts more effective.

The Geography of Children

Our children will be our salvation! Whitey is creating and is fitting Black people into a "homosexual" vacuum. A homosexual person does not produce children; thus, only an environment that is not conducive for reproduction of our ranks is considered homosexual. It is not that the people in these environments are sociologically, psychologically, legally or otherwise attracted to their same sex for sexual gratification.

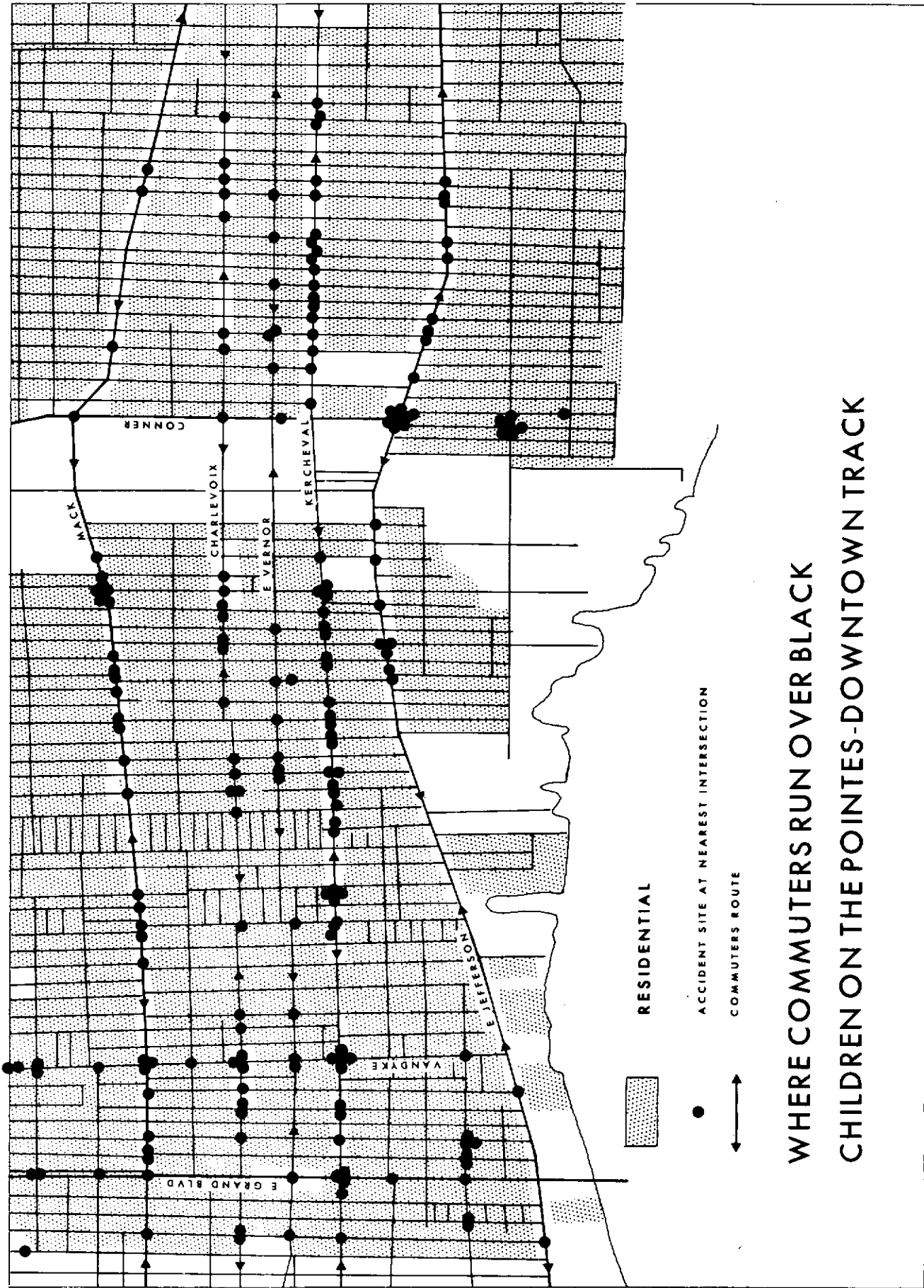
A drug addict does not produce children - he "produces" crimes to keep up his habit. He "produces" more drug addicts by turning them on to the dope and then turning them on to the friendly neighborhood pusher who rewards him with a fix. This friendly neighborhood "killer" takes his money to "another part of town" when the sun goes down. And, oh! By the way; this white man does not touch the stuff. A drug addict is in a homosexual environment created and perpetuated by "the man."

Already established health centers and pending legislation are creating homosexual environments for the sisters. The man is infiltrating our ranks with propaganda about birth control pills and abortions. Hardly a day goes by that another poor sister, either from ignorance or desperation, or just plain coercion, does not start using birth control pills or does not seek out an abortionist. (Whitey is seeking legislation for mandatory sterilization of some A.D.C. mothers.)

The term homosexual environment is to also imply the confining of one sex together for a major portion of their working hours, as in this nation's factories and jails and prisons. An inner-city employee may live ten miles from his job, but taking the bus to work may involve several minutes in waiting and numerous transfers. One reason for this difficulty is the transportation system's "catering" to their riders living on the fringes of the city, away from the hub. What should only be a matter of minutes for the inner-city employee to get to work may involve several hours. This means he gets up earlier in the morning for work and arrives home later in the evening. It is quite conceivable that if the employee is working the frequently imposed overtime, he spends fourteen hours a day with his job.

A brother imprisoned cannot produce children. The brothers are being unnecessarily confined to jails - usually on the roost of a pending trial. If a white man, suspected of murdering four young adults including his own daughter, can be released from custody the next day - ON BOND - then there is no reason for the brothers, or anyone, for that matter, to be confined to jail pending trial.

TO SUBURBS (GROSSE POINTE)



TO DOWNTOWN

WHERE COMMUTERS RUN OVER BLACK CHILDREN ON THE POINTES-DOWNTOWN TRACK

A dead brother or sister can not produce children. Our brothers are being destroyed uselessly in the oppressor's war. Our brothers and sisters are being gunned down in the streets, in their beds - unnecessarily, unmercifully and negligently. A Highland Park youth waiting on the corner for a bus with his mother was killed by the negligence of a white pig chasing a suspect, totally ignoring the safety of innocent bystanders on the street.

Our numbers are only increasing. The Black race should be exploding, bulging, teeming with beautiful Black minds. It is true that we must equip more so-called Negroes with Black minds, so that we may swell our ranks. But, we must also produce more black children, not only in the sense of biological reproduction, but also in the sense of black socialization. Black socialization produces Black children who grow into Black adults. White socialization produces misfits with black faces. Much like the Christian teaching of the Mystical Body of Christ. We must incorporate all Black people into a huge Black body, as one entity, against the oppressor.

Whitey, and his cities and his schools and his government and his wars, is killing us as a corporate nation. We must go into the community, our community and save our children's play areas, schools, text and leisure materials, and paint them with a Black coat of pride. Then we can rest, assured that our Black minds will not die. Our children will be our salvation.

Yvonne Colvard, Editor

Mack Avenue and Bloomfield Hills
- From a Child's Point of View

Martin Taylor, Jacob Abraham, David Mills, Leon Jasionowski, Mary Ann Kalewski, Franklin Spenser and Adam Caddell

Mack Avenue is deeply imbedded in what is commonly called the "inner-city." This heavily (Black) populated ghetto is an array of multiple dwellings and wooden units with but a few single homes, all in need of repair, junk piles for landscape and boarded up windows. Many of these "homes" have been condemned and abandoned. Others, in no better shape, are still being occupied by four or five families. The streets are filthy and cluttered with rubbish, debris and broken glass. The automobiles in the area are rusted and broken down. There is, however, a few new cars to be seen.

The area is poorly lit with only one street light for every block. Even though the houses are wooden, there is only one fire hydrant for every twenty-five houses. Landscape, trees in particular, is scarce. There is only one tree for about twenty-five houses.

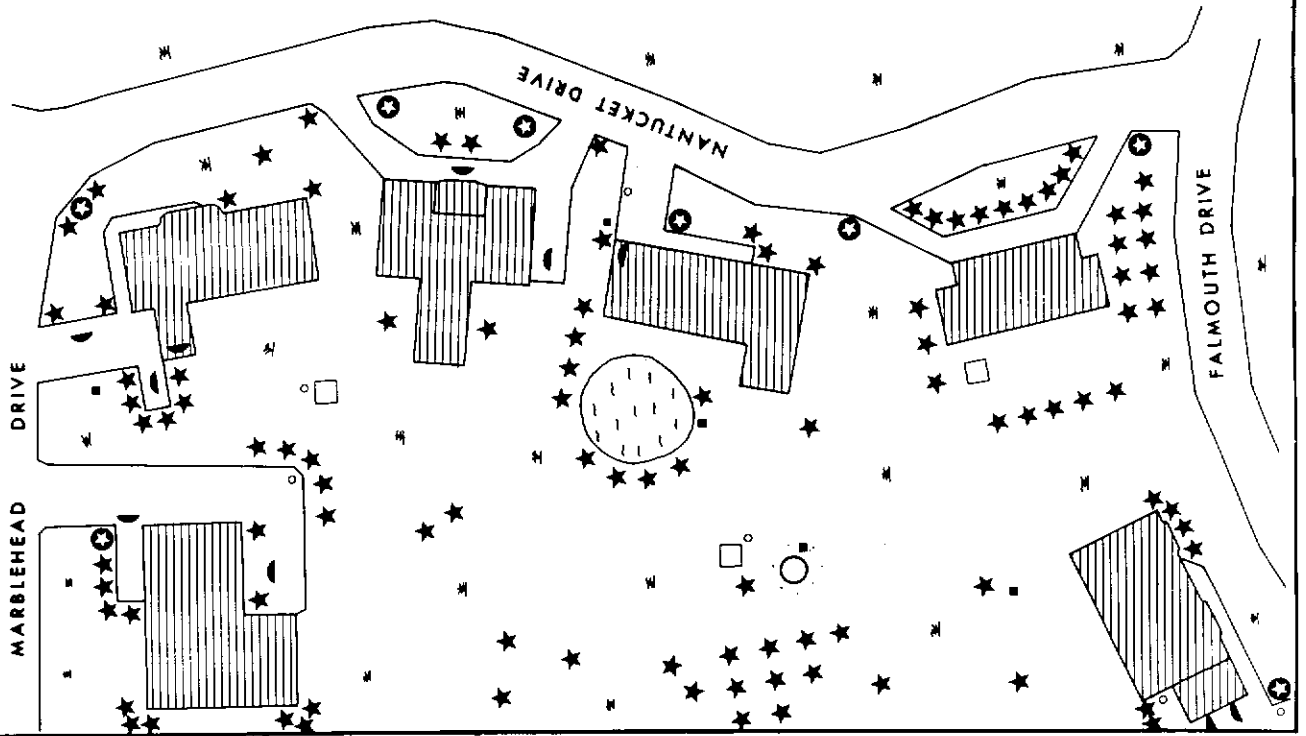
The kids of the area were surprisingly friendly. They talked freely and, I felt, with sincerity. The kids of the area were dressed "inadequately." Their clothing was dirty, full of holes and ill-fitting. They appeared to be hand-me-downs.

The kids I talked to felt that they had enough places to play. There was always the alley, the streets or distant playgrounds. All of these places had one thing in common - DANGER. All of these places were littered with broken glass, beer cans and stones. The kids on Mack Avenue didn't have footballs, baseballs and bats to play with. They substituted sticks, stones, rope or whatever they could get their hands on.

The kids expressed to me their own dream world. They think it should be comprised of a few small blocks. They have heard of many places, but they only know about them from what they hear. They have never seen them. Most of the children have heard of college. They hope to attend on an athletic scholarship.

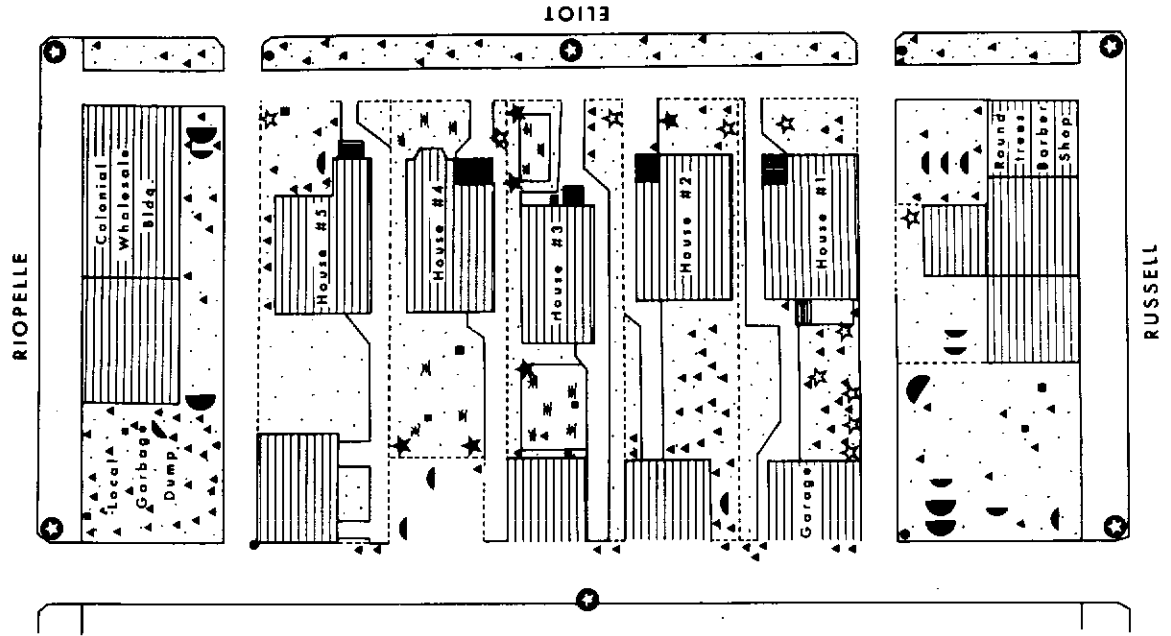
They know the policemen of the area well and what they know of them, they don't like. The police, to them are monsters to be feared. They act rough whenever there is trouble and they break up groups of kids whenever a group starts to form, whether there is trouble or not.

BLOOMFIELD HILLS AREA



- Buildings
- Dirt Areas
- Grass Areas
- Mixture of Dirt/Grass Areas
- Concrete Areas
- Water
- Fences
- Automobiles
- Trucks
- Streetlights
- Play Areas
- Gym Equipment Sets
- Dogs
- Cats
- Green Shrubs & Trees
- Dead Shrubs & Trees
- Telephone Poles
- Bicycles, Tri-cycles, Scooters, etc.
- Rubbish, Trash, Broken Bottles, Paper, Litter, Cans

MACK AVENUE AREA



The kids of this area have no museums, no libraries, and no adequate recreational facilities. What they do have is many bars. They cannot enter these bars but they feel the effects of them. Many neighborhood inhabitants are heavy drinkers and are familiar with the bars. Many are fathers of these kids, who, while under the influence of alcohol, beat their children.

The business district known to the children of the area is no better kept up than their own homes. Dirt, filth, alcoholics, tough police, and inadequate play areas are the constant companions of the children in this area.

The contrast between the section of Bloomfield visited and Mack Avenue is like night and day, not only in neighborhood appearances but also in children's attitudes.

The area is spacious and beautifully landscaped. The homes are large. These homes are surrounded by spacious yards with four to six trees per home. Well equipped playgrounds resemble state parks. The majority of the children attended private schools. The elementary school in this area resembled a small campus. The ages of the homes in Bloomfield Hills average about ten years. The houses on a block in the Mack area number about thirty-five to a side while those in Bloomfield Hills are about six to a block counting both sides.

In Bloomfield Hills, with the trees and gardens and happy air, a child is contented just to live in such richness. These children have more toys than a Mack Avenue playground will ever have. The children in Bloomfield Hills had no complaints and very little to say. It appears that the wealthier children are used to their swings, pools, color televisions and other luxuries and so did not talk to any length of their advantages. The poor Black children, however, have nothing but complaints. (It was easier to talk to slum children than rich children.) In answer to the question "Do you think your neighborhood is a good neighborhood?", twelve Bloomfield Hills children said "Yes," one hundred percent; and twelve Mack Avenue children said "No," one hundred percent. In answer to "Do you like your neighborhood?" only three from Bloomfield Hills said "No" and only three from Mack Avenue said "Yes." On the sad question of leaving their home, "Would you like to move?" only three Black children said "No" and only two white ones said "Yes."

The Bloomfield Hills children have a much wider perspective of the world. One little eight year old girl had travelled to Europe with her family the preceding summer.

High
10

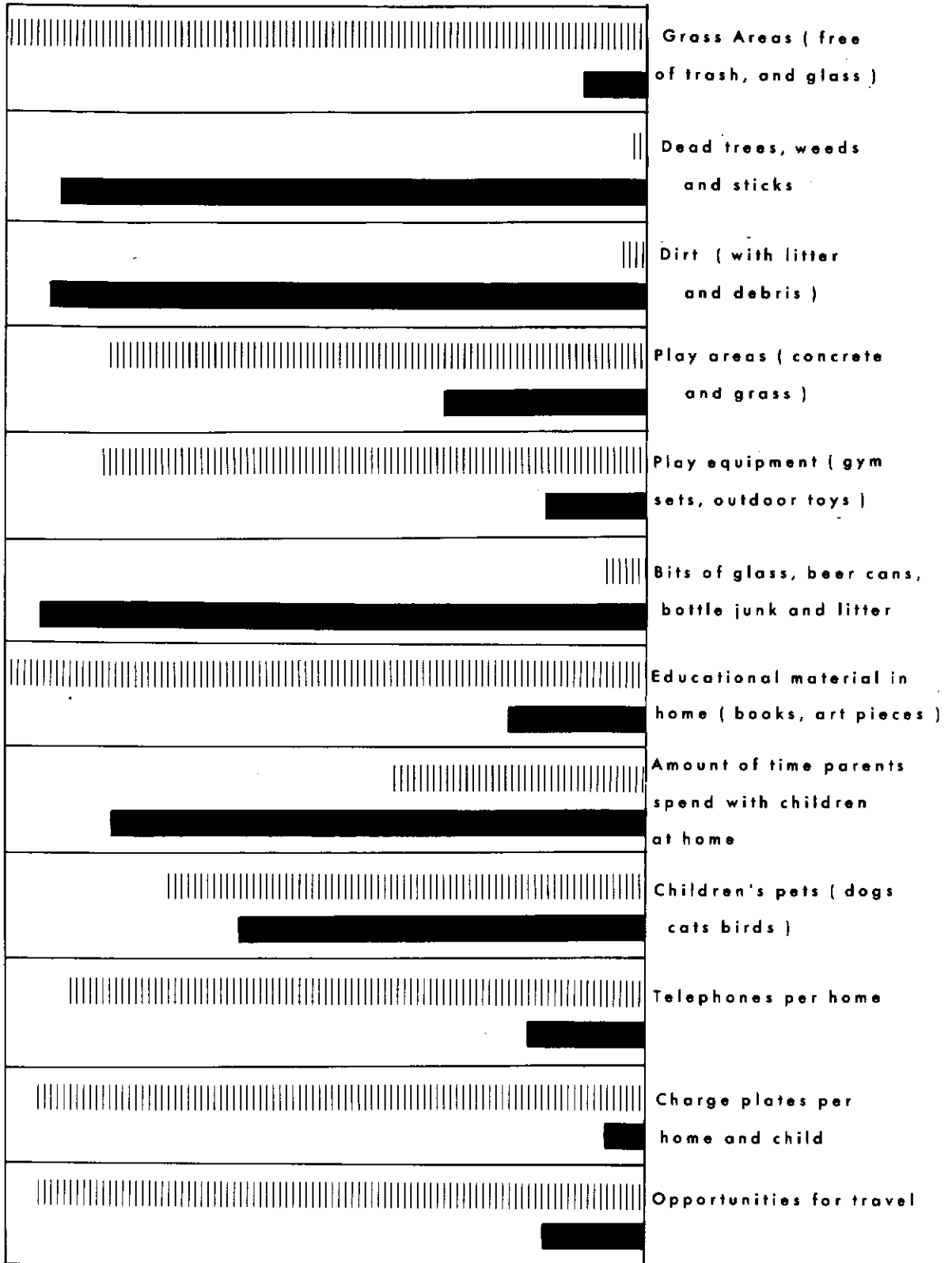
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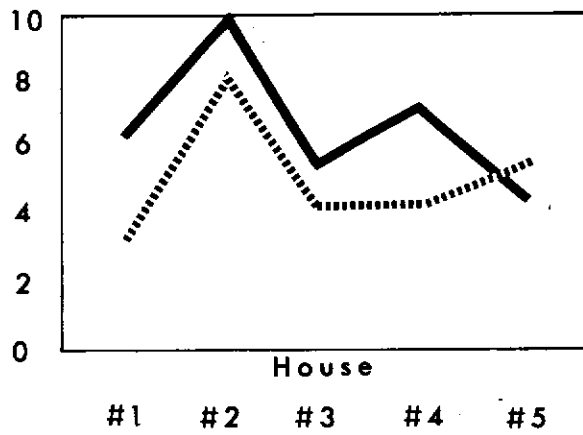


Bloomfield Hills

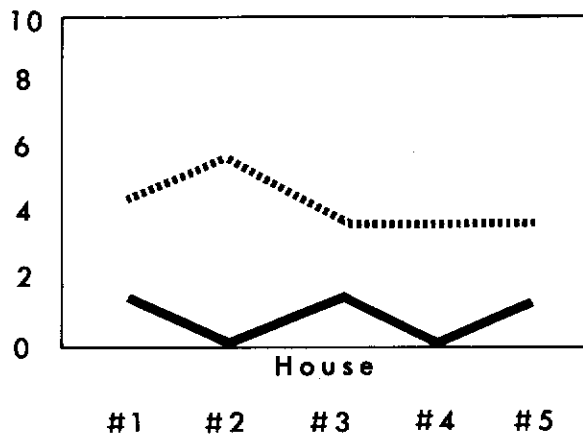


Mack Avenue

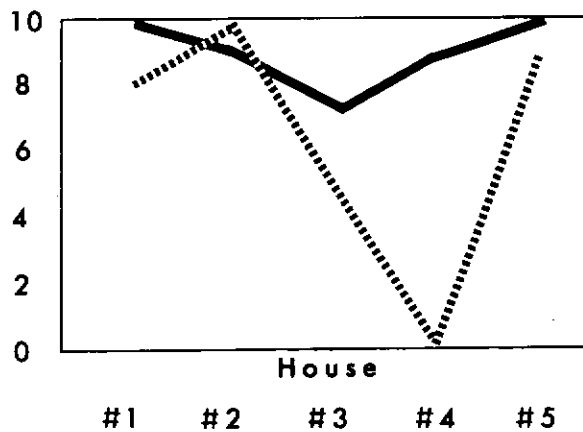




Number of Children per Household



Number of Television sets per Household



Number of bottles of beer, whiskey per Household (child's estimated number of unopened bottles)

Bloomfield Hills
 Mack Avenue —————

Data acquired from interviews with neighbourhood children

She liked her neighborhood and especially liked to come to the playground as there were so many things to play with - swings, slides and so forth. This little girl pictured the world as having some very nice places that she hoped to visit someday. But she also realized that there were places that were not so nice from what her mother and father would tell her. Another little girl had gone to Florida several times with her parents along with trips to a summer cottage up in northern Michigan. She also liked her neighborhood and had many friends whom she met daily at the playground.

The children of Mack Avenue do not know of Bloomfield Hills and the same is true of the children of Bloomfield Hills not knowing they are enjoying life's natural and physical blessings. All-in-all, the only comparison between the two communities of children is that of the haves and have-nots.

The Children of the Cass Corridor

The Cass Corridor is the primarily residential neighborhood which lies between Third and Cass, from the Masonic Temple to Prentis. The area was originally the farm of Lewis Cass, the second governor of the state of Michigan. When he subdivided the property, affluent families bought the land and began to construct huge, beautiful Victorian homes there. From 1860 and the turn of the century, the area was noted as a "society" neighborhood.

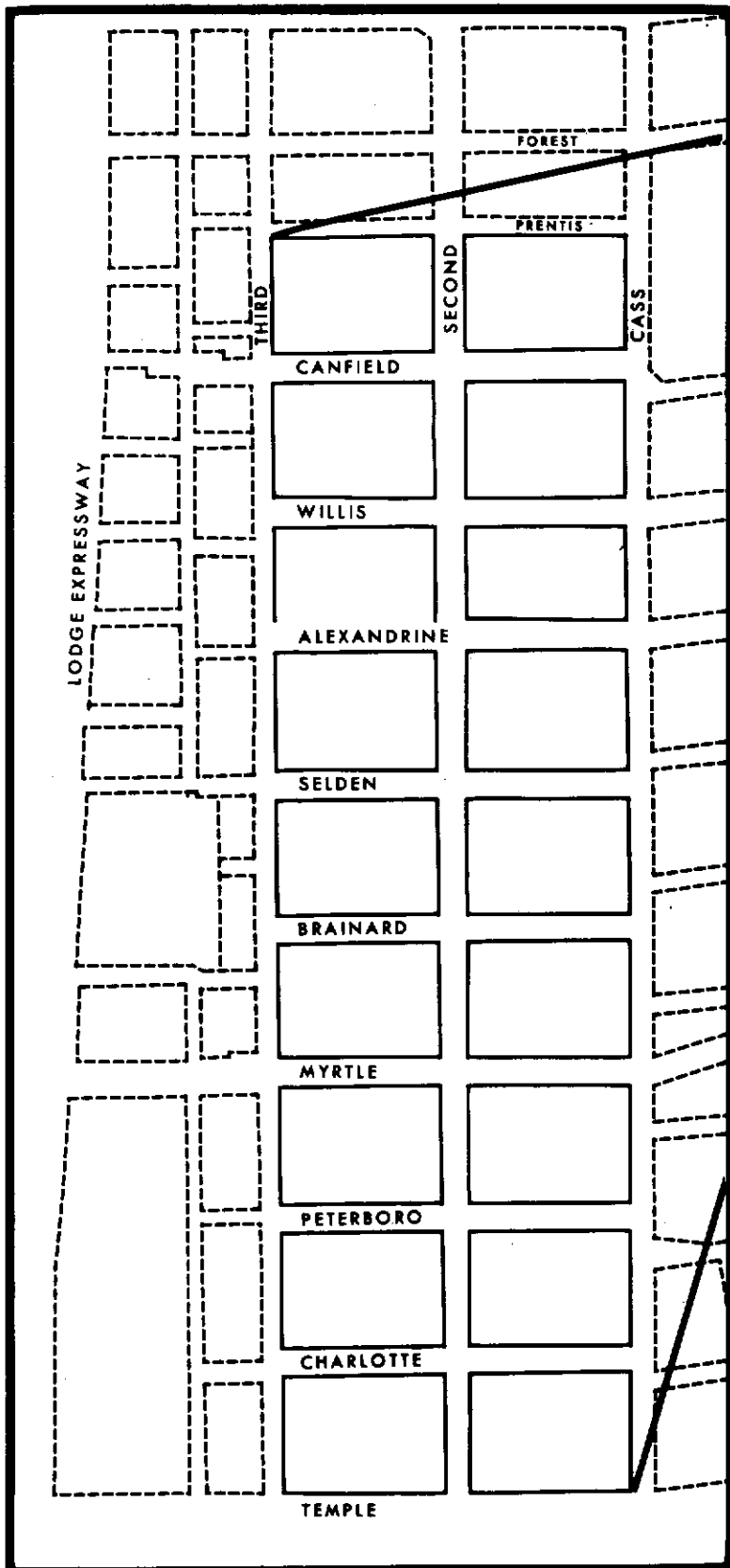
Between 1915 and 1923, however, middle class people began to move into the corridor. Apartment buildings began to replace the huge private homes, some of which were also converted into apartments. During Prohibition, Third Avenue was the center of bootleg traffic for the city. After repeal, the speakeasies simply opened as legitimate businesses.

During the Second World War, the area began to be the home of people coming from the South to find wartime jobs in the factories. Generally, those who lived there were white and came from the mountains of Tennessee, West Virginia, Kentucky and western Pennsylvania. The neighborhood remained primarily Appalachian after the war, and in the early 1960's, Student Non-violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC) workers referred to it sarcastically as "Little Kentucky."

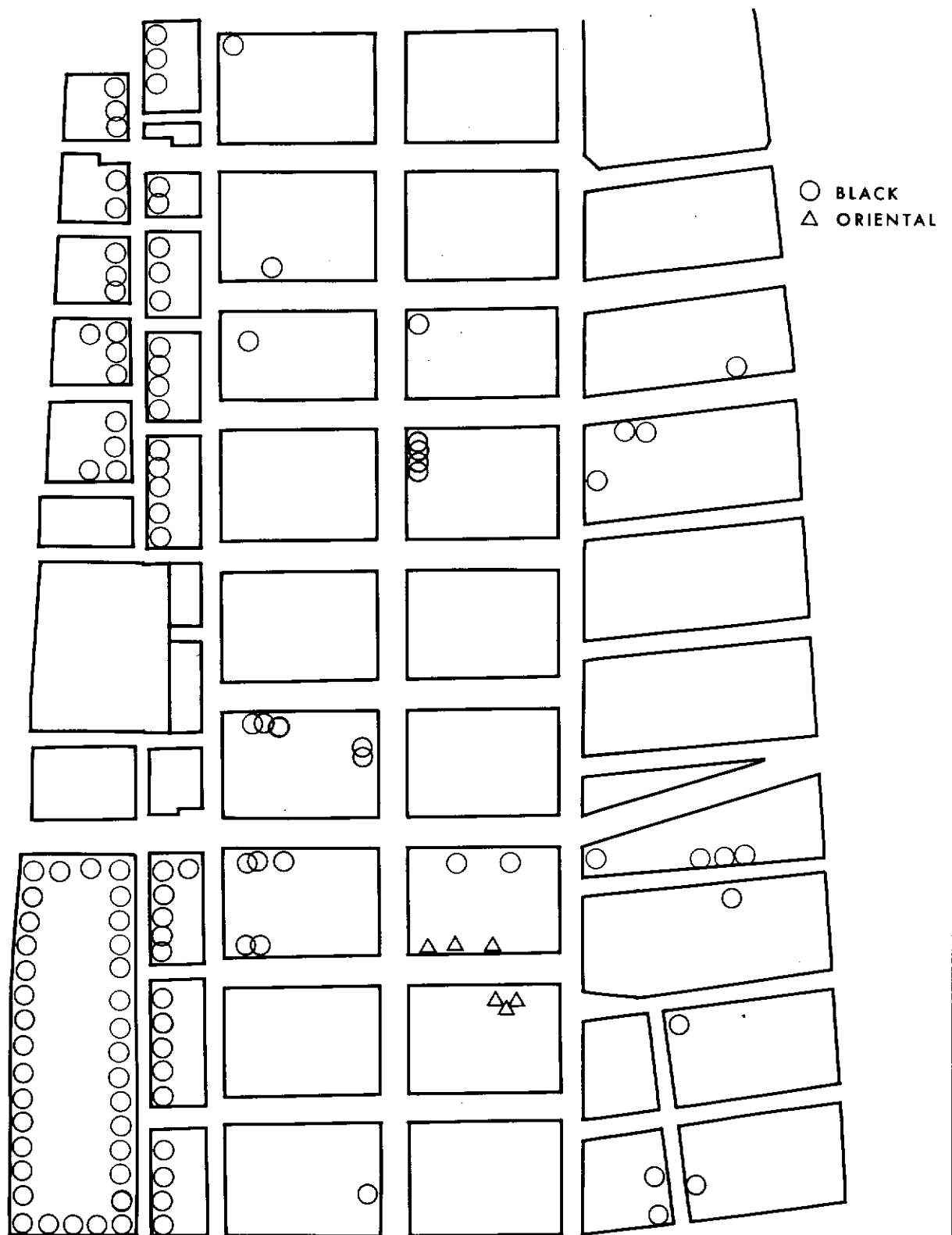
After the black rebellion in the summer of 1967, all the white people in the corridor who could scrape up enough money to move did. Some of them moved to the less affluent suburbs, such as Warren, east Dearborn, or Roseville. Others went "home" to their relatives in the South. They left behind the most helpless, those who were truly trapped in the neighborhood.

While the Cass Corridor had been going through these changes, the rest of Detroit had been changing too. The majority of the white population had been moving away from downtown, and the black population had taken over, residentially, almost the entire inner-city. There were still poor white people living in the inner-city, sometimes in "integrated" neighborhoods and sometimes in little white pockets like the Corridor. To the east of the Corridor is the John R. Brush area, which is the oldest black area of the city. To the west, the black community stretches right up to the alley behind Third.

But, physical proximity has done little to bring the white Appalachians of the corridor any closer to blacks socially. Their dislike for each other has a long history, which stretches back to the days when they were both poor



**THE
CASS
CORRIDOR**
DETROIT, MICHIGAN



DISTRIBUTION OF RACES

in the South. Poor whites and blacks have always had to compete with each other for jobs. An "outsider" may be able to see their mutual hatred as a trick played to keep them from uniting. To them, it is a deeply rooted cultural feeling.

The children who live in the Cass Corridor probably suffer more from the effects of racism than anyone else there. There are three groups of people in the Corridor. The most lonely and isolated are the old people, living on pensions, separated from their families, able to walk only with difficulty, with nothing to do and nowhere to go. These old people are so isolated that often one of them will die and no one will notice it until the rent is due or someone detects an odour.

The second group of people belong to the culture of Third Avenue (the center of white prostitution in the city). They are generally also alone severed in one way or another from their families, but they are usually between the ages of twenty and sixty. Some of them support themselves in the Third Avenue "industry." Others simply frequent the bars for entertainment. There are many crippled people who fall into this group, or jobless, or divorced. For many of these people, the gaiety that they show in the bars is an act of courage.

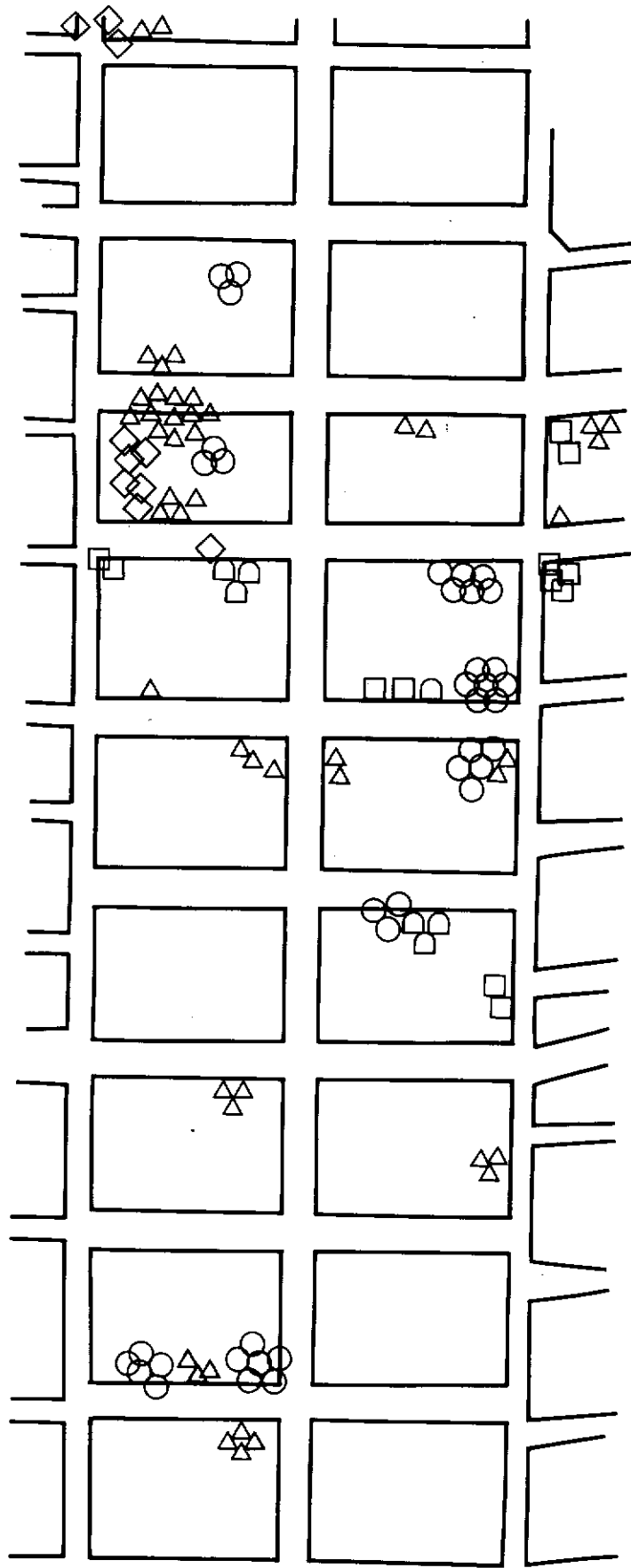
The third group of people in the Corridor is A.D.C. mothers and their children. Like everyone else there, these mothers need a low rent neighborhood where they can live with the kids. The Corridor also has the advantage of being close to the Social Services building.

But the Corridor is not really a "nice place" for children to grow up. There are a limited number of places to play: apartment corridors, alleys, streets, small yards in front of buildings, parking lots, abandoned houses. There is one city-owned play area in the Corridor - the Willis Tot Lot. This is a 50 by 150 foot lot, overgrown with weeds except for the places where they have been totally worn away by kids' feet. In the back, there is one swing set. At the front, there is a sort of combination table and jungle jim. In between, some truck tires have been imbedded in the ground.

The city sends a recreation director to the lot every summer. When I talked to her, she mentioned that she has to make the children wear shoes because there is so much broken glass on the ground.

There is another recreation area two blocks west of the Corridor. There, at the James Couzens school, is a nice, modern tot lot equipped with whimsical playthings. There is also a recreation center there, with a pool in the summer.

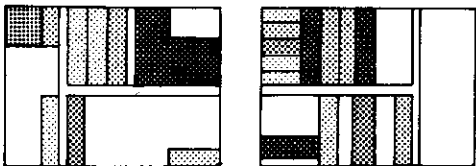
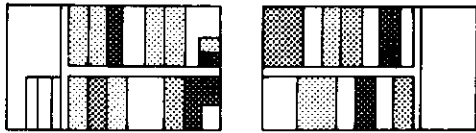
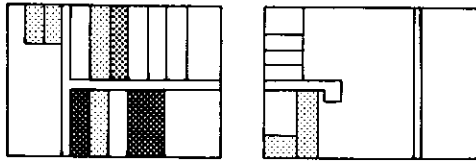
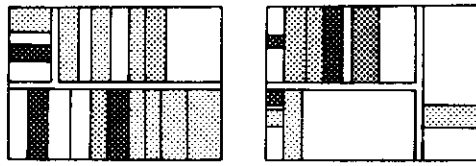
WHERE CHILDREN PLAY



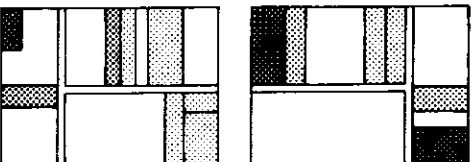
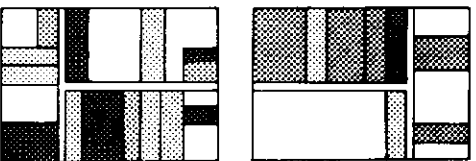
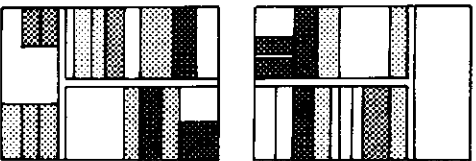
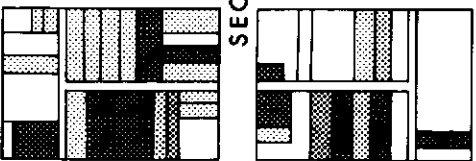
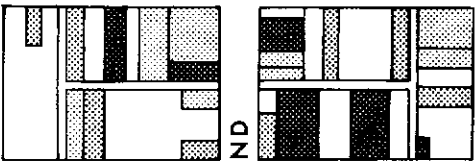
EACH SYMBOL MEANS ONE CHILD SEEN IN :

- △ STEPS OR PORCH
- YARD OR LOT
- ◇ BUSINESS PLACE
- ◇ STREET OR ALLEY
- OTHER

PRENTIS



SELDEN



TEMPLE

ANONYMITY

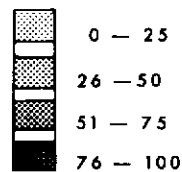
CASS CORRIDOR

THIRD

SECOND

CASS

PERCENT OF
PEOPLE LIVING ALONE



The area also includes basketball courts and baseball diamonds. But everyone in the Corridor knows that these facilities were built to serve the Jeffries Housing Projects, which are inhabited entirely by black people. White children are afraid to use the fields. The recreation center staff places a great deal of emphasis on black awareness in its programs.

Black children learn the distinction between black and white very early, and they learn it, often in economic terms. I heard one black teenager describe, for instance, that her first consciousness of race came when she was only about four or five. She and an older sister went to pick up another sister at work. The sister was working scrubbing floors in a white man's house. This was how she learned what "white" really meant.

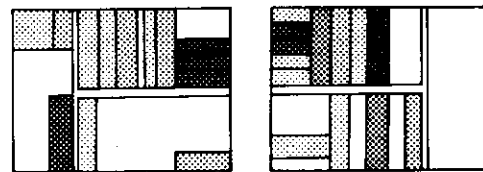
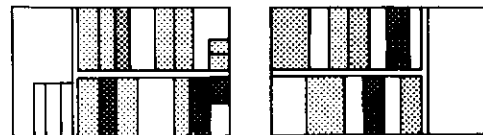
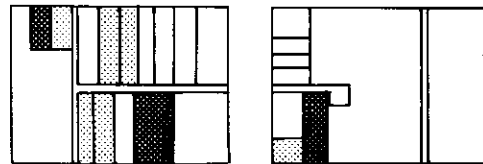
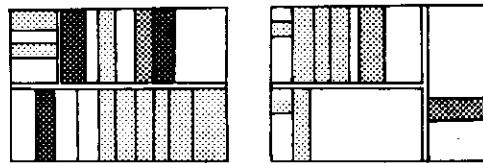
When such a child goes to school with white children, the results are certainly not beneficial to either whites or blacks. The children of the Cass Corridor go to "integrated" elementary schools. One little white boy in second grade told me "The black boys in sixth grade come up to you in the playground and say 'Gimme a dollar or I'll beat you up'." The Burton School, on Cass at Peterboro, draws white children from the Corridor and black children from the east side of Woodward. The young people of these two neighborhoods have traditionally been enemies. Fights between teenagers from the two areas are common. The elementary school is certainly not free of this tension.

On the elementary level, however, the proportions of the races are approximately even. In Jefferson Junior High School, which has a larger feeder area, the black kids become a definite majority. It is at this level that the white kids begin to drop out of school, being unwilling to attend a school where they are socially and culturally excluded and even threatened. A high school student is a rare phenomenon in the Cass Corridor.

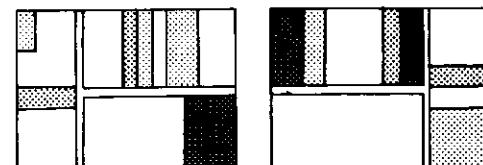
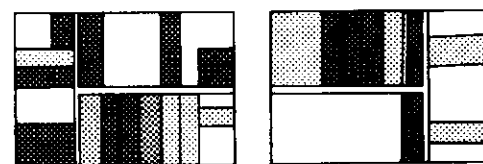
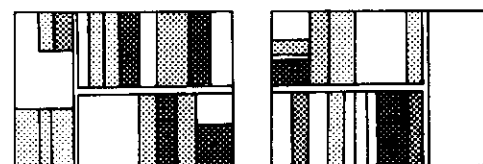
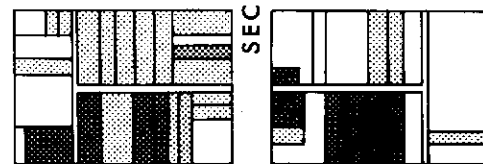
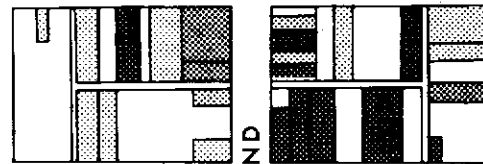
Instead of being in school, the teenagers are "in the streets," in every traditional sense of the word. They start smoking and drinking early and many of them marry in their teens. In general, they get used to the same life the adults around them are leading.

The life of a child in inner-city Detroit is never easy. But the children of the Cass Corridor have a very special set of problems to face. They are thwarted on all sides by a racist system which they have been lead to believe in but kept from participating in.

PRENTIS



SELDEN



TEMPLE

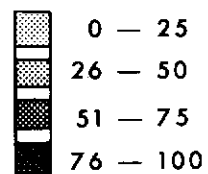
THE ELDERLY CASS CORRIDOR

THIRD

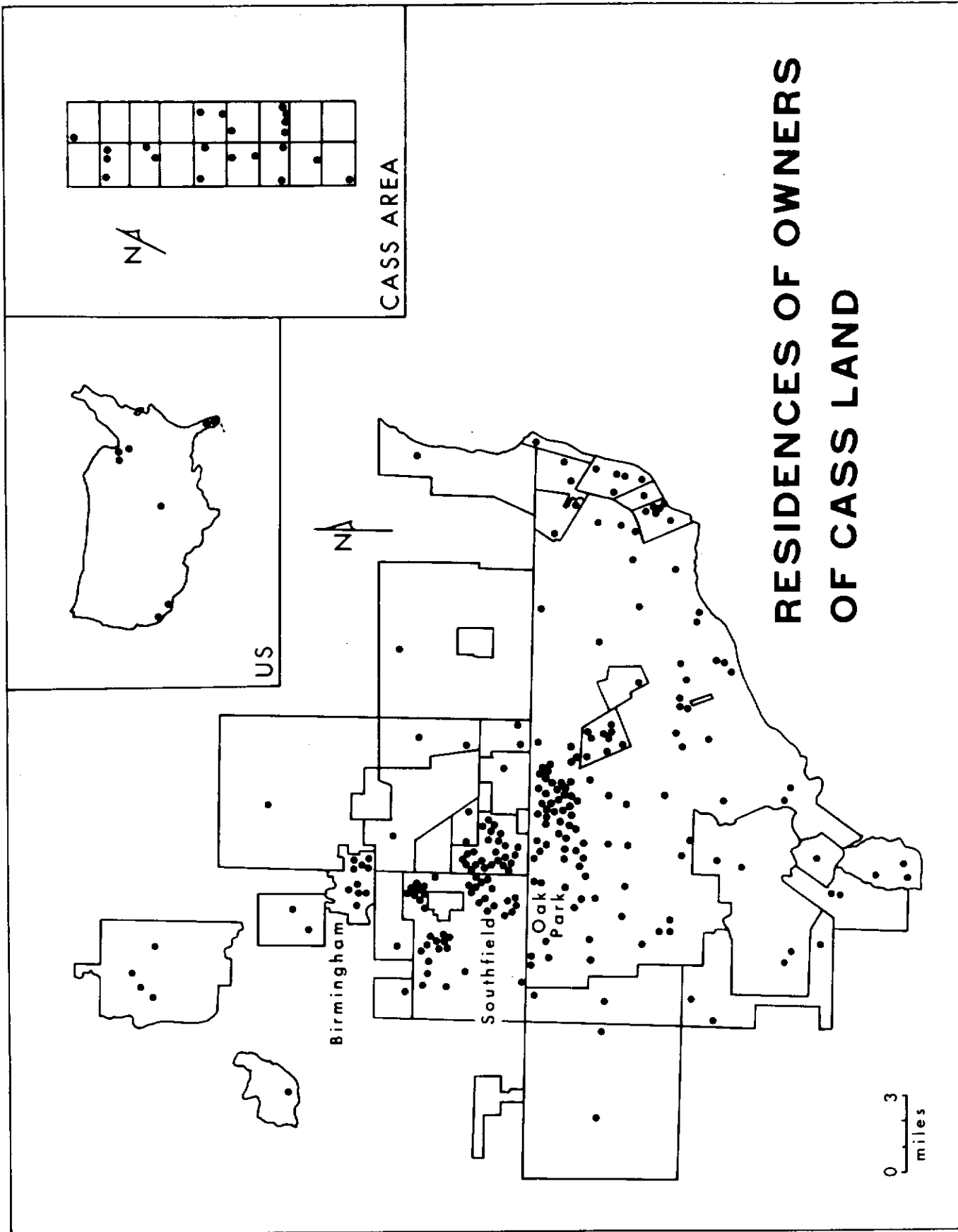
SECOND

CASS

PERCENT



RESIDENCES OF OWNERS OF CASS LAND



No Rat Walls on Bewick

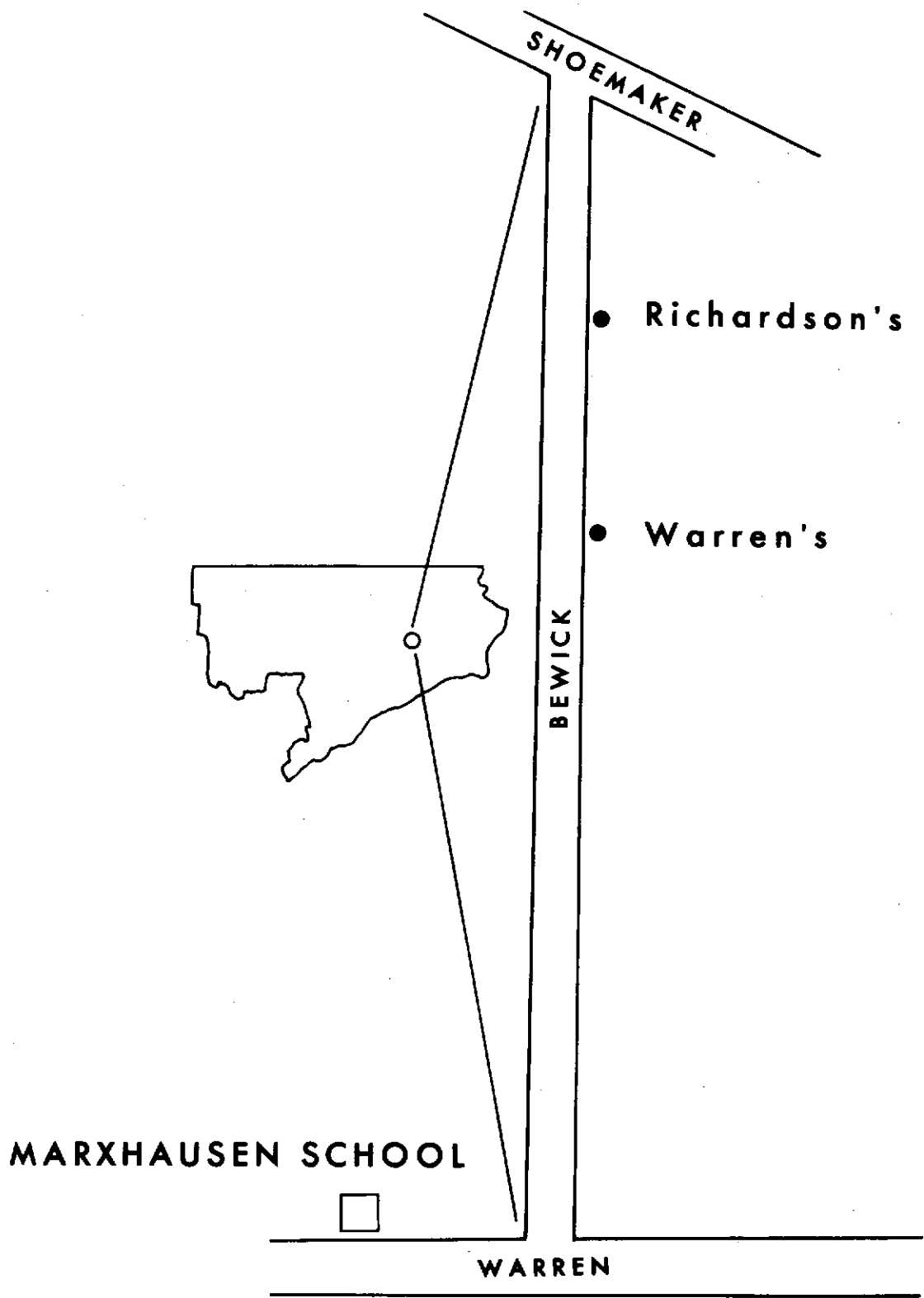
Gwendolyn Warren

Well, the kind of neighborhood it was, you had piles of kids. The house had two bedrooms and an attic for sleeping, and you had to go outside and upstairs to get to the attic. There were eleven people, my mother, my father and my grandfather all living in that house.

The whole neighborhood was infested with rats, and not one house within blocks of there on either side had a rat wall. And that is where I got my thing about rats. I was ten, in fifth grade.

When you move into a new house, they usually paint the house, cut the grass. We really thought we were getting into something big. We had just moved from Ruesdisale which is down close to Van Dyke where all the bums and everything else was living, so we were supposed to be stepping up in class, closer to the white side and further west than we were. We knew we would be crowded but it was bigger than the house we had just moved from. And the school was not far out and it was lucky for that because we had been used to walking twelve blocks to school. So we moved in.

And we used to have mice, little bitty mice. I was really freaked out by the little animals but they did not bother me that much. I could still sleep and eat and come into the house. It happened about six months later. These mice matured into rats. I guess the rats just ate off the mice. It all just changed overnight in the whole neighborhood. The whole place was infested. And these were not those little rats, the kind you see in encyclopedias. Water rats: eight inch bodies and eleven inch tails; those were the kind of monkeys living over there. We had a lot of cats hanging around there and you could see the cats and the rats fighting; on the curb, on the front porch, in the street. If you are sitting down at the table eating, do not turn your head to look at the TV - the rats would be on the table. They would leap up off the floor, onto the chair and onto the table and grab a piece of meat and run and jump back down. And they would not run and hide with that meat. They would look at you and eat your dinner at your foot. The first time we had a TV, we would sit in the living room and we would sit on the floor and look at Bonanza when it first came on and all the kids in the neighborhood used to come down and we used to be sitting around scooping the box and these bad boys - you used to put your hand down on the floor because we did not have any furniture but we had a carpet which we thought was cool - you would find somebody sitting



GWENDOLYN WARREN'S HOME, AGE 10

on your hand. And here is this rat, weighing a good four or five pounds sitting right there like a little puppy, a little German Shepherd puppy.

Me and my sisters, Sharon, Minnie and Jeraldine, and my two brothers stayed upstairs. And my mother, father, grandfather and two older sisters stayed downstairs, and we used to have to go outside and up the back stairs to get to bed. I mean, getting up those steps. The monkeyies used to sit on the top of the steps and when they were mice you could just take a broom and bam it and they would run, but they did not do that any more. They would just look at you. And there was not any stomping your feet and making them go away because they would not go.

When you used to go to sleep at night you could hear them. And that was one of the reasons that all the Warren kids used to pee in the bed because we didn't go down those stairs to go to the bathroom, because when you put your foot on the floor, they were there. We used to sleep four in the bed sometimes instead of sleeping in different beds to protect each other. They used to get up on the bed. My sister got bit in the ear and I have a scar on my side. They would get in your bed at night and they bite you to eat meat. The heaviest experience I ever had with a rat was once I was sick. But I never went upstairs by myself. Whenever anyone else decided to go to bed, that was when I went to bed. My mother worked midnights so if Melvin went out to a party, Sharon and I would be by ourselves and we would just sit in the living room with all the lights on in chairs with our feet drawn up. We had to sit in hard back chairs. We could not sit in cushion chairs because the rats would lay babies in the cushions of the couch and we were really terrified of them. This time, I got sick and I was going to go upstairs to bed. I just could not sit up. So I went upstairs, got into bed and it was really comfortable; I went to sleep and for some reason I woke up, and to this day I do not know what woke me up, but when I woke up he was looking me dead in the face. Just like this close.

I just freaked, completely. I jumped up and I was walking backwards off the end of the bed shaking my head saying, "This ain't happening," and I went off the end of the bed, backwards, and hit my head on the corner of the dresser with the whole impact of my body falling backwards on that dresser, on the edge of it, but do you know I did not feel it till the next day. Because by the time I hit the floor, I bounced; I was up and running and I jumped in Sharon's bed and she told me to get up, that I couldn't sleep in her bed and I said in a whisper, "There are rats in my bed, OK?" She said, "No." So I slept on top of the

chest of drawers that night.

In Black neighborhoods, it is much different with kids playing together than it is in white neighborhoods. The feeling is different. I went to school with white kids in elementary school but it was not the same. Every Black was sisters and brothers. We had something in common. At seven o'clock, we would be up and on the street sitting on the corner on the store stand. Everybody was there. And everyone was leaving for the same reason. You had to get out of the house because they were going to start arguing. You did not want to stay there because all you wanted to do was get your clothes and beat the rats out of the door. You knew you were not going to eat any breakfast. No need to hang around for that. We used to all get together on Jack's store step and pool our money and go in and get potato chips. And then we used to go over to the baseball field where we used to play baseball. Every summer, Parks and Recs would bring people out who would be nice to you and give you ping pong balls but make you leave your coats there in exchange for it, or your shoes or something very valuable - all you had in the world - in case you lose their little dinky thing.

At night, we stayed outside. And we did not play around the house like some kids play hide and seek around the house. When you do not have a rat wall, you do not play hide and seek around the house. You play around the cars or around the trees but do not get too close to the house because at night the rats come out. And they would walk up and down the steps, just like little people, and just do their thing. In fact, it was their house. At night, we used to go on Clifford hunts. Clifford is what we called our rats - Clifford. That was just our family name for them. Everybody gave their own rats a name. The Richardons, who used to live down the street from us, used to call their rats, The Jones. You know about the Jones having more than you have got; well, every time you used to get something, the rats would take it. If you had food, they would eat it. If you had clothes, do not hang it up in the closet because they would tear paper, put it in the pockets and the lining and have their babies in them in two weeks. So we used to hang our coats out on the front porch. And your shoes; when you wake up in the morning and have left your shoes beside your bed, first thing you do before you put them on, you throw them at the wall and if there is anything in them they will run out and several times you bang them against the wall and a rat or somebody came out of your shoe.

So we used to go Clifford hunting. And we would only do this when everyone was at home, like my brothers and sisters. (And my mother is terrified of rats, too. I think this is

why she has two jobs. That is not the real reason, but it would help.) The rats used to stay in the kitchen and the back porch so if you go into the refrigerator the rats would be in there. We had an old refrigerator and the door would not close right. The food cabinets we had on the back porch, they would gnaw holes in the wood. They would crawl up in there and eat the flour, sugar and potatoes. They would just eat everything. So we used to go on hunts at night. We would go into the kitchen and everyone would get a broom, mop, shovel, baseball bat, and some people would get up on the stove, on the sink, up on the refrigerator, chairs; then you would cut the light out. And you would leave it off for about ten minutes and you put some bread on the floor and they would come out, and then somebody would click on the switch and just go to war. And we used to sweep up at least seven or eight big rats every night, that you had to shovel up with a shovel. There was not any sweeping them up on a piece of cardboard and you could not flush them down the toilet. They were the kind you threw out in the alley. And in the bathroom, they would get up on the toilet and be crawling around the edge of the tub and they would fall over and if there were water in the tub, you used to see dead rats around there sometimes: Just sick stuff like that.

I do not like rats, specifically. Also, I do not like cats. I can look at a cat and I will not really have nightmares about it, but I can not stand it when they come near me. The cats and the rats used to be fighting. And you would see cats walking down the street with rat hairs in their mouths. You could see cats stalking rats in vacant lots. And you could see them just rip them to pieces, if he could beat him. He could not beat him if a cat went up to a pack of rats. He would always get whopped. Cats never came around the alleys because the rats were too heavy around there. The alleys were "rat domain," and the cats did not go in there.

The only thing that could put a rat down was a dog. There must have been thirty German Shepherds in that neighborhood. Black folks love German Shepherds and Great Danes and Dovermen Pinchers. We had two German Shepherds. They used to chase the rats. If a dog caught a rat, he would not eat him. He would kill him and leave him there. But a cat would sit there like a little nasty varmit and have blood dripping all over the place, which was really gross when you tried to eat. On Ruesdisale, the place we moved from, we did not have any rats, but they had cats, thirty, forty cats in the backyard at night running wild. They used to jump on kids. If your windows were open, they just went all in your house, in the cabinets. If you had babies' milk, they really would go after it. They would lick babies in the face. They

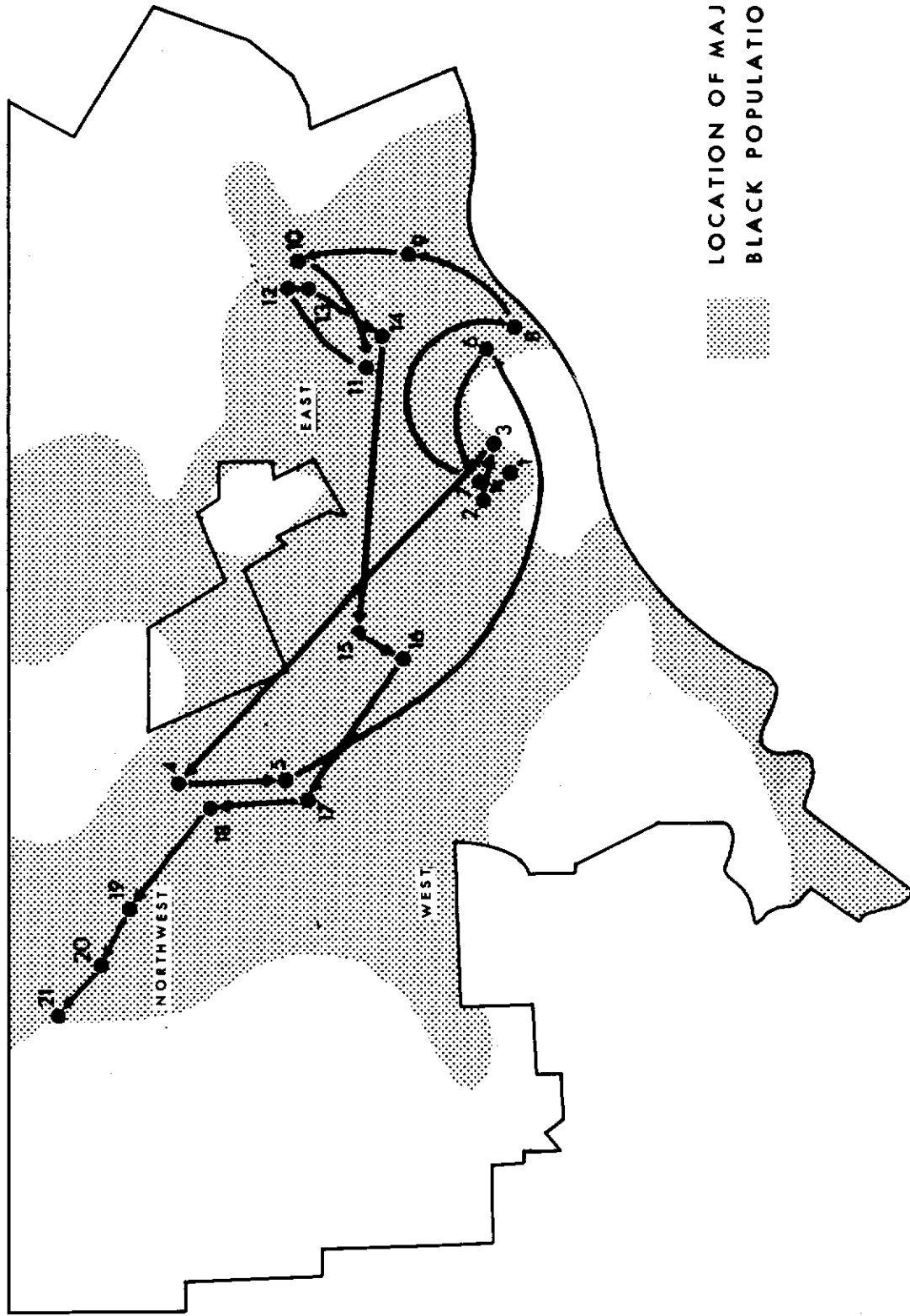
are really nasty animals.

Everybody loved dogs. If there were dogs around, the cats and the rats would not be in too much control because if you had a big dog he could keep the rats at least away from your bed.

I can honestly say that even though we had lived in places that were smaller than Bewick, where the school was much farther, I can not say I have ever lived in a place where I was hungrier than Bewick, or that I was more raggedier than on Bewick. I used to wear snow pants to school. It is summertime, June, and we are hopping along in snow pants, galoshes, boots, and it got to be such a pattern, all the kids would do it; the teacher used to ask, "Won't you take off your snow pants? Won't you take off your boots?" but pretty soon she just got the hint that you did not have anything else on, so don't be asking to take it off. We did not have any other clothes.

They did not have hot lunches in school. You could bring your lunch and eat in the lunch room, but since we did not have any food, what we used to do, we use to tell them we were going home to eat lunch and then we used to go home and sit up and look at TV for the forty minutes and then go back to school. Everyone was always sick because we were not eating anything. You did not eat breakfast, and you did not eat lunch. You probably ate one meal a day, usually that was comprised of baloney and bread, or beans and corn bread. But that was the basic meal.

I have stolen from the store one time in my whole life. That was when I was living on Fairview, down near Southeastern. It was a pretty nice house; it was really super crowded but it was warm. When you talk about a "pretty good house" in the ghetto, you mean one that is solid. If they put storm windows in and the ceiling was not falling in, regardless of what color it was or how it was built, it was a nice house if it was warm. It was a pretty nice house, but we were really hungry. We were going to Lowbridge Elementary School which is an almost all white elementary school. We were hungry. God knows we were hungry. So my sisters, Minnie and Sharon, they used to go to the store and steal bananas and Hostess Twinkies during lunch time and take them home and eat them for lunch. It really gets bad every time some one else cops off of you and you ask for divs and they do not want to give you any and they give you a lot of mouth service. Because you were hungry too and you just did not feel like begging. So this time, I was going to get my own Hostess Twinkies. I am really afraid on the inside, and I put those Hostess Twinkies under my coat and I got to the



LOCATION OF MAJORITY
BLACK POPULATION, 1969

21 HOMES OF GWENDOLYN WARREN
DETROIT

door and the dude picked me up, just lifted me up off the ground - "DROP THAT HOSTESS TWINKIE!" I pissed all over myself. "Don't put me in jail. Don't put me in jail. Don't put me in jail." I just started crying and Minnie and Sharon who were also in the store at the same time, pilfering, said "Let my sister go." "All right, I'll let you go, but I don't ever want to see you back in this store again." (I thought then that this dude was letting me off for murder for free.) "If I ever see you on Mack again, I'll call the police." I'm six, you know? He just blew my whole life so I ran home crying. I was really shook up and from that day on I have never stolen anything from the store. Not that I did not want to and not that all my buddies do not, and not that I see anything wrong with it, but basically, I'm a chicken.

In elementary school, everybody is coping food. And then they start with things like a yo yo, hoola hoops, jacks. You want to play with them. Then when you get to junior high school, you are still wearing your brother's pants and you are a girl; you start going out to department stores and coping skirts. Nothing expensive. I have friends that go there and steal underwear. They do not have any. When you are in high school, then you start stealing fashionable clothes. By the time you get to college, you are a professional. It starts with stealing food and as you get more socialized it goes with social needs. Pretty soon, you are coping cars. Take the girl for a spin on the weekend.

I moved from the East Side when I was eleven. We used to run in packs on the East Side. Life was more dangerous on the East Side. When my mother told us we were moving to the West Side of Detroit, we thought we were moving to Bloomfield Hills. Even now, the things that people do to people to meet their needs on the West Side is not like the East Side. It was like a jungle on the East Side. 12th and Dexter still is not as heavy as Mack and Canfield. You get down there on the East Side on Warren and Canfield and Iroquois, people are heavy; they were deep. They were doing some stuff you would not believe. We had a patent thing for the police.

We kept moving into bigger houses, and we had less kids because everybody was growing up. But when we had so many kids, we could only live in small places because we could not afford any more. We were living on East Grand Boulevard. And we were up in class. They have now converted it into a convalescent home, but it was really a huge, nice, out of sight, pad. Of course, we could not foot the bills and that was when we started our panics. And a panic is, one, no food in the house, absolutely none. We used to eat corn bread for

dinner. We could take a dollar and buy two packs of beans, a package of corn bread and a stick of margarine and feed the whole family. One dollar bill. We used to live like that, seven dollars a week. We could survive; it had just gotten down to that. We had a little gang going around there and it was a lot of the kids from the old neighborhood. I was seven. Those were hard times. We were not eating anything. And you did not get dressed up to go anywhere. My brother, Martin, was fifteen and never had a bike and that is when he went out and copped him a bike because he wanted to ride one. He did not even know how to ride.

This lady who lived right next door to us had this Great Dane. She was white. And she used to serve her Great Dane ground beef. We were watching her go to the store, go to the meat counter, get this food, take it home, cook it and give it to her dog. And what we used to do, while one person entertained her dog, the other would steal her food. And we used to eat like that. And we never saw anything like that on the West Side. You did not even talk about it either because once you moved from the East Side, you hardly ever mentioned you were from the East Side of Detroit. Because the Black people would say, "You from the sticks, huh?" Because they knew what the deal was - the jungle.

I was talking to a white graduate of Michigan State University and she was telling about how she was just horrified when she first went to State and she had to figure out what kind of classes she was going to take and what she was supposed to do about her program. She just did not know what she was to do. And she really wished her parents were there to help her through and get her registered and talk to her academic adviser about her career. I remember when I was in the first grade, Sharon registered me in school; I was in 1 (b) and she was in 1 (a), nine months older than me, and my mother, my older brothers or sisters never registered me in school since then. We moved about every six months and every time we went to a new school, I filled out all my own forms and my parents never put me in school. I put my ownself in school. Even registration this semester at State, I knew kids whose parents were up there. And I was saying, "Wow! Talk about lame." I can not imagine it! Oh my God; it is just mind blowing! Black little kids just go through all the formalities by themselves, even picking up your records.

There was one thing about living on the East Side that I did not encounter on the West Side and that was the distance between houses and school. When we lived on Bewick, the elementary school was only two blocks away, which was cool. When I went to Foch, that was a good two miles and

we used to walk in the rain, in the dead winter time; we used to wear this little jacket and we used to put two shirts on, your brother's socks and gym shoes, and we used to walk down Warren to school. My God, them was the days.

And you went to school because it was always warm there. I never skipped school when I was on the East Side.

The rats, the hunger and the cold; the natural elements - those were the monkeys. Not the people. Everything that was going on, you knew what was happening. Whoever killed Jack, who was running the party store on the corner, you knew his older brother, you knew the dude. And you knew he did it. You knew he was probably going to do it. You knew who ripped off the hardware store. When Reggie Harden* and all of them used to be down Snookler's Pool Room and everyone was pulling out forty-fives and shooting each other, the pool sharks used to come down there and set each other up; me and Sharon used to wait outside the pool room door cause my brother, Walter, used to be in there all the time. It did not bother me.

We used to walk down the street and we knew everybody. Everybody was somebody else's older brother or younger brother whom you went to school with. I was not afraid of crime at all. Especially if you are a kid with a large family. You do not fear anything. I had too many older brothers and sisters to say anything. I was the youngest of eleven kids. They would not necessarily protect me but nobody else knew that. As a matter of fact, they never did help me in a fight. Sharon let me get beat up once.

People in the suburbs are looking at what is happening in crime as the outcome of this situation. They are not looking at the causes of the situation. And if you are in the situation, you know it makes you do certain things. One of the heaviest things was when we were living on Bewick and Walter got sentenced to go to Jackson (State Prison). But I understood why he did it. I was living there. By that time, there were all those kids, and my two older sisters had kids; Walter was married and had a child; my mother had had a heart attack and was at home and father had run off some place and Walter was the oldest man in the house at seventeen. He had dropped out of school at thirteen. He could not get a job. Three weeks before then, Sharon, me and Melvin had just got out of the Receiving Hospital suffer-

*professional basketball player with criminal convictions well known around Detroit.

ing from malnutrition. What was he going to do? He went out and he stole to get some. Cause we did not know he had stole - right? And he came home one night and this guy just came walking in the door smiling, like a Chester cat. We wondered "What's the deal?" And he just came marching in with groceries. Bags, and bags, and bags. And I think that within two days we must have eaten half of what he had bought. It was just the fear that it was going to go away. And we just started eating and everybody's jaws were bulging, "What else you got over there?" I swear it. We just started eating. Melvin was in junior high school and Walter bought him a suit and we really dug Melvin's grey suit because Melvin never had a suit before. And we used to go up and down the street and tell all our friends how cool our brother was because he had a suit. And Minnie was going to be in the play, and she was a cheer leader, and she was working in Chet's, the ice cream place, and she wanted to go to college. And Walter bought her some clothes so that she could go to school and be dignified.* Because at that time there were about twenty percent Black at Southeastern and the rest were white and these whites came from the suburbs some place because they would drive up in their new cars and all their pretty clothes and the Black folks would be coming off of Warren and Shoemaker and Mack; all of them off of the welfare roles, and they put them all in the same school. And at that point we wanted to get in tight and do things and you could not do it because you were too raggedy, and you probably smelled bad because you had not had a bath because you had no water. Those were some of the heavy experiences of going to school. Everyone used to talk about your appearance.

I always had ring worm from not washing my face. And, of course, they tell you, you can wash your face in cold water. I do not particularly care for cold water. And if the water happened to be cut off we used to go to the park, to the city park, with buckets at night. Me and Sharon had a little water pail and would go to the fountain and fill them up with water so we would have water to drink in the house. That was in the heart of the city.

The thing that we used to say all the time was, "We may not be as smart as white folks." We used to believe that, you know - "We might not be as smart as them, and we might not drink as good and live in the best place, but we can beat their ass." The thing that kept us going was that we were madder than Hell. Just mad. Ten of us could beat an army of them, because we had just that much hate built up. You knew that physically you could beat them. They

*Walter Warren served time for armed robbery at Jackson State Prison in Michigan for many years starting when he was seventeen.

told you mentally that you could not do it but there was one thing they could not lie about and that was that the hate inside your fist could break a damn jaw and you knew it. And they feared you for that.

The thing that kept you going was the whole thing of survival. Everyone just wanted to survive. And people did it in a whole lot of ways. A lot of people who wanted to survive took the man's road. They went to working for the man. Not in terms of becoming teachers and getting a college job, but I mean in terms of pushing dope, numbers. They were still getting over. They were trying like Hell. That was the only way they knew how. It is not their fault as far as I am concerned. If they are not aware of what is happening now we can tell them, run it on them, and they can change their ways, but right then it came down, "I'm going to eat because I'm going to deal in the numbers. I'm going to make me some bread."

You had other things, the "eligible young bachelor." All right, in the White community he may be the guy with a college education with the most prominent future, right? "The eligible bachelor" in the Black community is the guy who has got him a gig at the factory. Not a post man, not a store clerk, not a college student, but a guy who has got a gig at the factory and you know damn well he is going to get a check every Friday. Every girl, from the age of fifteen on up; they hawk him, you know. And you survive by getting married at the age of sixteen so you can leave your family so your parents do not have to support you but your husband does. And that is how you start and you just keep going. Every sister I've got, got married like that.

We had a lot of things going for us that we enjoyed. One of the heaviest parts of living at home on Bewick was when you used to walk down the street about twelve o'clock at night and it is really black outside, so you can not really see the dirt, everybody is sitting on their front porch and from one end of the block to the other end of the block everyone is singing. That was the beauty. Little kids used to walk down the street harmonizing. Just like an opera, the whole place was lit up with sound. That was the thing. That was the part I really dug about it, the music. Because if there was not a radio going or a record player going, in this one block there must have been sixteen singing groups, just the neighborhood kids and everybody would try and out sing each other. And they would rehearse and they would practice and then they would go show off by walking from one end of the corner of the block to the other, just singing. And they would dress up and put on their best clothes and walk down the street and sing. And it was cool. It was cool. It was really cool.

On the main drags, like Warren, you had to be older to hang out on them. You had to reach a little more maturity to be accepted out there. But when you were below sixteen, you hung out on the side streets. But when you got to a certain age, you were cool enough to get out there, and when you got out there, you were somebody. I mean you were not anybody to the world, but you were somebody to us. We had a lot of idols. Of course, all of them are in jail now, but we had a lot of idols.

As far as the Warrens are concerned, we got over. It tickles me, cause I think we got over too. I do. We are all patting each other on the back. But the thing that got us through it all was that we stood together, maybe not as a whole total community, but as a family we did, and the thing that kept us together was the mother, naturally. She kept us together. I am not going to holler any Horatio Alger, because it did not happen like that. Everyone in my family got over because they were dealing like Hell. They did their time; they served from dope pushing, to number rackets, to rip off; they all did it. But they all said, "Look. I know what happened to me when I was a kid and I'll be damned if its going to happen to my kids." And they do not care what they do. I have come to realize why my preaching Black politics to my family just does not work. Because they have got one thing in mind, "My kid is not going to go hungry. And if he has got to go to a doctor, I'm going to take him to the best. So I am not going out here and fight the man so he can kill my ass and then my child is going to be sitting in some orphanage home or have to live with some old relative who is still down there in the ghetto." So they prefer to live quiet lives and work for people to assure their kids' future, with no risks. They do not want to take a chance. Looking at it from one perspective, it is good. It is healthy. The kid is going to survive, they know. But what we have got to do is figure out an alternative so that both of them will survive. That will be cool.

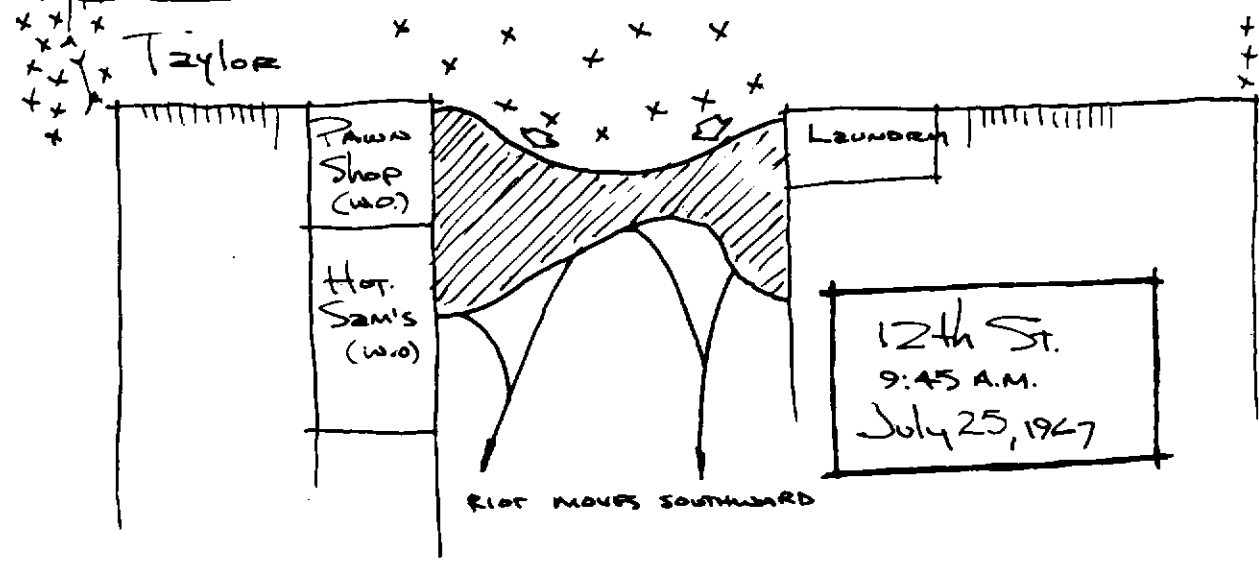
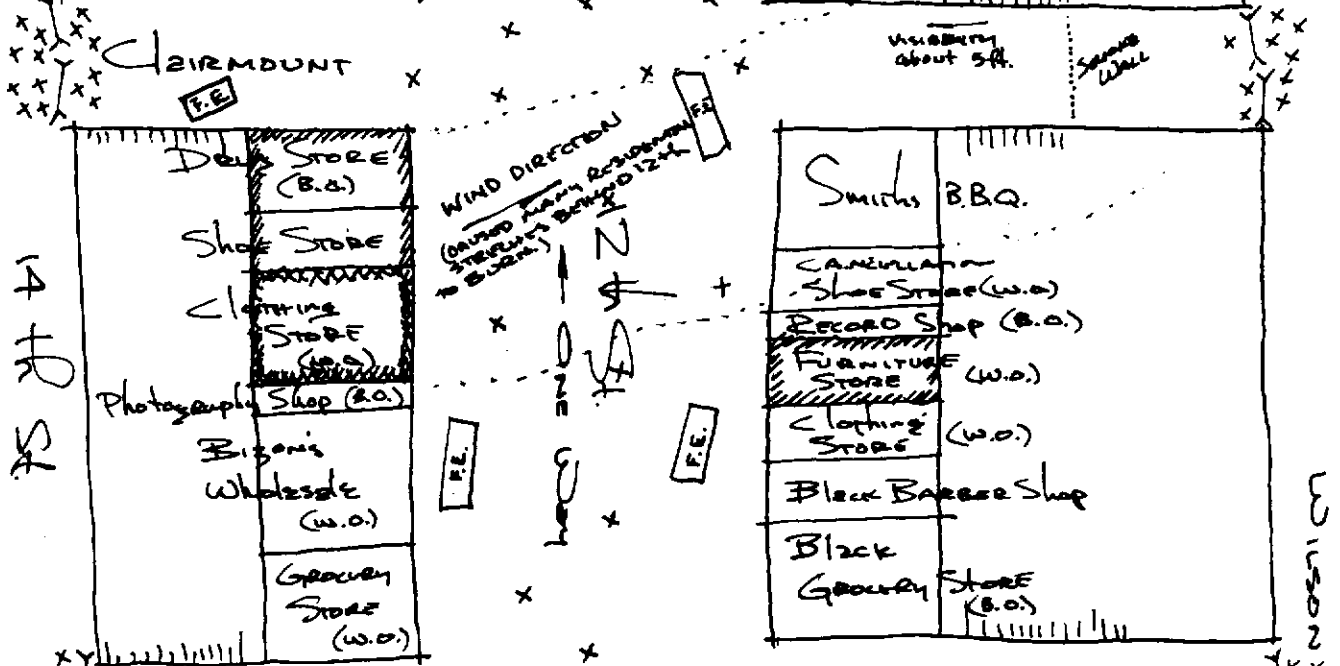
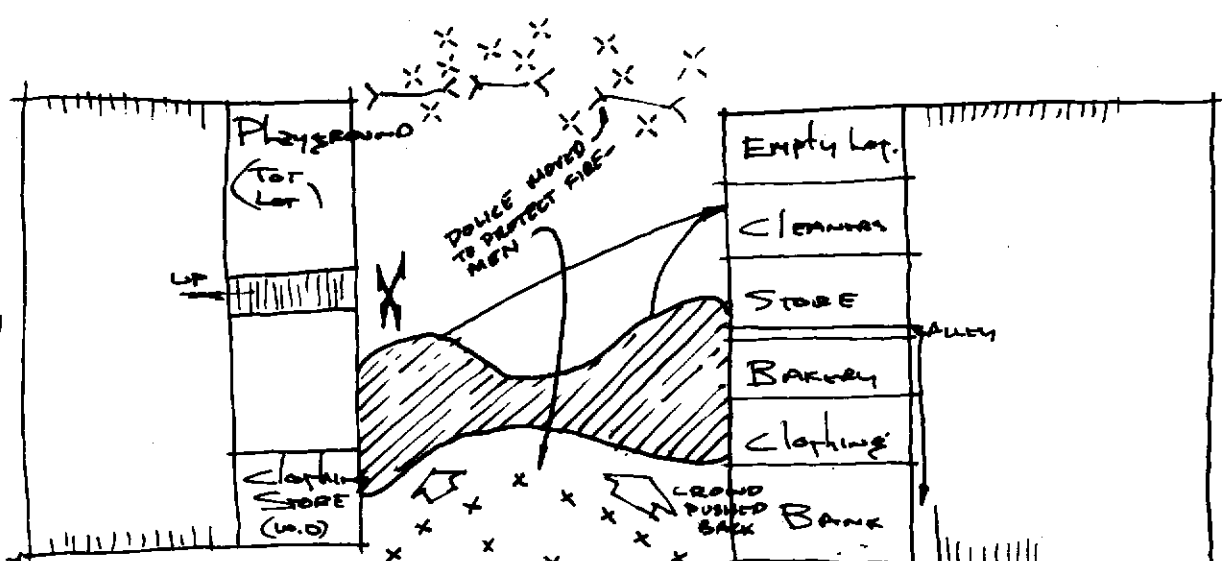
But I think the next generation of Black kids, we will all be Elites, because the people in the city are working. I can remember times when brothers were holding down two jobs, one at Chryslers and one at Fords, and then went out and got him a job for Kentucky Fried Chicken delivering chicken on weekends: putting money in the bank, or to buy a house, or to pay a doctor bill, or to be able to drive a new car. Detroit has changed a lot. But I would say that the city is the exact same for a kid living on the East Side of Detroit now as it was ten or twenty years ago. I do not think that is changed because I have been over there and there is still a family living in the house that we lived in on Bewick with no rat wall. No rat wall.

The Death of 12th Street

Robert Ward Jr.

I was there that morning. It started late at night before I got there. They raided a blind pig over a clothing shop. The raid got people mad. They got mad not because of busting the blind pig, but the way they were treating everybody. They broke in the door with axes and then they were dragging women and men out of there by their collars, and they were Black cops. They were really brutalizing the people as they were thrown on the wagon and that is when everybody got mad. Many times before a blind pig has gotten busted and no one has ever said anything. But when you really go to messing with the people like that, that is what started it. Edison has that place taken over and the 12th Street Academy has its offices there now. There was a Black grocery store on the corner across the street that was never touched. I worked just down the street at the Cancellation Shoe Shop. The prostitutes would walk up and down 12th but they would never go north of Clairmount. Not many people were up there. This is where 12th Street started to die down. The pawn shop was Jewish and I swear to God that cat was tight. There was a Black barber shop where everyone used to hang out and other such places.

When I first came down that morning, Sunday morning, they had police barricades along the side streets. I parked the car in the lot behind the shoe store and then walked around the buildings to the front of the store on 12th. When I got there it was just getting started. The riot itself did not start in the blind pig but a block down on Taylor. There were a whole bunch of people and somebody threw a brick through a window of the grocery store and until that time, I did not see any other windows busted. Then, just a whole bunch of people jumped in there and some of them came out with food and two of them came out dragging the cash register and they just left it right out in the middle of the street at Taylor and 12th and the cops were just looking at them. So the two men just busted the cash register open. It was about seven o'clock and was the beginning of the riot physically. People were gathering in front of the Black grocery store and elsewhere when the first brick was thrown. I was in front of the shop where I was supposed to be working. There were about two hundred in the crowd. They had about thirty-five cops. They busted the register open and took the money and just ran back into the crowd. There was a whole bunch of shouting and then it just faded. The pawn shop was next. Then I went home and told my mother that 12th Street was burning



ONE WAY

WOODROW

ONE WAY

WOODROW

12th St.
9:45 A.M.
July 25, 1967

RIOT MOVES SOUTHWARD

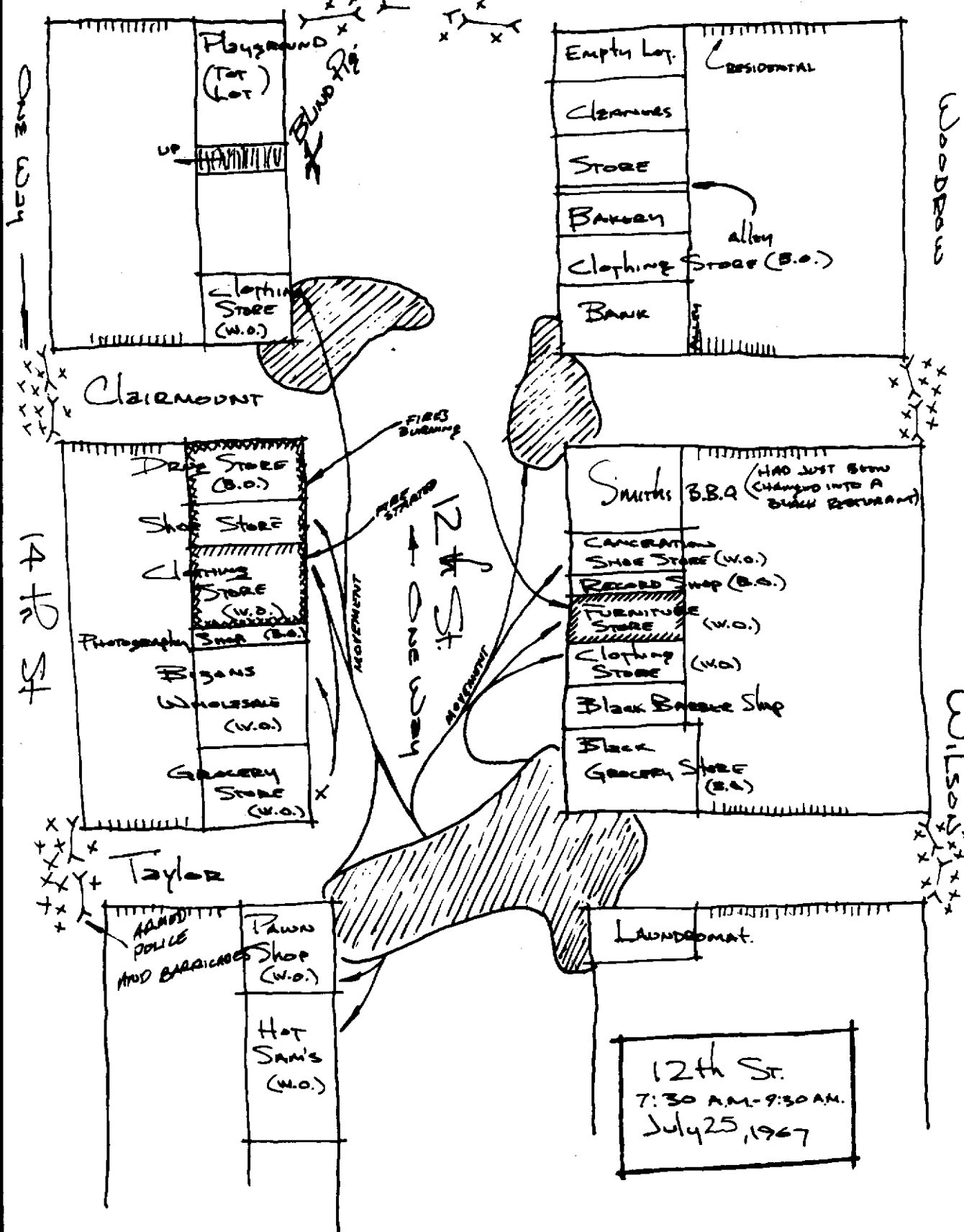
down and that was why I was not at work.

When I got back about an hour later, just about the whole street was gone. There were a bunch more people. And I got back just in time to see someone throw a Molotov Cocktail into Jack's. This was around nine in the morning. The gates were ripped off of Jack's. Everybody has these big fences in front of the stores and all of them were ripped down. People in the stores were grabbing clothes out of the windows, as in Jack's. Then someone threw a Molotov Cocktail into the place and the whole place caught on fire. But this was not the first fire.

It did not really get heavy till that afternoon when the bank went and the bakery. It hit the TV still in the morning. They were showing right next to WWG what they were doing next door. By 12 o'clock, people were going down in their rental trucks and there were close to a thousand people down there and they were ripping it off. People had to park their cars way up on Chicago (Street) and there were cops and state troopers and they had jeeps. By then, the whole place was up in flames. It just looked like gray smoke with flames popping up with both sides of the street on fire at the same time. You were surrounded by fire. And there was smoke all over the place. You could see the smoke almost up to Elmhurst; that is how high it was. And eventually, everybody started drifting that way. And the people also came from all the apartment buildings along 12th with everyone coming out and seeing what was happening.

About one o'clock the policemen were just standing up and the people were just knocking them out of the way because they had not had the order to fire. So this guy took his 1966 Eldorado Cadillac and they had the bank wide open but they could not get any money, so he drove it up the steps right into the vault. He did it four times, and it just popped. It came open. He got money and left. And there was money all over the street. And that is when they got the orders to shoot people. If you bent over to pick it up you got shot. So people did not touch it but everybody's mouth was watering looking at it. I could hear over the radio that they were doing the same thing over at West Grand Boulevard, so the cops kind of left and then the people got the money. When the cops got strong in one place, the people would move down to another. The police had to get orders to move and by the time the police got back down the people had time to get what they had forgot.

By then, the cops had moved up 12th Street in a triangle and they were really fighting. They kept the corner



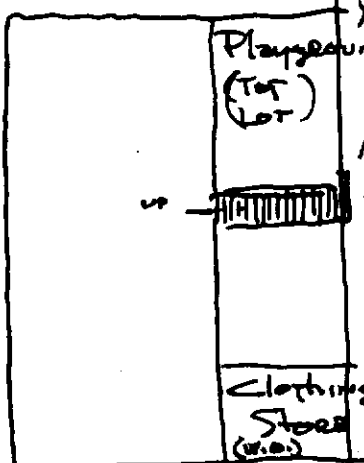
12th St.
 7:30 AM-9:30 AM.
 July 25, 1967

around the fire equipment. Two of them cocked shotguns and pointed them into the crowd and told them to move away, so the crowd, they just ran, took off. By two or three o'clock, you could not get into the area because they had it blocked off. There were people in the area; it was full of people, but the cops were blocking it on the edges.

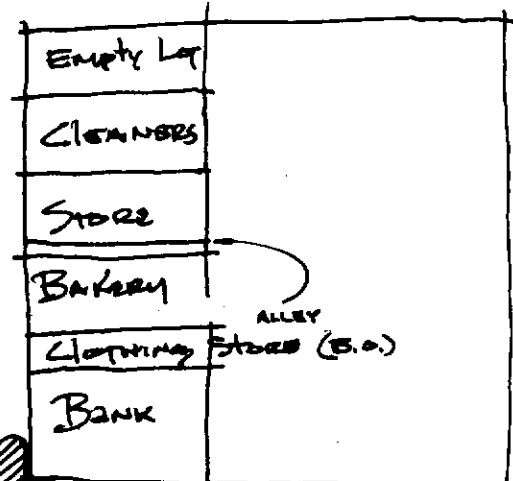
The next day, I had to come back down here because he wanted to look at the store, and like I told him "I don't think we should go down there." But, he wanted to go down anyway, so we went down to the store and the street was deserted. It was just empty. A whole bunch of jeeps came around, just a train of jeeps and they just drove down the street. They just let out National Guard troops and they posted them in twos. Like, I was trying to straighten out the front of the store. He wanted to see what stuff could be saved, what was left, and he wanted me to pair off the stuff. So I went out front and this National Guardsman told me I had better get back inside. So I went back inside. Then he told me to start picking up stuff and I just looked at him. The guy had been cheating me, really cheating the Hell out of me, forcing me to work fifty-five and sixty hours a week for fifty-five dollars. So I just told him to go to Hell and I walked out.

The street was just cluttered. Buildings were in shambles from being burned. You could look through and see the sky and stuff hanging down from the ceiling. 12th Street died that night. There was nothing left after the riot. You used to be able to drive up 12th Street at three o'clock in the morning and see the streets just crowded with people. You would see people hanging out. You would see the hot tomalee man on the corner. When I used to work at the shoe store, I used to stand out in front of the store on Friday night and it was just like a circus or a carnival. The street was just wild, dancing, music everywhere. It is possible that the cops wanted to kill 12th Street and provoked the riot.

ONE WAY



BLIND PASSAGE (START OF BLOCK)
Night Line of
Twenty Digs. Beyond
clearing out. As with the
number of shops



WOODROW

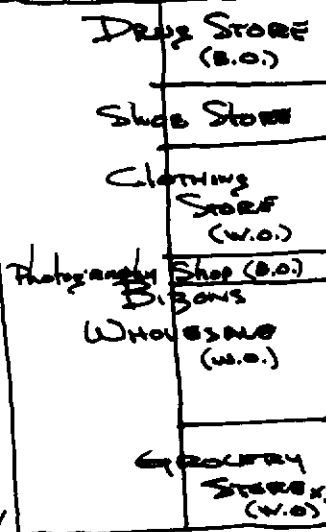
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CLAIMMOUNT

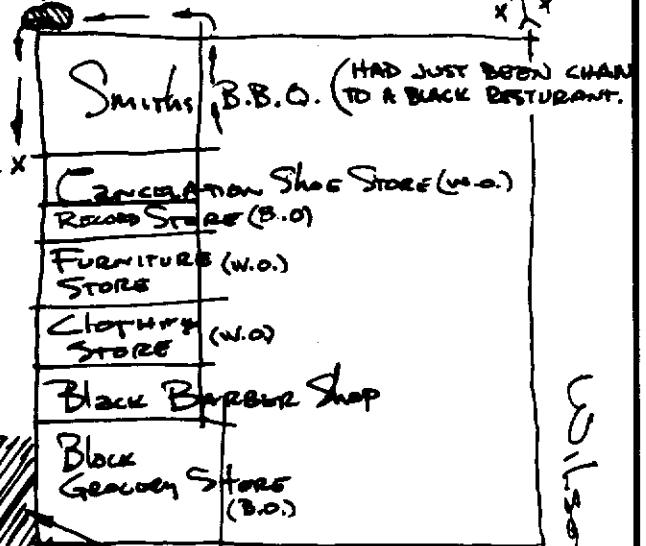
SMALL CRACKS

XXXXXX

12th St



12th St



WILSON

XXXXXX

Taylor

FIRST STORE BEGAN INTO

CASH REGISTER
DROPPED OUT AND
BURST. A PEN
WAS TAKING MONEY.
THE MET FOR FOOD.

MAJOR CRACKS

HEARD POLICE AND BARRICADE

ROWN SHOP (W.O.)

Laundromat.

HOT SAM'S (W.O.)

STREET BARRICADE FURNITURE DOWN

12th St.
7:30 AM.
July 25, 1967

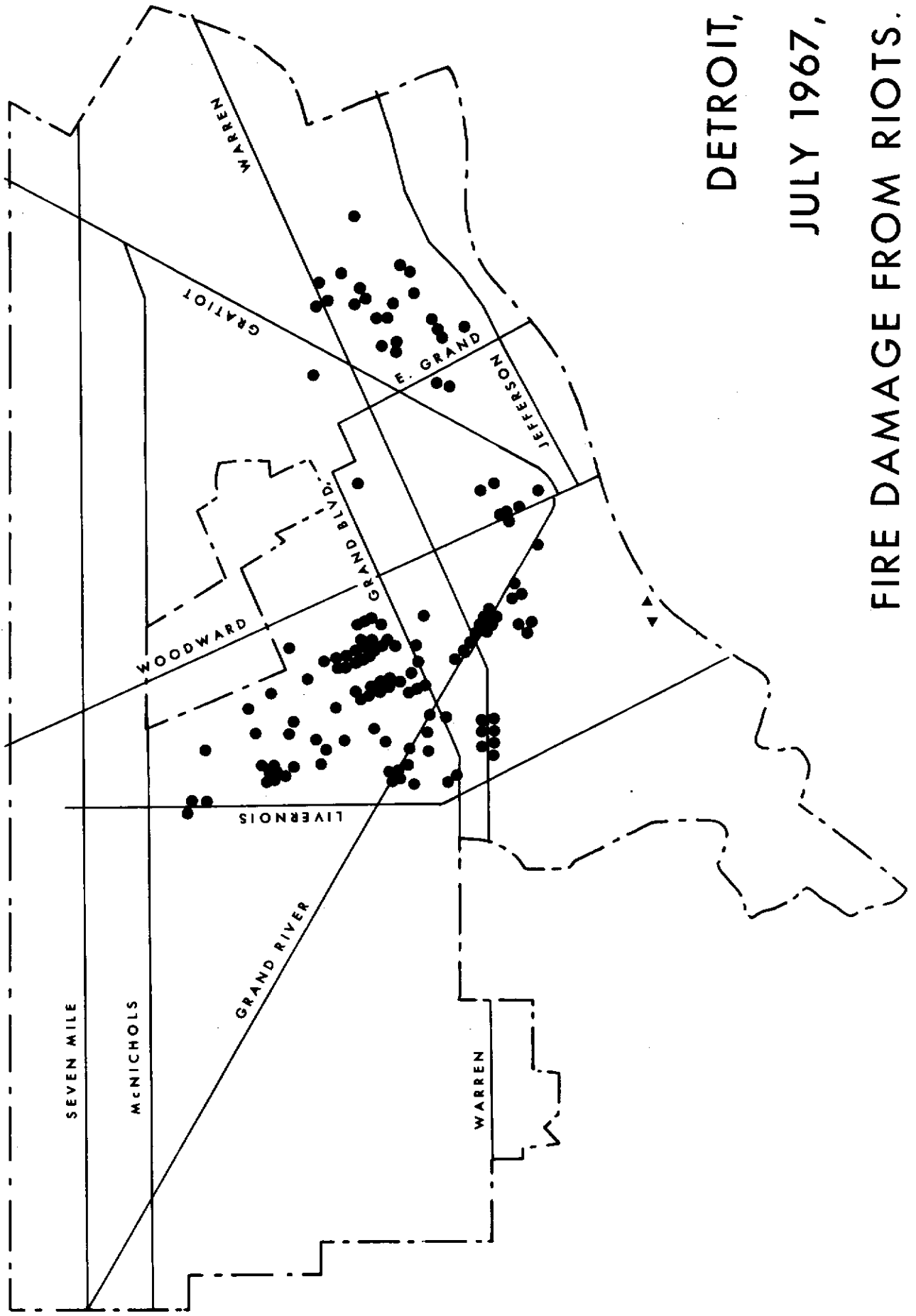
Everybody Was Eating Back Then

Frank Truesdale, Roderick
Shepherd, Sharon Evans,
Debra Hampton

After 12th, they just started popping, every group across the city. The heaviest on the West Side, even heavier than 12th Street was Dexter and Livernois. Livernois, between Fenkell and Six Mile, was just ripped; Gorman's (Furniture), Merchandize Mart, the rug company, which they later turned into a bed place, Kresge's, that paint store this side of the Largo Lounge, and others. They got Fenkell and Livernois first and later on that day, they moved on up to Seven Miles and got all those clothing stores. On, yes, and that precinct (Tenth) on Elmhurst and Livernois, they kept the whole building down. There were four or five guys with rifles on top of the Coney Island across the street and the policemen did not move. The policemen were scared.

Nothing happened around Linwood near Central High School because, wow, they took up Central's whole field. They had a row of helicopters there. They had three or four helicopter landing spots. They had lines of jeeps, tanks and convoy trucks. They had men laying on the grass in defense with machine guns and you could not even walk on that side of the street. They had machine guns on a tripod. This friend's father owned a gas station and we just heard shooting and tanks going up and down the street all night. My brother went outside for a minute to see what was happening and to watch one of the tanks go by and a jeep just pulled up and the National Guardsman got out and he said something to my brother and my brother started to get smart with him and they all jumped out and pointed the guns at my brother. So my friend's father pulled my brother back in.

Monday night, this white woman got shot clean through the head, downtown. That is when the fatality rate just started shooting up. Monday night, that was the big day. Everything started hitting up over the city. The dogs at Hudson's (Department Store) killed a few people. They have got killer dogs in there at night. They killed more than two or three people who went in there to do their thing and they got caught. The Guard was down there as soon as that woman got killed. Places like Hudsons, Northland, Meyer's Jewellery Store at Grand River and Oakman, they had so many National Guard, the moment everybody thought that things were going to spread, they had it covered. They had a helicopter on top of Hudsons. They had troops down



DETROIT,

JULY 1967,

FIRE DAMAGE FROM RIOTS.

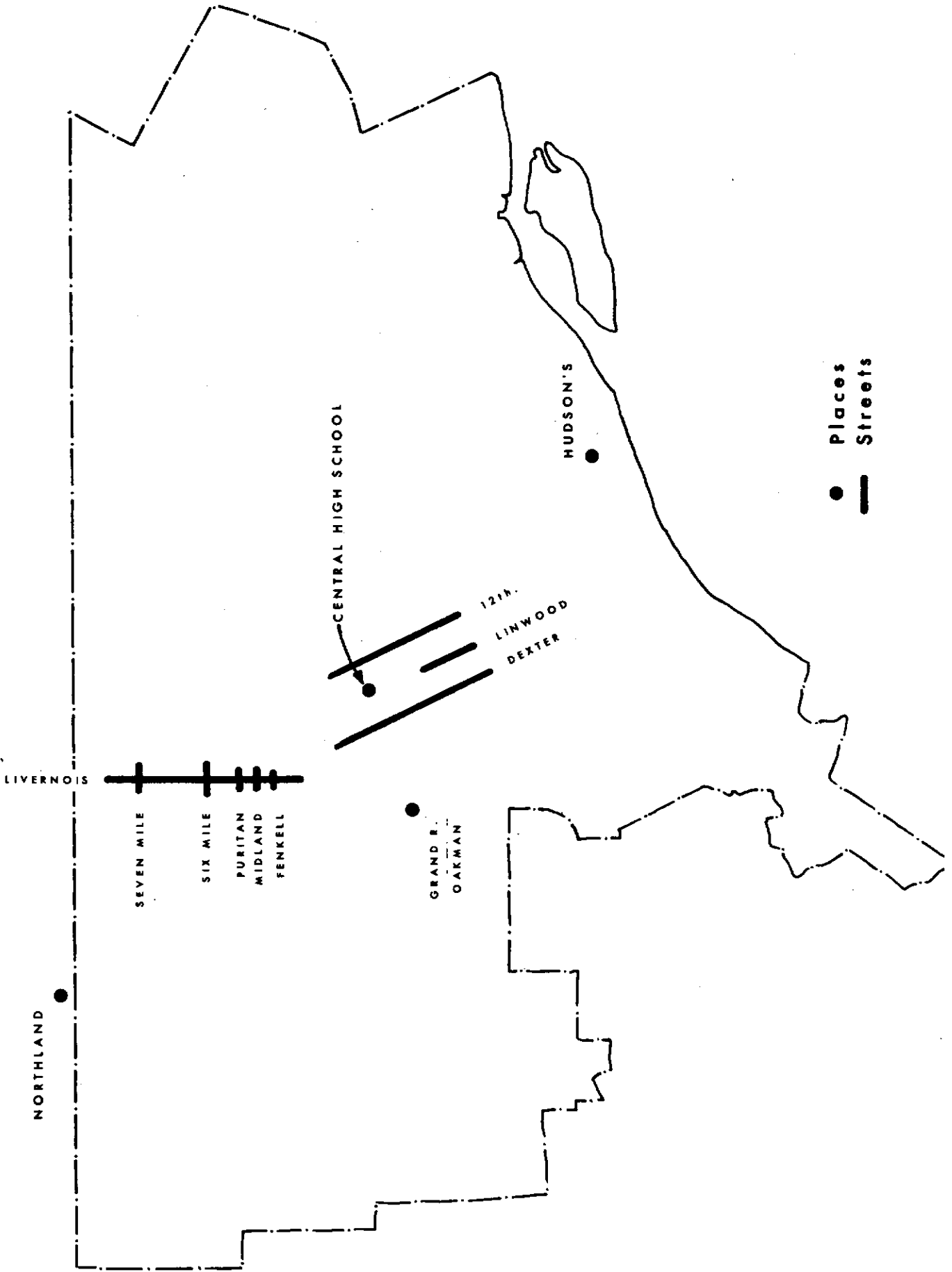
here and cops on the side streets. You could not get near them. But that one time when the lady got shot and those guys were going into the door at Hudsons, the dogs just went for their throats. They were trained to do that to. There were two or three and they were dead. They died. They got their necks torn out.

On Livernois when the riot broke out, people went in the loan company and burned their records. Some friends of ours whom we knew in the old neighborhood sent their kids into those stores to get the files and bring them out. And they brought them out to the middle of Livernois and set them on fire. And then they proceeded to go back and take the furniture. Right on. But they tore the files out so that after it was all over, they had made sure they would not pay all those bills because you can not bill us if you do not have any papers on us. And that was the big thing. They probably have another record somewhere, but those people had their lives. Here was a chance for them not to be in debt to the man. And they took the chance of going in those stores even under fire to get their life back.

Do you know how they got away on Seven Mile? There was one guy on the top of the Varsity Theater and he was just filling the police up. And he got away and the rest were down on Seven Mile with pianos and organs.

These particular people had a backyard full of furniture. They hit Good Housekeeping. They would put a couch up on the top of their car and ride down the street holding it by hands. A & P on Puritan - it used to be Danny's - they broke into the store and all the people along San Juan, Prairie and Tuller walked over to their friends; their whole living room and dining room was covered with food. Those people did not steal any clothing, they just went in cars and big boxes and were raking stuff off the shelves. And then they would take it and dump it on the living room floor and go back for more. It was heavy because you could not walk into the door. Everybody was eating back then. In Danny's Food, they were coming through there in single file. It was real humane. There was no paranoia or anything. Everybody was just shocking.

First thing hit was a liquor store. Get a bunch of booze, go home, got drunker than Hell and go back out, man. A friend got a big bottle of champagne and he came carrying it home in his arms and his father beat the shit out of him, shaved his head and would not let him come out of the house for two months. A grown man, seventeen.



RIOTING DESCRIBED ON THE WEST SIDE, JULY 1967

It was hip, man. We had pretty nice times during the riot. As a matter of fact, I was kind of hoping one would break out again. I know I never had that many shoes. Over on Livernois, the boxes were all over the floor and then "Here's a seven and a half." My brother ran his bike all the way down from our house to break into a shoe store. And he came back with two of the wrong shoes. So you know he got on his bike and took one of them all the way back to get the right shoe. They looked like chrome plated alligators, man. They were black, and you know how the raised part of alligator is - those parts were silver. And he had a whole bag of booze. The liquor was heavy. A lot of our friends got together and had a little party. So everyone there was bringing the clothes that they could not wear and we exchanged them. It was not like friends who might have fifths of V0 and Don Q, no, they just had boxes of it. It was not like, "I'll sell you this shirt for four dollars." It was "Here, take this."

The older people even had their kids go in and get furniture out of Gorman's - couches and stuff like that: Bring your kids and go tell them to pull it out. And when they got it outside, their parents would help them load it in the car. The parents figured that if the kids got caught, they would go down to the police station and say, "You naughty kids. Don't worry, judge, I'll get it." These kids were eleven and twelve years old and you knew they could not do anything to the kids, first offense, but just think of all the food and money they had. So the parents were sending kids in. Plus, they would shoot an adult before they would shoot a kid.

On Midland, where the rug company was, they took carpets out of that place and rolled them down Midland, just rolled carpets, one after the other laid out there. The neighborhood had carpets. Some were as wide as the street and they were just pushing them. Midland goes up hill and you could see four or five people just rolling carpets home, and the stuff that came loose, they would just leave it laying flat. It was funny because it was almost carpeted up to Prairie before they finished.

The people from fifteen to twenty-five did all the work in the riot. The old people got completely knocked out and down. They just sat back and said, "Well, you know that's not right. Don't get caught. You got a colored TV?" After the stuff was over, the old people said, "Hey, you got one?" or "Don't go in there. I had better not catch you with anything."

"Hey, but I know where you can get a colored TV for fifteen dollars."

"Where?"

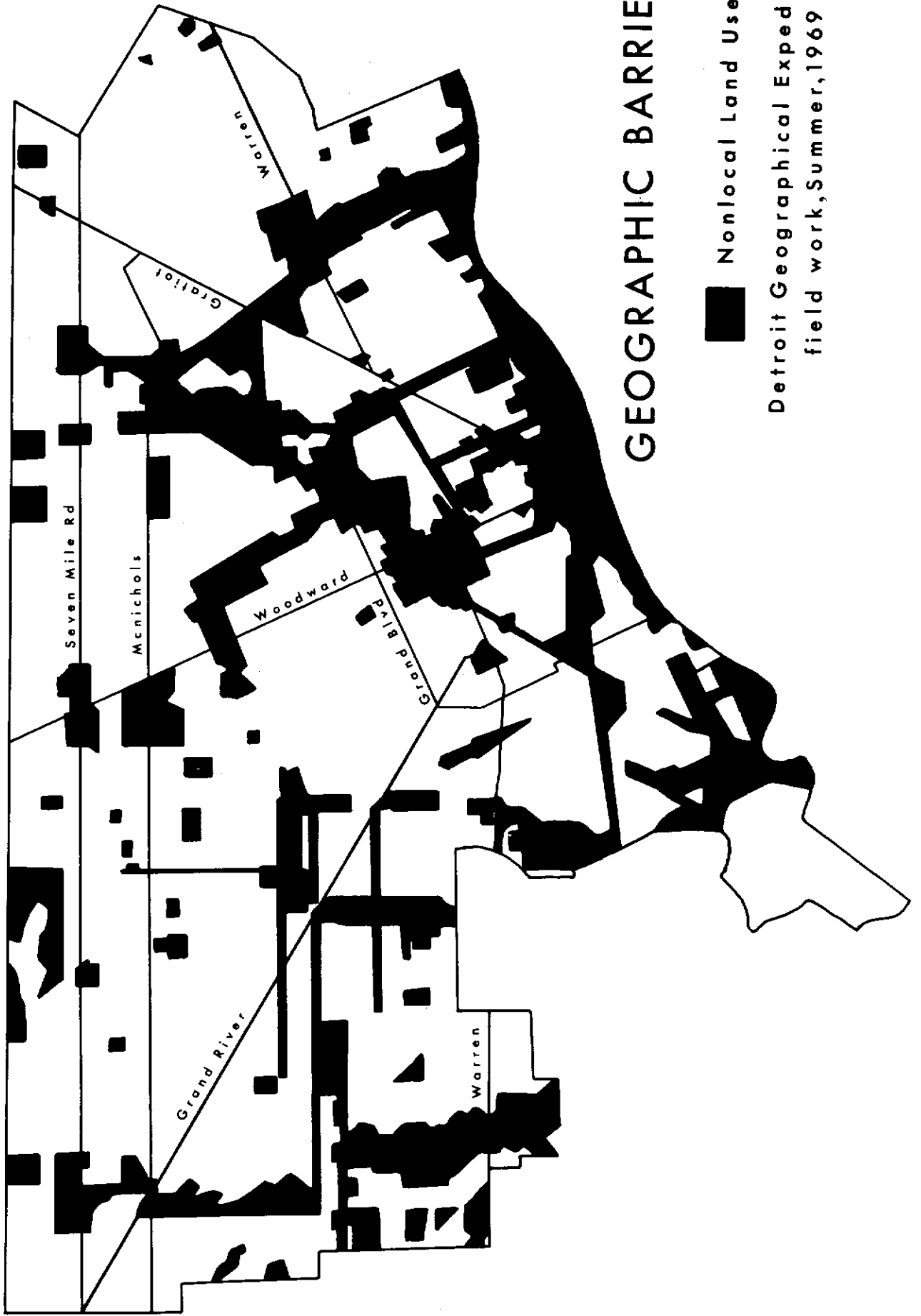
It was funny. Because you felt good. Because you had all the food you wanted to eat. You had about six or seven friends in the neighborhood who ripped off a food store and you could eat anything - ham, turkey, steak.

The Political Redistricting of Detroit

Jean Jones

There are several divisions within the city's area and its confines. There are voting, school, income and natural divisions. If one is to examine these carefully, there could be found no coinciding boundaries, especially among the physical divisions. There may be some similarities in the psychological areas concerning income and the status of the school or church one might attend. And these similarities exist generally within the confines of an area that has a common bound. The eastern suburbs of Detroit - the Pointes - already enjoy being a unit of affluent white citizens, while the poor are divided up.

In some of the areas of the city there exists a real boundary, dividing people, such as the wooden fence surrounding Indian Village on Detroit's east side. Few other boundaries are so definite and unabashed. Generally, the boundaries are natural, such as rivers, wooden areas and vacant land use. Sometimes these boundaries are industrial or commercial. The Ford Motor Company's land usage in Dearborn is the largest single industrial division in the Detroit area. There are several other large commercial boundaries appearing as jutting rays along the city's main arteries. In my area, the east side of Detroit, the largest boundary is the Detroit River. The area is primarily a residential area. This fact should be obvious, taking into consideration the financial and social prominence of the people of this area in comparison with others so near and yet so far. It should be self-evident that there would be very little local commerce and industry in this area. Large scale non-local land usage, whether it be factories, railroads or large well travelled thoroughfares, bring danger and insecurity to an area. The "WASP" members of America's elite, the affluent, the "beautiful people" have not been subjected to the dangers of playing around railroad yards such as those around Chrysler's Jefferson or Hamtramck plants. Nor should they be subjected to riding their bicycles on well travelled streets without a warning to the driver, like the ones on Cook Road in Grosse Pointe Woods with "Caution, Bicycle Lane" signs. Nor should they have to play in areas like portions of John R. and Brush where their porches are four to eight feet from the crowded streets swarming with suburbanites swatting down innocent children like flies in their flight to their "safe" neighborhoods. Should they have to play on debris filled vacant lots or in rat and germ infested alleys instead of neighborhood park and recreation areas like Balduck Park and private greeneries like the one behind the homes on Mack



GEOGRAPHIC BARRIERS

■ Nonlocal Land Use

Detroit Geographical Expedition
field work, Summer, 1969

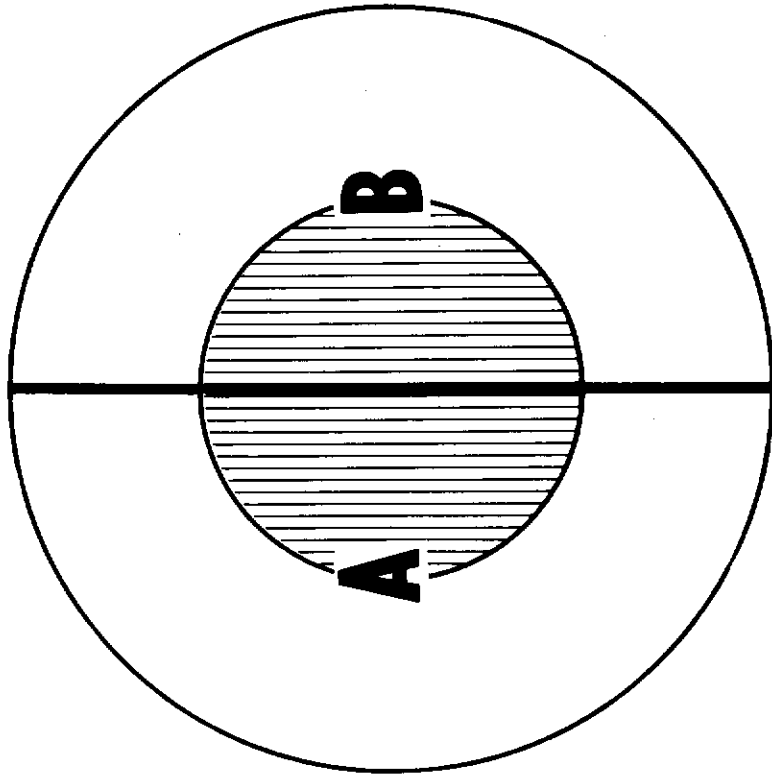
Avenue near Moross in Grosse Pointe Farms? If the affluent ones don't have to cope with these problems, why then should children of different ethnic groups, be they Polish, Italian, Black, Jewish, Chinese, or whatever?

We also can not forget that not only race causes segregation; income restrictions and lack of unity in the community are contributing factors.

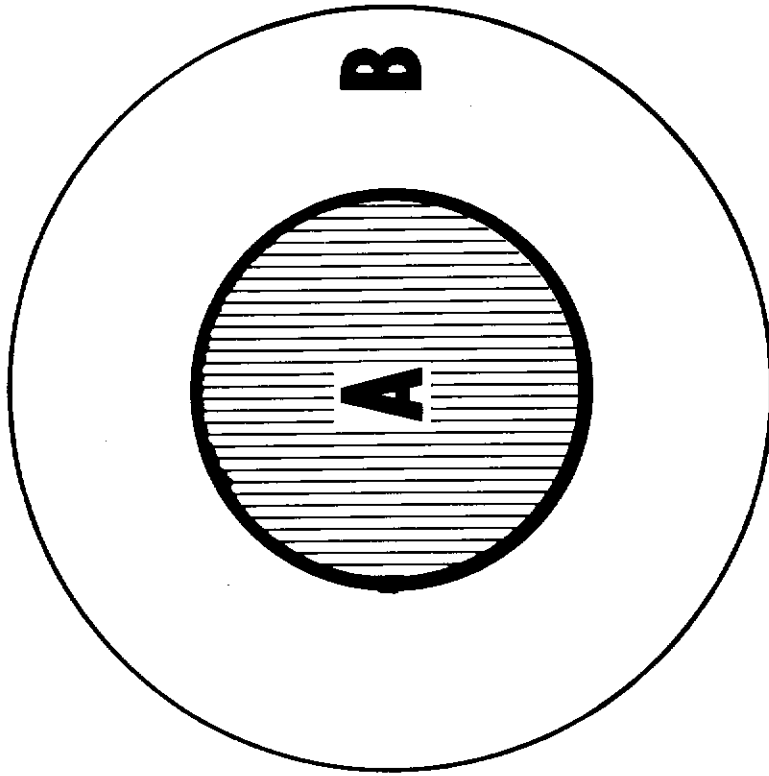
Knowing that a problem exists is one thing, being able to define it in all its complexities is another. The problem exists and we are aware of it. To overcome it, we must examine all its facets. There is an environmental condition existing in our area that prevents our people from getting the best and the most from their tax dollar. The people are not represented properly for the achieving of individual group goals and advancements. The voting districts of Detroit are divided so as no ethnic group has the majority of any. This requires a "strange" way of dividing voting districts. Many feel that if the districts are reset, then and only then, can all of our people be equally represented. As it stands, ethnic groups are divided by industrial belts. They have no real unity. They are linked with other ethnic groups. At election time, this brings about serious problems. A prospective candidate has to divide his platform. He has to give the different groups a showing of his feelings but he cannot fully advocate all the desires of a specific group because he has to try to represent all of his people. For example, take Polish and Blacks. Say there are two candidates from a mixed Polish-Black district. The Black man is all for the Blacks but he has to represent the Polish. The Polish man is all for the Polish but he has to represent the Blacks. On several issues, the two people differ drastically. Now, if the districts were such that there was a Black district or a Polish district, then the representative of each could know, and wholeheartedly support, the want of each.

To conquer a problem, it must first be acknowledged. This acknowledgement plus the reason for the situation being as it is adds up to a solution. This solution is redistricting. To do so is a job for city planners, but the basic methods are visibly evident and districting should be done according to people's conditions and occupancy of land, not merely land space. Once proper redistricting is accomplished, the working people, ethnic groups, and rich and poor alike will benefit from their government as they should.

MIXED DISTRICTS



COMMUNITY CONTROL DISTRICTS



POLITICAL BOUNDARIES
(VOTING DISTRICTS)



BLACK POPULATION



POLISH POPULATION



HYPOTHETICAL VOTING DISTRICTS

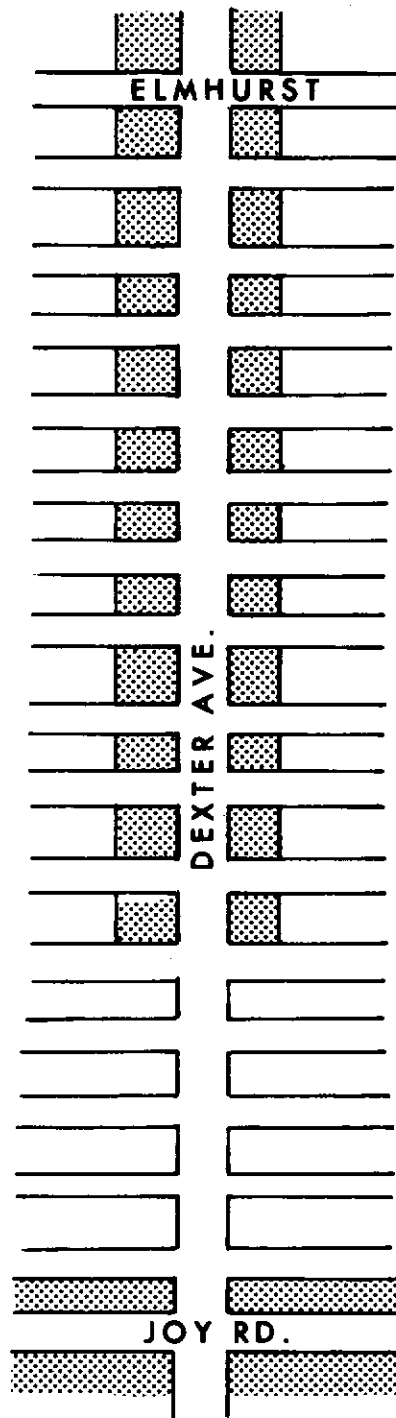
Money Flows in the Dexter Area:
A Progress Report

William H. Beville Jr.

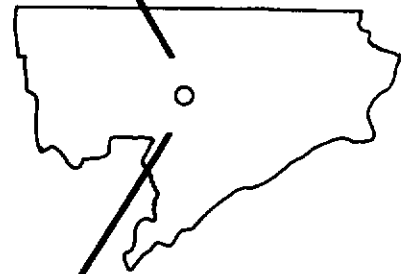
The area I chose to study is the Dexter Avenue business complex, which consists of those businesses located on Dexter Avenue, between Joy Road and Elmhurst. I chose this area because it is heavily travelled and is laden with businesses on either side of the thoroughfare, which passes through the Black community in this area. Many of the residents of this area depend on these businesses for their everyday needs. The variety of shops and stores is such that one could purchase anything from ham and eggs at Mawdes Fine Foods to the 1970 Chrysler of your choice at Ed Davis Chrysler dealers, to a spanking brand new cast iron vault to be put away in at McFall Bros. Funeral Home.

In this study of money flows, I am attempting to ascertain all the facts pertaining to the money circulating in this community. There were several things which I had to determine in order to make this study as objective as possible. Also, I tried to conduct the study in a manner so as to be relevant to the Black community. I intent to do this in several ways. First, I had to find out if the owners of the businesses in this community were Black or White. Next, I had to find out how much money was being spent in each store, and what percent of the customers were local or non-local. Also, I am trying to find out where the money is going and to whom. The final goal is to halt this flow of dollars out of the community and develop programs which will assure that the majority of the money circulates within the community there by raising the prosperity level.

In conducting the study, I used several methods to ascertain the needed information. First, I would estimate the amount of dollars taken in over a certain period of time, say a half hour, and then use this figure to project the total gross per week. Then I would interview the proprietors to find out what percent of his customers were local or non-local residents. Also, I would find out where he purchased his stock and what percent of his gross was used to do so. Next, I would try to determine how many people he employed and what was his expenditure(s) for wages. After interviewing the proprietor, I would focus my attention on the employees to find out whether they were local or non-local residents and what their individual salaries were. Then, I would interview a portion




COMMERCIAL



MONEY FLOWS IN THE DEXTER AREA

of the customers concerning their location and mode of transportation used to get to the business. I have found that this type of information can be extremely difficult to gain at times.

Much to my surprise, I found that ninety percent of the businesses were owned by Blacks, however, only five of them live in the surrounding community. Of the sixty-three businesses in my area, only three are owned by Whites. So it would seem that the profits which the owners reap are circulating in the Detroit area but not in this community. Only five percent of their entire gross filters back into the community in the form of wages, because seventy percent of the help hired is non-local. There are approximately ten thousand people living within two blocks east and west of this eighteen block area. This represents quite a large number of potential customers. Of the businesses I have studied thus far, and the same holds true for the majority, the average gross per business is approximately five hundred dollars per week. This means that the sixty-three businesses in this eighteen block area gross \$1,629,000 annually. Of this, thirty percent or \$488,700 is grossed from non-local customers. Thus the total drain from the community is \$1,140,300. Virtually, none of this money returns to the community except a small five percent in wages.

Grand River-Oakman Boulevard Region

Robert E. Sylvester

The area in the proceeding reported outline is bounded by Livernois, Elmhurst, Plymouth Road, Wyoming and Davison. It is approximately 90% Black.

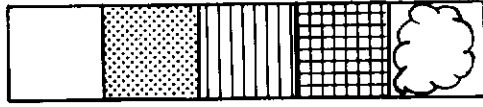
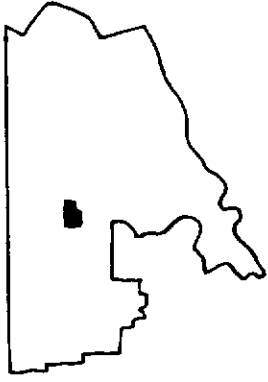
This is a largely commercial area. It contains a very large shopping center and several smaller stores. There are numerous car lots, several thousand rented houses and flats, anywhere from eighty to ninety dope dens or number houses, only three gas stations, approximately eight barber shops and beauty salons and several eat shops. This report is based on my observances and information of the ways the preceding employers drain the money from the area mentioned.

The rents in the area are varied from \$150 in the Robert Oakman area and along Ewald Circle to \$85 and \$90 in the Ford Highway and Glendale Subdivision. The subdivisions closer to Grand River have a variation similar to the Robert Oakman and Glendale region. These rents vary because of the older housing, from \$75-\$100 for flats and \$75-\$130 for houses. There's not much difference in the structures other than one is kept in a little better condition in order to continue the higher rent. The others are just in a stagnant area without resources to move out, or the occupants are already buying. The rents remain in because the people have to pay it.

With few exceptions, until five or six years ago, the housing was White owned or owned by real estate companies such as Arthur N. King. Some housing sold at so-called steals have been torn down for they lay in the path of the new Davison freeway. The structures in majority of approximately 3,312 are over thirty years old. Only approximately 400 are under twenty, and approximately 125 are under ten years old.

The people here have an average income of \$6,240 or less; approximately 8% makes more working one job. The two job families have an average of \$180 or \$8,640 annually. As a rule, they reside in the Ewald Circle-Robert Oakman area or near the Wyoming Avenue-Buena Vista area. Now, ten years ago the average income in the area was \$6,451; then, the area was mixed, more so than now. The housing cost less and they needed less improvement.

The cost of housing could never be called an average. The cost ranges from houses costing \$16,200 ten years ago now costing \$23,800 to houses that costed \$8,900 then and now costing \$12,000, and are over thirty years old and



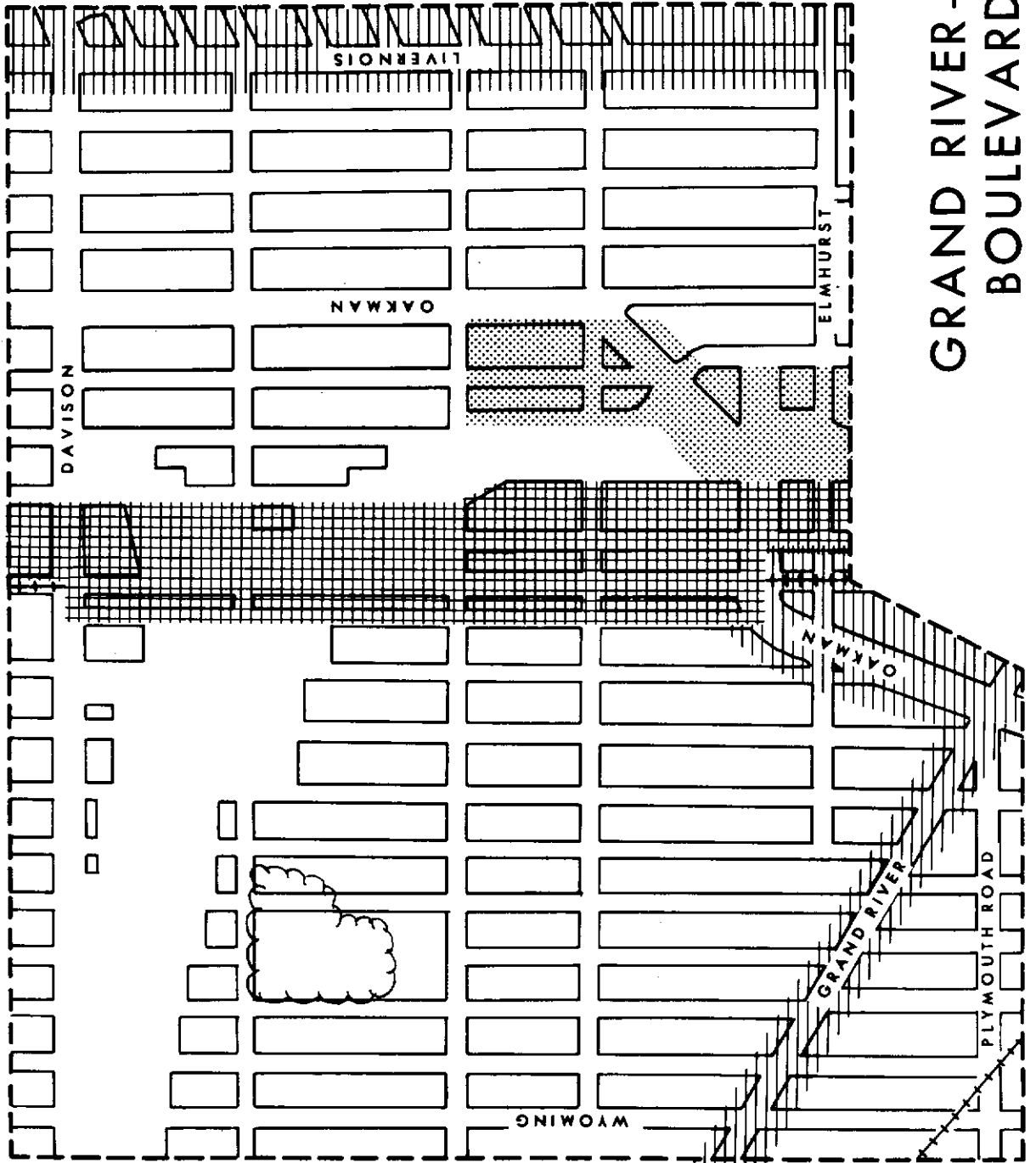
RESIDENTIAL

MULTIPLE FAMILY

COMMERCIAL

INDUSTRIAL

OUTDOOR REC



GRAND RIVER - OAKMAN BOULEVARD REGION

slightly dilapidated. So the housing cost more and the people make less.

The Northwestern owners and suburban realty companies who still hold leases and are renting poor housing in the area, making a profit, causes the hard earned money to leave the area.

On a commercial exchange basis in this area, there is a suction on an unbelievable scale. The small stores, liquor and grocery stores, are the front runners in exploitation and high prices. A can of sliced pears cost 49¢ at Sunset Market and 38¢ at Farmer Jack (Southfield). The same can costs 42¢ at Farmer Jack on Oakman and Elmhurst. Sunset gets all the immediate neighborhood shoppers seven days a week averaging \$2.34 per customer on week days and receiving an average of 200 customers a day. The shoppers who spend \$50 to \$60 on Friday, Saturday and Sunday are usually A.D.C. food stamp recipients or welfare families. The 20 to 60% higher prices are the way owners of markets (who reside in Florida and employs relatives from the Oak Park area) are pulling money from the area.

The Beer and Liquor store on Livernois and Webb is the only liquor store for 3/8 of a mile. The other stores sell beer but no liquor. So Al's Liquor Store has it much his own way. His prices range from 8¢ more on beer to 7¢ more on canned goods. He averages \$200 to \$400 on a Friday and sometimes as much as \$1,000 on weekends alone. He resides on Mendota and 7 Mile Road and employs persons from the immediate area.

These stores receive customers from the entire city but the very steady customers are from around the neighborhood and spend at least \$10.00 per visit.

The Michigan Bell Telephone Company on Plymouth and Grand River employs approximately 4% of the area. This Grand River-Oakman region is the largest means of withdrawal of money from this community. Oakman and Grand River to Wyoming and Grand River is lined with shops of all kinds of stores - second hand stores, auto parts, used machinery, vegetable and meat markets and a frozen meat packers outlet. These stores are White owned and operated, and are, with a few exceptions, self employed. Collectively, the stores in the area take in the largest chunk of community money, but in comparison, employment puts more back than any other exchange.

The third largest exchange is the auto dealers. There is no question about whether or not the car lots, such as King Auto Sales on Webb and Livernois, Bauer McDonald-

Livernois and Burlingame, aren't putting anything back into the area. These major car lots sell an average of eight cars daily. The lots have an average of three salesmen and a sales manager, usually one Black salesman and the others White. The people in the region don't buy cars every day, but part of the money made should be put back in the area to help in the struggle of keeping up the area. They contribute to things such as, junk heaps, eyesores on the streets, double parking, the cars waiting for preparation, filthy side lots such as John Sutters Motor Sales, C. S. Lewis Garage, Union Car Company, and Al's Garage. All these places make a living within this community and contribute little or nothing to it.

The largest illegal exchange in the region is numbers. The whereabouts of the pick-up houses is a heavily guarded secret. The people in the area supply the number men from \$1,000 to \$2,000 a day. The houses may have as many as four pick-ups. There are three operating to my knowledge in the area.

The second largest is the dope in the area. Some of the people indulge every other day, costing them anywhere from \$3.00 up, depending on what kind of dope they want. The marijuana sales in the area were down in the last year, but the others, such as heroin and the largest seller, cocaine, still manages to bring approximately \$600.00 a night. This doesn't include the man on the street selling or hustling. This is the house where you can buy it and "do it" there. There are approximately twelve of these in my area. These large operations are being controlled by the so-called Black Mafia. This is another way the money in this area is being grafted and used elsewhere.

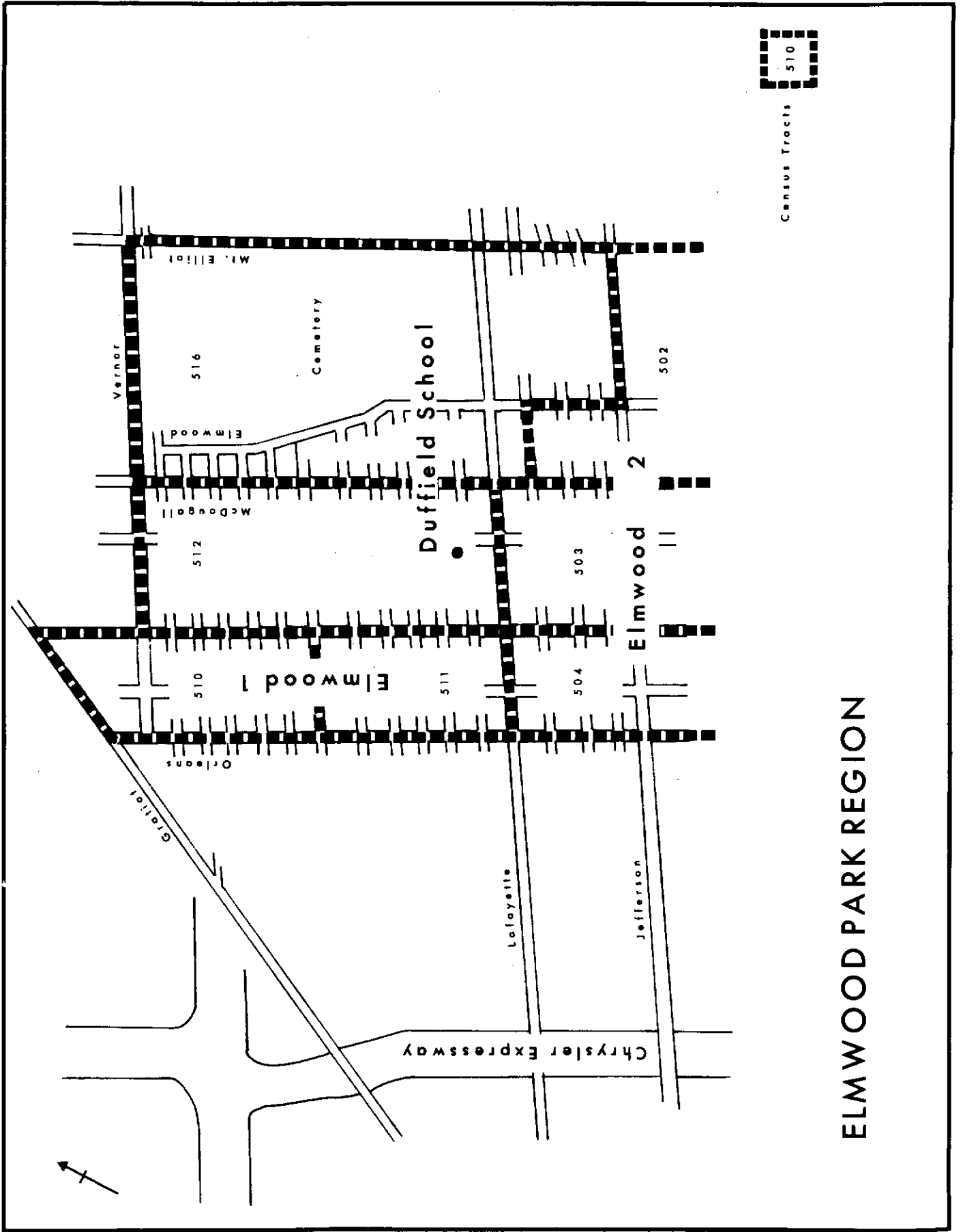
Elmwood Park and Urban Renewal

Bruce Evans

The Elmwood Park project is located on the southeast side of Detroit's inner-city. The area is bounded on the south by Jefferson, the east by Mt. Elliot, the west by the Chrysler Fwy., and the north by Vernor. This area is primarily residential. In the early nineteen hundreds, the area was inhabited by immigrants from Poland, Italy and other European countries. With the immigration of Blacks from the south to Detroit, the immigrants divided their homes into apartments and rented them to Black families. As the immigrants increased their income, they left the east side of the city for other parts of the city, leaving the present population of the neighborhood to about 99% Black. A population drop was related to the depression. The population decrease was characteristic of many other inner-city neighborhoods during this period. The population increase in 1940-1950 was related to the effects of the war.

In 1950-1960, the Elmwood areas were declared an urban renewal project. A large population decrease occurred during that period. Elmwood I was cleared in approximately 1959; Elmwood II clearing was completed in 1968; Elmwood III has not yet been started. This decrease in population in Elmwood III and the clearing of Elmwood I and II has caused the school population to drop. As the school rooms are vacated, special education classes are brought in. At present, about half of the Duffield Elementary School's room space is devoted to special education.

The general characteristics of population are noted on the table. At the present, the occupied Elmwood III is about 99% Black. At the last housing count in January, there were eighteen White families and about one-third of the people in this area are under 18 with about one-half of that number living with both parents. The Elmwood I area, census tracts 510 and 511, is now being occupied. It appears that the majority of the new families will be White, two-parent units with young children. The reason for this migration of White families back into the inner-city was due to the convenience of Elmwood Park I area. It is close to downtown Detroit and the recently opened Chrysler Freeway makes transportation both minimal and convenient. This should have an effect on the vacant classroom problems. However, the parents, because of their income level, might send their children to a private school such as Friends or Sacred Heart Academy. The



ELMWOOD PARK REGION

RESIDENTIAL DENSITY TABLE
by 1960 CENSUS TRACT

1960 Census Tract	1967		1960		Persons per Residential Acre	Housing Units per Residential Acre
	Total (Net) Acreage	Residential Acreage	Total Housing Units	Total Population		
512	63.1	53.2	1,113	3,671	68.9	20.9
516	173.2	35.9	877	3,141	92.5	25.8
(The present occupied Duffield School area is made up of part of census tracts 512 and 516.)						
510	55.1	8.5	773	2,397	281.1	90.7
511	56.6	31.6	563	1,529	48.3	17.8
(Elmwood I now occupies most of census tract 510 and all of 511. No official figures are available on the new move.)						
502	109.0	17.1	608	1,300	75.9	35.5
503	83.4	23.6	704	1,894	66.0	24.5
504	97.9	24.9	879	2,206	88.6	35.3

(Elmwood II is now being constructed in part of 502, 503 and 504 census tracts. The rest of these tracts fall south of Jefferson.)

Research Division
City Plan Commission
April, 1966

Elmwood II area, census tract 502, 503 and 504, is now vacant. This area was 42% White. The majority of the Whites who moved from the Elmwood II area moved to Hamtramck and Highland Park Michigan.

The units to be built will be of moderate and medium income; rental and some ownership. Although the sound of "housing families with moderate incomes" may sound like the answer to the problem of relocation, it actually isn't. These units, for example Riverside Homes, allow families of five to six who may only earn \$10,450 per year to house. The majority of the people in Elmwood III are blue collar workers, many working in auto plants and often both parents have this type of work and may earn up to \$11,000 per year. Therefore, they earn too much to rent a three bedroom apartment.

Within Elmwood III, there are about 1,350 dwelling units. About 488 of these dwellings are abandoned resulting in a net of 862 occupied dwellings. A large portion of the residences in Elmwood III are still in repairable condition. A survey by the Mayor's Commission on Housing of Elmwood III revealed a sound dwelling as being repairable for under \$500.00. A substandard house can be repaired for under \$1,200.00. A deficient house can be repaired for less than \$3,000.00. A delapidated house is structurally unsound and requires more than \$3,000.00 to repair it. Using this guideline, 21% of the occupied houses are sound, 47% are deficient, 22% are substandard and 10% are delapidated.

Elmwood III relocation presents a very pressing and serious issue. Where is low cost housing to be found? Where will the people find homes? Where are rental homes to be found at low costs? Very few people from Elmwood III will be moving back into that area because right now they are paying an average of \$60.00 per month and the Riverside Homes monthly rent begins at \$98.00 per person.

The housing commission does not have the answers to these serious problems. The Common Council is trying to give some direction to the solving of this problem; however, at this point, only time seems to hold the fate of the residents of Elmwood III.

Urban Renewal is a method the establishment uses for the clearing of slums. However, this is not completely true. When a slum area is cleared and people are forced to move, they have no choice but to move to another blighted area due to their economical position in our society today. The proof for this is shown in tracing the families that

were forced to move due to the Elmwood I project. Not one family made any initial improvement in their environmental change. These families moved to neighborhoods similar to that from which they were originally forced to move from. Therefore, as one slum area is cleared, another is growing and expanding. Therefore, our present housing program does not solve the very problems for which it was designed but only moving the problem to another portion of the city.