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From Delinquents to Street Terrorists: L.A.'s War on Black and Chicax Youth, 1945-
1965

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by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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by

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The history of policing and criminalization of young Black and Chicax Angelinos from 1945 to 1965 reveals a central node in the development of Los Angeles's carceral state. Examining the (neo)colonial archives of L.A. law enforcement, probation, think tanks, and public education system during this period illuminates the buildup and devastating impact of L.A.'s youth criminalization regime by various state and private actors. I show that the genealogy of L.A.'s massive youth criminalization regime starts with both the racialized moral panic against Mexican zoot suiters during World War II and the white backlash to the demographic increase of Black residents the following decade were dual sparks to the tinderbox of racial capitalist urbanism which criminalized, incarcerated, and surveilled young Black and Chicax Angelinos for the second half of the twentieth century. L.A.'s overlapping spatial histories of Spanish and Anglo settler colonialisms, the afterlives of chattel slavery shaping U.S policing, and Cold War

liberalism set the structure for how tens of thousands of young people of color labeled as delinquents would have their lives drastically changed in post-war L.A. As white flight increased and racial segregation deepened in South Central and East Los Angeles, youth social clubs in two of the city's most impoverished geographies were relabeled by law enforcement and social service providers alike as bastions of "zooters," "hardcore delinquents," and "gangs." Law enforcement, criminologist, policy makers, and social reformers shaped L.A.'s carceral state to criminalize Black and Chicana youth over three decades. Through new discourse, policy, and transformation of policing towards professionalization, young Black and Chicana Angelinos who were placed in the crosshairs of the carceral state went from being declared juvenile delinquents in the 1940s to "street terrorists" as codified in the California Penal Code in 1987.

Through a critical examination of the shifting grounds of L.A.'s carceral state via a focus on Chicana and Black youth policing, I map out a genealogy of L.A.'s "War on Youth" developed through policy, juvenile police training, youth development programming, incarceration, and crafting of criminalizing discourses. Institutional actors and complementary social, political, and economic forces constructed a hegemonic carceral order that racialized L.A. youth gangs as especially deviant, menacing, and by the 1980s, terroristic. This shift in focusing on punishment to address youth gang affiliation forever changed the lives of all young Black and Chicana Angelinos as the material realities of the neoliberal racial capitalist order deepened in the growing post-war metropolis. In L.A. and California at large, the targeting of Black and Chicana dovetailed as the "tax revolt" took off after the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978. For

example, per pupil public education spending plummeted in the 1980s and simultaneously California embarked on the largest prison building project the world had seen by constructing twenty-two state prisons from 1980 to 2005. *From Delinquents to Street Terrorists* is a critical intervention into history of the carceral state, the “School to Prison Pipeline” paradigm, and L.A urban history. A key pillar of the phenomenon of racialized mass incarceration that we see today was in fact sowed by L.A.’s juvenile prison expansion, incarceration, and criminalization regime which targeted Black and Chicana “gangs,” beginning in the period of 1945-65 addressed in this dissertation.

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Introduction

In the Summer of 1943, the U.S. was embroiled in war both abroad and at home. My maternal grandfather Ralph Mendez, a Chicano¹ living in California's Imperial Valley, had enlisted in the U.S. Army at age 19 earlier that year to fight the expansion of Nazism in North Africa and Southern Europe. While he and hundreds of thousands of other young Chicanxs were fighting in the name of the Allies, young Mexicans, alongside Black, Filipino, and some working-class white youth were being targeted by U.S. Navy sailors for being "defiant" Mexicans in Zoot Suits in the downtown streets of L.A. By 1943 the L.A. Times and other media outlets had demonized these young people as *Pachucos* and *Pachucas*. In the aftermath of weeklong attacks and jailing of largely Chicancx youth in L.A., San Bernardino, and other cities in California an intersection of political forces including the Los Angeles County Probation Department, the Los Angeles Police Department, the L.A. County Sheriff's Department, and a select group of sociologists and anthropologists began a political project to curtail what they saw as a rising tide of delinquency within the "Mexican colony" of Los Angeles.² This project, I argue was the beginning of an *L.A. youth policing regime* which through collaboration of

¹ Throughout this dissertation I will be using Chicano, Chicana, Chicancx, Mexican, and Mexican American to denote people of Mexican decent regardless of citizenship status. Where it is important to denote the citizenship status or workings of the criminal immigration system to criminalize a non-regularized Mexican person I will do so. For my grandfather he was born in the Arizona and was a U.S. citizen at the time of enlistment.

² Official L.A. city documents in the late 19th and early 20th century often demarcated non-Anglo areas of the city as "colonies" and in 1919 the Mexican barrio of Belvedere was no exception. Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 89.

sworn officers, think tanks, the juvenile court system, and expanding youth detention camps, targeted Mexican and Black youth who transgressed the political and social norms of hegemonic racial capitalism and Anglo settler colonial rule in L.A. for criminalization, surveillance, arrest, and detention. The following dissertation traces the genealogies and discursive historical manifestations of this expression of L.A. police power towards Black and Chicax youth from 1945 to 1965 and how it transformed the policing of youth of color in “conflict with the law,” especially those identified as associated with street organizations, and the particular developments of L.A.’s carceral state apparatus. By the late 1980s generations of young Black and Chicax youth from the most impoverished and historically segregated communities in L.A. were transformed in public opinion and the law from delinquents to street terrorist under California penal code 186.20.³

The L.A. youth policing regime, as a discursive power bloc within the L.A. economic and political ruling class, transformed L.A. County by the end of the 20th century to be home to the largest juvenile *in*justice system in the nation. The four decades of post-war L.A. produced the modern-day gang injunction and court system that is number three nationwide in sentencing youth to life without the possibility of parole (LWOP).⁴ However, the warehousing and adjudications of young Angelinos that mark

³ “Street Terrorism Enforcement Protection Act,” California Legislative Information: Code Section Group, n.d., https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=PEN&division=&title=7.&part=1.&chapter=11.&article.

⁴ See Youth Justice Coalition, “Tracked and Trapped: Youth of Color, Gang Databases, and Gang Injunctions,” December 2012; John R. Mills, Anna M. Dorn, and Amelia Courtney Hritz, “Juvenile Life Without Parole in Law and Practice: Chronicling the Rapid Change Underway,” *American University Law Review*, 65 AM. U. L. REV. 535 (2016)

the landscape of L.A. County in the form of 12 juvenile jails run by the Probation Department and 4 adult jails run by the Sheriff's Department, have only recently been viewed as sites of historical interrogation.⁵ Even more rarely considered are the carceral landscapes that exceed jail walls, including a wide variety of surveillance systems, state institutions functional in criminalizing youth (such as schools), and the neighborhoods mapped in gang injunctions. Mike Davis was one of the first of the "L.A. school" cohort to produce a new set of historical questions on the particularity of L.A.'s political history, the contours of local state and economic power, the impacts on subaltern communities and their significances for the multicultural metropolis.⁶ Davis' engagement with the carceral aids my own research here of L.A. in excavating the histories and futures of L.A. in the context of Western-led global finance capital and in tandem with the shifting priorities of white supremacy embedded in Anglo boosterism.⁷ Ultimately *From Delinquents to Street Terrorist* brings into historical analysis the criminalization Black and Chicano youth and the development city's "War on Delinquency" which transformed into the "War on Gangs." And like the so called "War on Drugs" these actions by the state and local actors are part of L.A.'s long history of a racialized class war. In other words, this is part of "deceitful campaigns waged by one class over another to legitimate

⁵ See Kelly Lytle Hernández, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

⁶ Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York: Vintage, 1992). Davis adds to the significant interventions of Carey McWilliams on the racialized landscape of Los Angeles and California in *California: The Great Exception* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); and *Southern California: An Island on the Land* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs-Smith, 1973)

⁷ For discussion of Anglo boosterism and its histories also see William Deverell *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and The Remaking of Its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004);

the hateful solutions used to resolve class contradictions.”⁸ The contradictions of a quickly changing post-war L.A. demographically, economically, politically, and geographically provided fertile ground for new modes of domination for what many early twentieth-century boosters of L.A. had named as the nation’s “last white spot.”⁹

Interrogating the Carceral Archive

To accomplish my project my research engages a discursive institutional history of youth criminality and policing of youth and gangs in L.A. Discursive in the sense of the historical and changing discourses of racial, gendered, aged, and social anxieties produced by local and national think-tanks, law enforcement, schools, media, mental health practitioners and others which sutured racialized youth sociality as delinquency to the point of “crisis.” I tease out this history by investigating the intersecting archives of law enforcement, probation, juridical, private, non-profit and academic institutions which increasingly collaborated to both produce and “solve” the racialized juvenile gang problem. For example, a central part of my dissertation analyzes the interactions between L.A. based criminology departments at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and University of Southern California (USC). These two institutions conducted research and crafted policy funded by private foundations to instruct and shape policing practices, changes to the criminal code, and sentencing on behalf of or in-service of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and the Los Angeles County Probation

⁸ Steven Osuna, “Securing Manifest Destiny: Mexico’s War on Drugs, Crisis of Legitimacy, and Global Capitalism,” *Journal of World-Systems Research* 27, no. 1 (March 23, 2021): 28, <https://doi.org/DOI.10.5195/JWSR.2021.1023>.

⁹“Parker Declares City is White Spot of Nation,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 9, 1950, quoted in John Buntin, *L.A. Noir: The Struggle for the Soul of America’s Most Seductive City* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2009), 162.

Department (LACPD). My interrogation of these institutional carceral archives probes how these sites were informed and structured within state apparatus under the guides and logics of white supremacy, carcerality, Cold War anti-radicalism, and coloniality. The carceral archives reveal how the state's hegemonic discourse and deployment of "anti-social behavior," "delinquency," and relying on statistical analyses of the ill-defined "crime rate" was done in service of what Naomi Murakawa describes as "postwar racial liberalism" and what I argue is a racially informed (which is always classed and gendered) tool of counterinsurgency focused police power during the Cold War.¹⁰

To historicize and focus on the enormity of the problem of youth and gang criminalization in L.A., my research centers on an examination of three historical archives the carceral state in L.A. The first are the founding documents and curriculum of the Delinquency Control Institute (DCI), a pillar of police power in the L.A. that is largely absent in the histories of L.A. law enforcement professionalization and local policing policy. This collaborative teaching and research center founded in 1946 and housed at the University of Southern California's School of Public Administration was funded by various state and private interests. The principal architects of DCI were USC Dean of Public Administration Dr. John M. Pfiffner and LAPD Deputy Chief Ervis Lester who constructed a policing education program on juvenile crime in response to the moral panic surrounding the infamous Zoot Suit Riot.¹¹ DCI's main assumption, like those of city officials and even some liberal reformers at the time, was that the Sleepy

¹⁰ Naomi Murakawa, *The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2014).

¹¹ John Henry Good, "A History of the Delinquency Control Institute: Its Program to Combat Juvenile Delinquency" (Master's Thesis, University of Southern California, 1967), 60-62.

Lagoon Trail (1942), the Zoot Suit Riot (1943), and the nearly daily reporting of Mexican youth crime was indicative of a racialized youth crime wave.¹² My reading within and against the grain of DCI documents demonstrates a particular anti-Mexican logic and criminological policy of the city's longstanding Anglo-settler colonial anxiety surrounding the "Mexican problem."¹³

The second archival focus is the L.A. County Probation Department's (LACPD) annual reports and research bureau which centered on gangs. From the early 1940s until 1966 the Probation Department assigned probation officers as gang intervention workers to Mexican and later Black youth gangs to lead counseling, gang diversion programming, and so called preventative social services.¹⁴ Probation continues to be a marginal site of historical inquiry of the U.S. carceral state. The prison, the police station, and the courthouse are strongly tied to the decisions and actions of probation but there has been little explored of its development in the second half of the twentieth century in the U.S.¹⁵

A final archival focus is on the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) annual statistical reports on crimes, department structure, and budgets that were provided annually to the L.A. City Council. Each of these reports provides hundreds of pages of

¹² Historical analysis of the arrest data and reported crime demonstrates that changes in spatial policing and laws at the time produced more arrests rather than increase in crime. See Edward J. Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican American and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 195

¹³ Luis Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance During World War II* (Berkeley: University of California, 2008); Mauricio Mazón, *The Zoot-Suit Riots: The Psychology of Symbolic Annihilation*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984).

¹⁴ Malcolm W. Klein *The American Street Gang: Its Nature, Prevalence and Control* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 44.

¹⁵ In multiple journal special issues and conferences on the U.S. carceral state probation is under-addressed, even when it is mentioned that U.S. probation officers are responsible for over three times the amount of people in the U.S. prison and detention system.

data on who was arrested, where, why, and with details divided by race, age, and gender. While this accounting of arrest data was prepared primarily for city officials as justifications for budgeting, it also details the transformations of how youth policing was viewed by the LAPD in their overall structure of crime suppression.

My approach to each of these archives simultaneously follows and diverges from historians who are tracing the histories of the carceral state. As part of the “carceral turn” in U.S. history this project relies heavily on state-produced documents and therefore necessitates a reading both along and against the grain. In the former, state documents that focus on the policing youth and criminological approaches to delinquency “reflect the values and ideologies of the state. The sources therefore illustrate the larger inequalities shaping the imbalanced power relations between the youths and state representatives.”¹⁶ It is this point of understanding the discourse and policies of crime as steeped in power relations of the California liberal state apparatus, founded in overlapping colonial conquest, warfare, land privatization, resource extraction, and the machinations of racial capitalist governance. This understanding of the illustrative power of state documents, often thought of as a mundane accounting of jurisprudence in action, is what can be analyzed by looking at the plethora of charts, graphs, statistics, and studies produced by the youth criminalization regime in L.A.

When reading these documents “against the grain” I not only find these power relations and hegemonic discourse of racialized state violence, but also discern the logics

¹⁶ Miroslava Chávez-García, *States of Delinquency: Race and Science in the Making of California's Juvenile Justice System* (California: University of California Press, 2012), 11.

and structures of coloniality within the L.A. bureaucracy, revealed by the creation of the archives themselves. In their analysis of Dutch Colonial archives Ann Laura Stoller writes “colonial archival documents serve less as stories for a colonial history than as active, generative substances with histories as documents with itineraries of their own...they were an arsenal of sorts that could be reactivated to suit new governing strategies.”¹⁷ Within a U.S. settler colonial structure, which by the time of the anti-Mexican zootie hysteria was approaching 100 years of occupation in L.A., the need to create more statistical analysis of youth crime became very generative in the changing demographics of L.A. of increased migration of Anglo, Black, Mexican, Filipino, Native Americans (through federal relocation), and other migrant groups. The reports and statistical digests that this project engages with assess a significant part of the carceral *arsenal* of youth detention camps, surveillance technology, or military surplus to be used starting in the late 1960s by LAPD’s Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team. The documents were in fact used as justifications for expanding police power against youth identified as “delinquents” but targeted as “insurgents” in the normalizing of Cold War discourse starting after World War II. The policies that were implemented then continue to shape the language and policy of the carceral state in L.A., including even those non-governmental organizations that were to reform such systems.

Coloniality and L.A.’s Carceral State

¹⁷ Ann Laura Stoller, *Along the Archival Grain: Thinking Through Colonial Ontologies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 1–3.

The historiography of policing in the U.S. rightfully places emphasis on the system of racial chattel slavery in which white settlers, learning from the slave patrols that started in Barbados as early as the 1530s in South Carolina had an obligation to watch, interrogate, harass, and arrest African peoples enslaved as chattel or otherwise. Enforcing this type of surveillance was an obligation for various white settlers as part of the overlapping regimes of juridical and colonial control especially in the Southern colonies. These methods of control were adaptations of the architecture of enslavement imported from Barbados, including its Slave Codes, which included practices employed by many of the South Carolina's African bondspeople sold in slave markets like Charleston's. These codes specifically sought to arrest African bondspeople who did not carry written consent (slave passes). This aimed to obstruct their ability to sell goods such as foodstuffs (for those that had the ability to grow their own gardens) and, more importantly, to stop the possibility of conspiring insurrection, which was a constant threat for the master class and white citizens of the South. These policing patrols in the South extended North as well, in the form of slave catchers and armed posses who searched out and captured African bondspeople using the legal framework implemented through laws and clauses contained within founding documents of the U.S. colonies and the nation. This include the New England Articles of Confederation of 1643, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793, and other local acts of enforcement throughout individual states. The historiography that informs 20th-century issues includes postbellum period policing

including adoption of the constable system from England and the implementation of professional police forces in urban cities.¹⁸

However, until recently historical scholarship on policing has left out the U.S. Southwest as part of this genealogy along with the histories of Spanish colonialism and the period of Mexican independence, and instead framing these issues as “frontier justice” distinct but also somewhat detached from the larger policing historiography. Instead, with few recent exceptions, the historiography of policing in California begins with the post 1848 war of imperialism against Mexico and the following genocidal settler war against Indigenous peoples of the Southwest. To understand the discursive machinations of Los Angeles police power and the development of a post-World War II youth policing regime, it is critical to historians of the carceral state to understand the ways settler colonialism as a structure and organizing logic of native elimination is interlinked to prisons, policing, and various forms of domestic warfare. Kelly Lytle Hernández in *City of Inmates* writes “To reflect the timbre of settler society, but especially Indigenous and racialized communities, I name incarceration ‘elimination’... Incarceration has been just one of the many “eliminary options” deployed in settler societies.”¹⁹ This section will provide a snapshot of the intersections of settler

¹⁸ See Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Kristian Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue: police and Power in America*, (Cambridge: South End, 2007); Eric H. Monkkonen, “History of Urban Police,” *Crime and Justice*, 15, (1992), 547-580; Robert M. Fogelson, *Big City Police* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977); enter for Research on Criminal Justice, *The Iron Fist and The Velvet Glove: An Analysis of the U.S. Police*, Second (Berkeley: Center for Research and Criminal Justice, 1977); Micol Seigel, “Objects of Police History,” *The Journal of American History*, Volume 102, 1, June 2015, 152-161.

¹⁹ Hernández, *City of Inmates*, 9.

colonialism in L.A. and police power that undergird my engagement with policing and domestic warfare throughout this project.

According to the 2010 census, Los Angeles has the second largest urban population of Native peoples (54,236) in the U.S.²⁰ In February of 2013, the Santa Monica City Council voted to name a newly constructed park located near city hall “Tongva Park.” Due to the organizing pressure of local Native activists the park was named to recognize the Gabrielino peoples whose land is occupied by Santa Monica and most of the city and county of Los Angeles. Although this was the intention of the activists, the naming of the park is more of a “dedication” to the past instead of recognition of current Gabrielino/Tongva resistance to continual settler occupation and coloniality that are present within the political, economic, and police power of the L.A. basin. This settler coloniality is exemplified in an article by the *Santa Monica Daily Press* that comments on the controversial decision to name the park:

Santa Monica City Council voted 4 to 1...to name the city’s newest park after the Native American people who *inhabited* the land before the arrival of Spanish settlers... [Councilmember Holbrook] was always opposed to the name, thinking that it ought to reflect the *fact* that the park is located in the middle of Santa Monica... ‘As time goes by, I think the park will be called the Tonka Park, because people will confuse the name with the Tonka Toy company.’²¹(emphasis added)

The journalist presents naming of the park as a dedication to those who *inhabited* Santa Monica, disavowing the existence of current Gabrielino/Tongva people’s continual

²⁰ The Census data is based on respondents who identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native and does not require federal recognition or tribal membership. Sara Schwartzkopf, “Top 5 Cities With the Most Native Americans,” *Indian County Today Media Network*, July 29, 2013, <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2013/07/29/top-five-cities-most-native-americans-150634>

²¹ Ashley Archibald, “Turf War Rages on Over Name of Tongva Park,” *Santa Monica Daily Press*, March 3, 2013, <http://smdp.com/turf-war-rages-on-over-name-of-tongva-park/119202>

relationship to the land. Moreover, the use of *inhabited* confers dwelling in a unspecified past, absent of western legal authority to make claim to ownership thus erasing the political formations of the genealogy and continuance of the Gabrielino/Tongva as well.²² Instead, the discourse in the article and the political argument against the naming of the park presents the Spanish colonial mission period from 1769-1821 as “first” settlers of the land, thus marking their juridical claim to Santa Monica as continued reality to the present. The city of Santa Monica, whose name pays homage to Franciscan and Spanish settlers’ veneration of the mother of St. Augustine, connects the discursive *facts* that conjoin Spanish missionization to the present settler urban imaginary, rendering Indigenous sovereignty/governmentality in Los Angeles and even historical recognition as an impossibility. Furthermore, the article presents the logic of settler colonial erasure of Indigenous peoples in proximity to urban space. The settler colonial nation state’s legitimacy is predicated on the elimination of Indigenous bodies and the erasure of pre-colonial political formations, which are well beyond the simplistic connotations of an *inhabited* polity. Though Native reservations do exist in Southern California as nominally sovereign entities, the settled urban, suburban, and rural cities enclose them both spatially and epistemologically through the settler common sense of a once inhabited space. Public history monuments like El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument in the original Spanish colonial plaza of downtown Los Angeles, whose structures were turned into U.S.

²² The Gabrieleno/Tongva peoples were systematically denied access to federal recognition and treaty rights due to their presence slowing down the colonization of L.A. and Southern California. Their children were subject to genocidal Sherman Indian boarding school yet they were part of the “18 lost treaties” of some of California’s Native nations who were “terminated” by the Eisenhower administration. See Heather Valdez Singleton, “Surviving Urbanization: The Gabrieleno, 1850-1928,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 19, no. 2 (Autumn 2004): 49–59 and Tribal History, <https://gabrielinotribe.org/history/>.

military garrisons after the Mexican surrender in 1847 and whose historic church was used as the cartographic nexus chosen by U.S. military Lieutenant Edward O.C. Ord to be privatized for Anglo settler development.²³ The erasure of Indigenous L.A. is literally at the intersections of militarism, private property, and religious doctrine.

The articulation of Gabrielino/Tongva peoples having *inhabited* before the arrival of Spanish settlers also connects to what Maile Arvin argues as “possession through whiteness.”²⁴ Arvin posits that settler colonialism not only (dis)possesses land but also possesses Native bodies via whiteness. Moreover, Arvin argues that this possession produces, “through the analytics of raciality...subjects who are formed in contrast to the image of the self-determined, and self-perfection, post-European Enlightenment Man.”²⁵ Arvin uses the “scientific” literature of the nineteenth century as well as more recent engagements with the Polynesian genome and blood quantum legal statutes to argue that the logics of settler colonialism have at times rendered Polynesians as ancestrally and self-identified as white. Though I am not comparing the histories of colonization and scientific writing of Gabrielino/Tongva peoples of Southern California to Polynesians, instead I suggest that Gabrielino/Tongva peoples are similarly “possessed” by whiteness through the history of the California missions and the Los Angeles urban landscape. This possession through whiteness renders Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the primordial yet temporary inhabitants subsumed in totality by Spanish colonialism, Mexican

²³ William David Estrada, *The Los Angeles Plaza: Sacred and Contested Space* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 54.

²⁴ Maile Arvin, “Pacificaly Possessed: Scientific Production and Native Hawaiian Critique of the ‘Almost White’ Polynesian Race” (PhD diss., University of California, San Diego, 2013).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

nationalization, and the western imperial conquest of Yaanga, Puvunga, Kawenga, Hahamongo, and other Gabrielino/Tongva polities by settler colonists starting with Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo's expedition to enact the colonial discovery rights on behalf of the Viceroy of New Spain on the California coast in 1542. The three-fold settler colonial histories and current settler colonial structure(s) combined with the urbanization of the Los Angeles "megalopolis" produces a settler urban imaginary in which Spanish and in particular Mexicans²⁶ become the reference point of conquered Indigenous inhabitants and Gabrielino/Tongva peoples to be erased or dismissed, imagined instead as an obscure relic in order to extinguish their claims to land, governmentality, and sovereignty.

To foreground the character of urban settler imaginary, a cursory investigation of Spanish colonialism in Alta California, as with all settlements in Nueva España, as a settler project is essential. This dates back to the Doctrine of Discovery, one of the earliest forms of international law, sanctioned by the Vatican through official papal bulls written by the respective Popes beginning as early as the Crusades. Discovery is concerned with the rights to title of infidel (read non-Christian) land claims in the name of Christian Empires. Discovery became the juridical backing for the settler-colonial project in the Americas first for the Spanish and Portuguese, and later the English and French. Robert J. Miller, a legal scholar and professor, provides the following

²⁶ Mexicans as used in the settler colonial imaginary of Los Angeles deduces that Mexicans were the previous "owners" of the land before the U.S. settler conquest during the U.S War on Mexico. In accordance with this, the figure of the Indigenous National Mexicans are those that can trace their migration to Los Angeles back to mid-nineteenth century and early twentieth century, often excluding more recent Mexican migrants who are subject to immigration policies and referred to as "illegal" or "undocumented." The settler urban imaginary suggests that Mexican peoples in Los Angeles are the Indigenous inhabitants yet are a national group of a mestizo/a nation-state which renders them disconnected from any land claims or Indigenous epistemologies.

explanation of how the process of Discovery worked in 1493 through the issuing of the

Inter caetera II papal bull by Pope Alexander VI:

The Church's interest in expanding Christendom and Spain and Portugal's economic and political interest in colonization had solidified under the existing canon and international law of the Doctrine of Discovery to stand for four basic points. First, the Church had the political and secular authority to grant to Christian kings some form of title and ownership rights in the lands of infidels. Second, European exploration and colonization was designed to assist the pope's guardianship duties over all the earthly flock including infidels. Third, Spain and Portugal held exclusive rights over other European, Christian countries to explore and colonize the unknown parts of the entire world. Fourth, the mere sighting and discovery of new lands by Spain or Portugal in their respective spheres of influence and the symbolic possession of these lands by undertaking the Discovery rituals and formalities of possession, such as planting flags or leaving objects to prove their presence, were sufficient to pass rights in these lands to the discovering European country.²⁷

Spain and all the other European countries had to utilize Discovery to lay claim to any lands, not for the legal right of Indigenous people, but so that other Christian Empires could not legally claim first rights to certain territories in legal courts. According to the four basic points laid out by Miller, the Americas were categorized as a land of infidels because of Indigenous peoples being non-Christian, and therefore under canon law had no rights to ownership over the land.

By 1532, influenced by writings of *padres* like Bartolomé de las Casas who told of the slaughtering of the "noble savages" in the Americas, many Spanish legal scholars and theologians began to question the legitimacy of the papal bull of Discovery through ritual alone. Francisco de Victoria, a leading theologian and legal scholar of the Spanish King, challenged this papal bull based on the principles of "European natural law." Miller states

²⁷ Robert J. Miller, *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Manifest Destiny*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2008), 15.

that Victoria's challenge made three conclusions based on his interpretation of natural law, "First, the natives of the Americas possessed natural legal rights as free and rational people. Second, the pope's grant of title to lands in America to Spain was invalid and could not affect the inherent rights of the Indians. Third, violations by the Indians of the natural law principles of the Law of Nations...might justify a Christian nation's conquest and empire in the new world."²⁸ Though these three points seem counter to any Spain's goals of colonizing the America's by giving Indigenous people natural law rights, Miller argues that Victoria's interpretation strengthened Spain's ability to colonize. The natural rights forced onto the people of the Americas were the rights to accept Spanish occupation, trade, extraction of resources, and allowing missionaries to spread Catholicism. Miller explains that, "Victoria's conclusion...was that if infidels prevented the Spanish from carrying out any of their natural law rights, Spain could 'protect its rights' and 'defend the faith' by waging lawful and 'just wars' against the natives...The legal regime envisioned by Victoria was just as destructive to native sovereignty and property interests..."²⁹ If Indigenous peoples were to impede the conquistadors and padres rights, then Spain could legally wage a "just war." In effect, Indigenous peoples gained natural rights to *title* of the land, which meant the right to stay on the land and sell the land to the European country who claimed discovery over their territory. The people of the America's could not interfere with any of Spain's natural rights, or it would be seen as an act of aggression and qualify a "just war" against them.

²⁸ Ibid., 16.

²⁹ Ibid., 16-17.

Alta California, of which modern day Los Angeles is a part, was no exception to the Doctrine of Discovery and placing natural law rights onto the Indigenous peoples of California. In 1542, just ten years after Victoria's conclusions, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo would invoke these rights and claim Discovery of multiple ports and islands of Alta California for the Spanish Crown. In an excerpt from 1559 summary of Cabrillo's voyage by Andrés de Urdaneta, the only surviving original document of this voyage, he confirms the Discovery of the port of San Diego, then referred to as San Mateo. The summary recounts that, "On Sunday, September 17 [1542], they continued on their voyage. About six leagues from Cabo de la Cruz, they found a good, protected port. The port is called San Mateo and is located at 33½ degrees. *They took possession of the port* and remained there until the following Saturday" (emphasis added).³⁰ This first account of the invocation of Discovery in what is now California began a process of dispossession of Indigenous people and land that the Spanish missionaries under Father Serra would solidify.

In June of 1770, after months of travelling up the coast of California, Father Serra and the Spanish soldiers would reach Monterey Bay and invoke Discovery. Father Serra recounts the process he and others participated:

Everything being in readiness, and having put alb and stole, and kneeling down with all the men before the altar, I atoned the hymn *Veni, Creator Spiritus*... Then we all made our way to a gigantic cross which was all in readiness and lying on the ground. We set it on the ground and then, with all the tenderness of our heart, we venerated it. I sprinkled with holy water all the fields around. And thus, after raising aloft the standard of the King of Heaven, we unfurled the flag of our

³⁰ "From the Official Account of the Rodríguez Cabrillo Expedition," in *Land of Promise and Despair: Chronicles of Early California, 1535-1846*, ed. Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz (Santa Clara, CA: Santa Clara University, 2001), 35.

Catholic Monarch likewise. As we raised each one of them, we shouted at the top of our voice: “Long live the Faith! Long live the King!” All the time the bells were ringing, and our rifles were being fired, and from the boat came the thunder of the big guns...the officers proceeded to the act of taking formal possession of that country in the name of His Catholic Majesty, unfurling and waving once more the royal flag, pulling grass, moving stones and other formalities *according to law*...³¹ (emphasis added)

This account demonstrates all the idiosyncrasies of the rituals of Discovery, from the raising of crosses and flags, discharging arms, and making other physical marks on the land. However, to hold up in international law of possession, the Spanish needed to set up physical structures and did so with the missions and military garrisons, including the missions of San Gabriel within miles of the military installation or *presidio Nuestra Señora de la Reina de Los Angeles*. If Serra and the other *padres* understood the “law” as such, then he had a clear understanding of his role in being the Father President of the mission. He understands that Discovery claims for Spain needed the support of physical structures and set out to establish as many missions as possible.

After establishing Discovery formally through rituals and the building of permanent structures, the settler project could begin. It is important to emphasize this point of the character of Spanish colonialism in Nueva España as a settler project. When Serra and the other Spanish authorities arrived in Alta California, unlike the voyages of Cabrillo or other Spanish sea and land expeditions of the past, they came to settle permanently. As Patrick Wolfe argues, “settler-colonizers come to stay—invasion is a

³¹ To Father Juan Andres, June 12, 1770 Antonine Tibesar, ed., *Writings of Junípero Serra* (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1956), 168.

structure not an event.”³² The missionaries and Spanish, though small, were intent on expanding Spanish dominion in Alta California territories in the 1770s as had been done through Nueva España for nearly 250 years, through the rituals of Discovery combined with the building of missions and *presidios*. In the case of Los Angeles, the Spanish Governor of Alta California, Felipe de Neve received approval from Spanish Viceroys in 1779 to begin conscripting *pobladores* to settle and displace the Gabrielino/Tongva communities of Yaanga.³³

Settlement and land dispossession through the establishment of the Los Angeles *presidio* was not the only method of Spanish settler colonialism, but also the ontological dispossession of Indigenous peoples through religious conversion to Christianity and “marriage” to Spanish settlers. Wolfe describes the European sovereign, in this case Spain, as relating to the Indigenous within the settler logic of elimination. Wolfe argues that “The logic of elimination is a primary motivation or agenda of settler colonialism that distinguishes it from other forms of colonialism...”³⁴ In the case of Los Angeles and Alta California at large, the Spanish Crown wanted to maintain their land holdings while expending the least amount of capital on the project of elimination. The missions were the most efficient way to do so because Indigenous peoples were a source of “free labor” to build the missions and harvest the crops for both missionaries and Spanish settlers in the *presidios* while eliminating their way of life through enclosure, warfare, and

³² Patrick Wolfe, “Structure and Event: Settler Colonialism, Time, and the Question of Genocide,” in *Empire, Colony Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, ed. A. Dirk Moses (New York: Berghahn, 2008), 103.

³³ William David Estrada, *The Los Angeles Plaza: Sacred and Contested Space* (Austin: University of Texas, 2008), 27.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 103

ontological destruction through conversion of souls and land. Settler missions also maintained their original duty of the papal bulls by spreading Christianity to all the “Pope’s earthly flock.” In doing so, the Spanish were still colonizing within the settler colonial logic of elimination. However, the intention was not the total physical elimination, although that did happen through direct-armed campaigns of extermination, especially for Indigenous Californians who harbored escaping neophytes from the missions. Adding to this was the massive death caused by disease through biological devastation in the forms of invasive flora and fauna and the military tactic of sexual violence against Indigenous women which caused the spreading of syphilis.³⁵ The uses of the missions instead were intent on the elimination of Indigenous identity and being, destruction at ontological level. Wolfe writes that, “settler societies characteristically devise a number of often coexistent strategies...[which] can include officially encouraged miscegenation, the breaking down of native title into alienable individual freeholds, native citizenship, child abduction, religious conversion, and a whole range of cognate biocultural assimilations. All these strategies, including frontier homicide, are characteristic of settler colonialism.”³⁶ From these definitions, the missions of Alta California were a settler colonial project and the *padres* along with the military officers at the *presidios* were concerned with land accumulation through the construction of twenty-one total mission and the elimination of the native identity.

³⁵ Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Miroslava Chávez-García, *Negotiating Conquest: Gender and Power in California, 1770s-1880s* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 103.

The blueprint for the conquest of L.A. was based on nearly three hundred years of Spanish warfare across the Americas and Caribbean but it did not mean a totality of control of the Gabrielino/Tongva and surrounding Native Californians. Killing of *padres*, burning of missions, plots of revolt, and other forms of resistance to settler rule were common among the missions and required military. As scholars of the genealogy of policing argue, this should be understood as police power. Mark Neocleous observes the rise of state power necessitated a unit of war power and police power. As early as the 16th century European states were creating legal statutes against those who absconded the labor regime of an emerging capitalism, or what Marx called a series of “terrorist laws” targeted against various acts of vagrancy or refusal of the capitalist social relation.³⁷ Yet these laws of police power in the metropole of European empires were deeply rooted in the experience of European colonialism and histories of European racialism that dominated from the middle ages to the capitalist epoch in the fifteen century.³⁸ The response to any type of colonial disorder from racialized subjects, in the L.A. context that being the Native Californian by the 1770s, was shaped by hundreds of years of experience with police power throughout Nueva España and in the Iberian peninsula. The conditions of Spanish settler colonialism use of police/military exemplify what Franz Fanon identified as the police officer and the soldier being the “spokesperson for the colonizer.”³⁹ And the colonality of police power is most clear in the response to one of

³⁷ Mark Neocleous, *A Critical Theory of Police Power* (London: Verso Press, 2021), 11–13.

³⁸ Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*, 3rd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020), 20–28.

³⁹ Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 3.

the widespread forms of resisting the police power in Spanish California, that of fugitivism.

When baptized indigenous peoples (neophytes) left “permanently” by themselves, in families, or in the hundreds outside the boundaries of direct missionary and Spanish control, it was in direct conflict with the colonial social order, especially the power of the *padres* who oversaw the labor and baptisms over their “flock”. Beyond this direct conflict with the structure of power, it also meant the possibility for larger resistance campaigns and attacks on the missions. Junípero Serra was the first head of the missionary system in Alta California and immediately became aware of the reality and possible consequences of fugitivism. Speaking on the subject he wrote, “It will happen that one day, because they are punished or reprimanded, another day, because they fear punishment, yet another day because they have friends over there [in the wild], little by little they will flee there, and it will multiply our *enemies*.”⁴⁰ Serra not only lists the various reasons that neophytes would flee the missions indefinitely, but also the reality of reprisal that the Spanish colonial agents and structures felt constantly through direct acts of resistance like arson, assassination, sabotage, and the expropriation or destruction of resources and infrastructure. Serra and all proceeding California Mission Father Presidents understood the role of missions was linked to that of the military *presidios* and they too were surrounded not by wandering souls but by potential or active insurgents.

⁴⁰ Serra to Neve, January 7, 1780, in *Writings of Junípero Serra*, ed. Antonine Tibesar, O.F.M. (Baltimore: J.H. Furst, 1956), 3: 411.

Serra had good reason for concern of the potential increase in hostility towards the missions caused by fugitivism and the increase in neophyte flight. During his tenure for example, the San Luis Obispo mission was attacked three times by adjacent Indigenous polities who set fire to different buildings using inflamed arrows.⁴¹ Though the estimated number of apostates is minimal during his tenure as Father President, the consequences of punishment and capture of fugitives were great. Sherburne F. Cook commenting on the “clerico-military” responses to fugitivism, which used methods of prevention, punishment, and capture, writes, “physical restraint and confinement, as well as punishment of a corporal or any other nature, would render more violent the desire to get away...and would crystallize the urge in others...the third procedure operated [by which]...armed parties [came] among [gentile communities] and drag[ed] off the Christian to a fate which must have seemed like slavery.”⁴² In looking at the responses to fugitivism, the reprisals may have sown the seeds for more constant streams of flight and hostility to the missions.

Although Serra provides one of the earliest remarks to why policing fugitivism was so important to the mission project, an important pattern appears in the colonial archive in how the language towards fugitivism changed over time. In July of 1775, Serra wrote in concern for getting soldier escorts to search out fugitive neophytes around Monterrey. In this document he refers to the fugitives as Christians in a very paternalistic manner. Serra wrote, “I state to you that these wayward sheep are my

⁴¹ James A. Sandos, *Converting California: Indians and Franciscans in the Missions* (New Haven: Yale University Press: 2004), 163.

⁴² Sherburne F. Cook, *The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization*, (UC Press: Berkeley, 1976), 63.

burden, and I am responsible for them...” In this document Serra does not even use the word fugitive to describe the people who have fled the mission in Monterrey. In what Jack Forbes, a L.A. based founding scholar-activist of Native American and Indigenous Studies, describes as the *wétiko* psychosis of European settlers, Serra seems to be unaware of why any of the California Indigenous peoples would want to leave the diseased, corporal punishment regime, and captive conditions of the missions.⁴³ In a similar paternalistic address in concern with finding fugitives, a letter by Padre Payeras, a father president of the California Missions in 1798 used similar language. Payeras wrote to the California governor of his failed attempt at retrieving a fugitive. Payeras wrote, “In order to fulfill the great task that has been entrusted to us of teaching these neophytes to be both rational men as well as to be good Christians... We pleaded with them often to present themselves, inviting them by offering them pardon... We have threatened them with recourse to government intervention if they do not appear...”⁴⁴ The tone here is slightly different from that of Serra’s. The fugitives have gone from Christians and lost sheep, to being neophytes who are being trained to be rational Christians. Now, this might just be semantics or possibly just the reflection of different individual relationships that Serra and Payeras had with Indigenous converts at the mission who fled. However, as the settler project progresses via the mission system and the continual acts of resistance throughout all twenty-one missions, there are also other changes in dictum by

⁴³ Jack Forbes, *Columbus and Other Cannibals: The Wétiko Disease of Exploitation, Imperialism, and Terrorism* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2008), 25; For testimonies on the brutality and forced labor in the missions from California Natives see Rupert Costo and Jeannette Henry Costo, eds., *The Missions of California: A Legacy of Genocide* (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1987).

⁴⁴ To Governor Diego de Borica, August 2, 1798, *Writings of Mariano Payeras*, ed. and trans. Donald Cutter, (Santa Barbara: Bellerophon Books, 1995), 27.

the padres. In 1819, Payeras has a much different description of an expedition to return fugitive Indians. In the letter there is not one mention of the word Christian or neophyte. The letter, which is handwritten and difficult to decipher, clearly uses the word *cimarrones*, Spanish for escaped slave, to describe the fugitives which he is trying to capture.⁴⁵ The word *cimarron* was given during Spanish colonial times to escaped African slaves, especially in the areas of Oaxaca and Guerrero of Spanish empire of Nueva España. Payeras usage of the word demonstrates a completely different relationship and concern with fugitivism, from one of paternalism, to complete aggression.

In 1821 Mexico gained its independence from Spain and instituted sweeping liberal reforms including the secularization of the California missions in 1834.⁴⁶ However Native peoples of California were not “free” or included in the formation of the newly birthed liberal republic. In fact, Indigenous peoples were policed in many of the same ways by the Mexican Nation-State as the Spanish Crown had done. They were forced into work contracts in all the major cities with the secular ruling class of Californios taking on the mission complex became secularized under the liberal constitution of Mexican nation state. This practice would continue in the U.S. period after the post-war settlement and territorial acquisition of the northern half of the Mexican territory. Once the California constitution was ratified in 1850, policing the population, especially

⁴⁵ Fray Mariano Payeras, O.F.M. to Solá requesting an order for an expedition to return some fugitive Indians, June 30, 1819, California Mission Documents, Santa Barbara Mission Library.

⁴⁶ Lytle Hernández, *City of Inmates*, 31.

Indigenous peoples, Mexican, Latino, Chinese goldminers, and Anglo laborers became paramount.

While a court and state ranger system were consolidated as part of the settler state constitution, other locally grown forms of policing called “vigilance committees” were recognized by the state. These locally deputized possess formed throughout the state in response to the influx of Anglo settlers into the state in search for gold and land. They used racially targeted terror against Mexican, Indigenous, and Chinese communities which dovetailed with the U.S. military who were sent throughout Northern California to engage in warfare against Native Californians as part of the ongoing federal policy of extermination and land settlement prior to 1887 Allotment Act.⁴⁷ One of California’s earliest historians Herbert Bancroft writes the following of the tensions between the state’s power of holding the monopoly on violence through the organs of the state and how to deal with growing power of the vigilance communities which had existed for decades. He writes:

The San Francisco Vigilance Committee was opposed by the state government and Governor J. Neely Johnson met with Coleman, the president of the vigilance committee at the Continental Hotel. Upon acquiring what it would take the vigilance committee peace to accomplish he replied “to unify the moral and political atmosphere, to do what the crippled law should do but cannot. This done, we will gladly retire. Now governor...you are asked by the mayor and certain to bring out the militia and crush this movement. I assure you it cannot be done; and if you attempt it, I will cause you and us much trouble...We ask not a single court to adjourn; we ask not a single officer to vacate his position; we demand only the enforcement of the laws which we have made...Leave us alone in our shame and

⁴⁷ Ken Gonzales-Day, *Lynching in the West: 1850-1935* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Michael J. Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching and American Society* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Karen S. Wilson and Daniel Lynch, “Here Come the El Monte Boys: Vigilante Justice and Lynch Mobs in Nineteenth-Century El Monte,” in *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*, ed. Romeo Guzmán et al. (New Brunswick: Rutgers, 2020); Benjamin Madley, *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe* (New Haven: Yale, 2006).

sorrow; for as God lives we will cleanse this city of her corruption or perish with her. So we have sworn...leave a alone in our righteous purposes.”⁴⁸ In Los Angeles, the earliest recorded vigilance committee dates to the Mexican period. In 1836 by the Californio ruling class of the period. Like that of the San Francisco committee, the L.A. posses were undeterred by calls of the formal judicial structure to stop in their literal execution of justice. The L.A. committee writes in their defense to publicly execute Gerbasio Alipas and Maria Del Rosio Villa for the murder of Domingo Feliz, son to Spanish landowner Jose Vicente Feliz and part owner of the over 6,000 acres of Rancho Los Feliz. They write “the public requires an example and also revenge...the blood of the murders must be shed today...”⁴⁹ This early public execution and use of “summary justice” would be part of the L.A. informal rule of law into the 1870s. These executions and others that would take place during this period were the results of the new racial regime constituted under Anglo rule that was sweeping throughout the Southwest combined with the sensationalist editorials in the local L.A. newspapers.⁵⁰

This culture of “street justice” by local vigilance communities, their rationalization of violence as righteousness, complimented the settler preoccupation with native elimination that marked the type of carceral and policing structures were the genealogical base of the policing regime in California and L.A. As Chapter 1 will demonstrate, the anxiety of the “Mexican Problem” from the perspective of police power

⁴⁸ *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft: Volume XXXVII*, vol. Popular Tribunals II (San Francisco: The History Company, 1887), 166–67.

⁴⁹ Gregg Layne, “Account of the First Vigilance Committee in California – 1836,” in *Los Angeles, Chronological and Documentary History*, ed. Robert Mayer (New York: Oceana Press, 1978).

⁵⁰ Robert W. Blew, “Vigilantism in Los Angeles, 1835-1874,” *Southern California Quarterly*, 54, 1 (Spring 1972) 11-30.

was often undergirded by the logics of Native elimination. One glaring example is the use “Red Mexican” and “Red Indian” by the LAPD’s annual statistical digests reports when differentiating race among the arrest at least until 1949 when it was replaced by “Indian” and “Latin” in the 1952 statistical reports.

This settler logic of L.A.’s police power starts from the mission period and continues to be present in U.S. policing. The histories of anti-Native genocide and anti-Mexican vigilante violence have contributed to the plantation logic that undergirds all of U.S. policing. For instance, as mentioned previously the role of slave patrols and the continual condemnation of Blackness by law enforcement is paramount to also understand the manifestations of modern policing practices that continues to be a pillar of anti-Black domestic warfare. In addition, the histories of police power within the mission complex and Anglo settler complex continue to reverberate in significant ways when investigating the histories of policing in the Golden State beyond this early settler period. For example, in 1956 the California Peace Officers association standardized its oath for sworn officers throughout the State. The oath states in part:

As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind - to safeguard lives and property, to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder...I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all...develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty...I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession...law enforcement.⁵¹

⁵¹ “Kettmann Endorses State Code of Ethics for Officers,” *The Desert Sun*, December 19, 1956.

The religious overtones of service, confessional duties, faith, and God are echoes of the ruling class culture from both the Franciscan missionaries and Anglo Protestantism that occupied the land and lives of California starting in the late eighteenth century. Policing in California continued to follow these legacies which sustain the narrative of a settler common sense that is at war with the Indian, the Mexican, the African, and in the post-World War II period especially, the delinquent whose criminalization is shaped by these insurgent and enemy combatant archetypes.

Chapter Outline

The first chapter focuses on the precedents to founding and impact of USC's Delinquency Control Institute and the years 1945-55. I first detail the significance of its founding in relation to the racial contestations of the Zoot Suit hysteria with the 1942 flashpoint of the death of José Diaz at the Sleepy Lagoon. I investigate this historical event as the forging of L.A's youth policing regime around the Mexican youth delinquent and Mexican gangs. I analyze the ways law enforcement, the California prison system, social workers, and academics came together to develop the nation's first training institute for juvenile policing. Chapter 1 examines the Institute's formation, curriculum, graduating classes, published reports, and relationships they had with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD), Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD), and the California Youth Authority (CYA) during their first ten years. Rather than historicize individual actions of police brutality that targeted young people, especially Mexican youth in the wake of the Zoot Suit

hysteria, my investigation of DCI reveals what Naomi Murakawa describes as a “postwar racial liberalism” of L.A.’s policing apparatus.⁵² The currents of white nationalism, anti-communism, and warfare were present in the culture of the LAPD and Sheriff’s Department, constitutive of rather than antagonistic with the liberal settler social order of L.A.’s political economy and carceral state.

In taking this structural-historical approach and analyzing the carceral state during this period, I shift the lens of analysis on the well-known incidents of youth criminalization. These include the intersection of DCI and the Sleepy Lagoon trial and the relationship with the Institute to the professionalization of the LAPD under Chief William Parker. This chapter details how the Zoot Suit hysteria continued after the war within the Institute and how their ideas of race, gender, class, citizenship, and order were shaped in significant ways by the consortium of academics, private investments, and state policing agencies behind the Institute.

By 1995 DCI had graduated over 5,000 law enforcement and probation officers and produced the “bible of the juvenile justice field,” the criminology text *Police Work with Juveniles and the Administration of Juvenile Justice* by former director Dan Pursuit.⁵³ Examining the early history of DCI illuminates the foundational logics and praxis of youth policing both as a discipline of study and mode of racialized enforcement of control over L.A.’s Mexican youth.

⁵² Murakawa, *The First Civil Right*, 4.

⁵³ Mary Sullivan, “USC Blue: The Delinquency Control Institute Celebrates 50 Years on the Beat,” *University of Southern California Chronicle*, February 27, 1995.

Chapter 2 focuses on the history of L.A. County Probation Department's (LACPD) Group Guidance program and expansion of detention facilities during the years 1955-1965. This chapter highlights the histories of youth gang policing leading up to and during the 1965 Watts uprising and the role that the Group Guidance program had in forming the surveillance apparatuses against young Mexican and Black social clubs while largely ignoring the proliferation of white youth social clubs, labeling the former "criminal gangs." Utilizing department annual reports and research evaluations of the Group Guidance Program, and analyzing the impact of juvenile adjudication records, this chapter demonstrates how L.A. Probation department was an essential pillar of the build-up to the war on gangs in L.A. The sworn officers of the LACPD created the carceral geographies that labeled South Central and East Los Angeles "gang territory" while ignoring the Anglo gangs of the Southeast, Westside, and white segregated areas of L.A.

The Group Guidance program was L.A.'s inaugural "boots on the ground" program to actively identify and provide intervention services for Mexican and later Black youth associated or active in gangs. Just as other historians have identified the ways local and federal officials implemented anti-juvenile crime initiatives in response to crime trends and moral anxieties of adolescence during World War II, my focus on the history of the Group Guidance program will similarly contribute to this historiography.⁵⁴

The Group Guidance program is an important vantage point for understanding the growth

⁵⁴ Gerald D. Nash *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 120; William M. Turtle, "Daddy's Gone to War:" *The Second World War in the Lives of America's Children* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 6; James Gilbert *A Cycle of Outrage: America's Reaction to Juvenile Delinquency in the 1950s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

of police power through the Probation Department. From 1955-1965 the carceral capacity of the Probation Department rapidly expanded through massive publicly funded bond measures to increase sites of youth incarceration. In 1955 there were six juvenile camps, one girl's school, and one juvenile hall. By 1965 sites of youth detention increased to fourteen junior and senior youth camps, four juvenile halls, and complete replacement of the girl's school. The chapter interrogates how the Probation Department used statistics, local bond measures, the juvenile court, the Group Guidance intervention model on Mexican and later Black youth to justify in public opinion and the political sphere the massive county wide expansion of Probation in the lives of youth of color.

Chapter 3 investigates the solidification of counterinsurgency warfare as the *modus operandi* of the L.A. youth policing regime during and after the 1965 Watts Rebellion. A central explanation by the Governor's Commission, the LAPD, and the County's civil rights organ, the Human Relation Commission, all found Black "anti-social" behavior and Black "hard-core gang members" as central to the riots. The moral panic and historical legacies of the criminalization of Black youth in conflict with the law were utilized in part to justify the ascendancy of police power to new heights in the form of Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), gang sweeps, increased infiltration of police in schools, and other technologies to be used against working-class Black and Mexican communities engaged in underground economies, left political activism, and daily acts of resistance to the racial capitalist and colonial social order.

It was during the Watts Rebellion that Group Guidance probation officers were called upon to survey the damage and conduct interviews with young people to stop them

from participating. However, it was also a way for the city to further extend the State's narrative of young Black male "gang members" as the primary drivers of the rebellion, rather than the combined weight of material factors including police occupation, a housing crisis, high unemployment, and the apartheid conditions inflicted on the Black communities of Watts.⁵⁵ Finally, an investigation of the Group Guidance program reveals an important shift in the history of youth crime and gang intervention debate taking place during this period. In the early 1960s research groups at UCLA and USC evaluated the effectiveness of intervention workers in curbing gang related crime. The reviews of the program in-light of the Watts Rebellion were significant because their findings pushed the LACPD to terminate the program and pave the way for new suppression tactics like additional surveillance technologies, increased probation referrals to adult court for "hard-core" gang members, and by the mid-1970s the creation of LAPD's Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums (CRASH) specialized gang suppression unit. Each of these new manifestations, programs, and technologies of warfare received local and federal funding and were given *carte blanche* to be released on the community by L.A.'s race liberal political order whether white, Black, or Mexican.

Finally, I end with a Coda that proposes how historians and scholars can more critically interrogate the history of urban policing. Based on this twenty-year period of L.A.'s youth policing regime I propose the reinterpretation of theoretical lens and international legal definition of genocide be used in making sense of this history. As

⁵⁵ Gerald Horne *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Boston: De Capo Press, 1997), 99.

home to some of the highest numbers of police-related homicide in the twenty-first century, L.A.'s contemporary moment cannot be disentangled from its twentieth century, billion-dollar LAPD police project. This Coda is also a response to the current conjuncture and social uprisings against policing that various peoples across the U.S. have risen up under the larger banner of Black Lives Matter.

Chapter 1

“The Afterlives of the Zoot: The Founding Years of the Delinquency Control Institute”

In early August 1942, a candid photo of five Chicana youth was printed in the *LA Times*.⁵⁶ Victoria Audelet stared directly at the *LA Times* photographer, defiant with her stiffened upper lip, thin rimmed glasses and a button-down long-sleeved polka-dot dress.⁵⁷ The *Times* photographer captured her and four young Chicana arrested in the “biggest roundup since prohibition.” Audelet along with Gloria Navarro, Socorio Tafoya, Paul Rosales, and Leonard Matonado were arrested with three hundred young people from the 38th Street *barrio* as part of a two-day siege by the LAPD, LA County Sheriffs, and California Highway Patrol.⁵⁸ The goal by LA’s law enforcement and the larger push by the media and local politicians was to combat the “reign of terror” in the wake of months of media hysteria in conjunction with the death of José Díaz in which zoot suit wearing Chicana in particular, along with African Americans and other youth of color were hyper-visualized as delinquent, criminal, and anti-patriotic. They accomplished this by a mass weekend check-point operation at main intersections in the Northeast part of

⁵⁶ I use the “x” to replace the normally gendered Chicana/o spelling throughout the dissertation in connection to the growing critical queer-studies turn in both scholarship and cultural spaces. See Josh Logue, “Latina/o/x,” *Inside Higher Ed* (blog), accessed September 1, 2019, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/12/08/students-adopt-gender-nonspecific-term-latinx-be-more-inclusive>; Shiela Marie Contreras, “Chicana, Chicano, Chican@, Chicana/x,” in *Keywords for Latina/o Studies*, ed. Deborah R. Vargas, Nancy Raquel Mirabal, and Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes (New York: NYU Press, 2017).

⁵⁷ For a thorough discussion of Audelet and her subsequent rebuke of the *LA Times* picture in a moment of Chicana young women contesting their demonization of the press see, Elizabeth R. Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits: The Lives of Mexican American Women on the World War II Home Front* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

⁵⁸ “Police Seize 300 in Boys’ Gang Drive: Many Weapons Taken in Roundup Conducted by Hundreds of Officers,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 10, 1942.

the city, in which Chicane youth who were driving to meet with friends and family for a weekend gathering were stopped, searched, and had their property seized. According to the newspaper this included the confiscation of “weapons” such as rocks, links of chain, and fingernail files. The article shared the names of the “gangs” some of the youth were affiliated with including “38th Street” “Happy Valley,” and “girl gangs” like “Cherries” and “Black Widows.” This sweep resulted in 31 youth being indicted by the L.A. grand jury of which 17 would ultimately be tried in the infamous Sleepy Lagoon Trail.

Chicane scholars and cultural historians have dissected the impact of mass arrest and criminalization of youth of color surrounding the Sleepy Lagoon trail and the zoot suit hysteria as a pivotal conjuncture for the trajectory of Chicane politics, criminalization, activism, myth, and memory during and after World War II.⁵⁹ These studies aid in understanding this moment of shifting racial, economic, and spatial dynamics of a city transformed into a hub of military industry and garrison outpost of the Pacific front during WWII. It is understood how the city’s war on zoot suiters greatly shaped the future of law enforcement’s suppression of *barrio* communities. However, less known is how this moment transformed the policing Mexican youth in the city and as I argue in the chapter the future of youth policing across the state through the creation of the Delinquency Control Institute (DCI).

⁵⁹ Catherine S. Ramírez, *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 54.

DCI was founded as part of USC's School of Public Administration shortly after the riots in 1946 and would begin a nearly seventy-year institute of the carceral state to train law enforcement officers in techniques of youth crime suppression, youth criminology, and criminal sociology until its closure in 2011. From its inception, DCI quickly evolved into a nationally renowned law enforcement educational center, but its development and roots are entrenched within the anti-Mexican zootie panic. The Institute became a nexus of what I will refer to throughout this dissertation as the L.A. youth policing regime, a discursive conglomeration of policing policies, local political forces, and the development of the post-war political economy which over time developed an apparatus of counter insurgency against Mexican and Black youth. DCI stands out as an exceptional force in the city's liberal political structure that reached beyond the borders of L.A.

When naming DCI as part of a continuity of the L.A. youth policing regime I mean to define policing as more than an institution of law enforcement officers but instead as form of power that goes beyond the sworn officer. In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Michel Foucault ends with a meditation on the six results of the carceral network of panoptic sites in western European state formation. Specifically, he identifies that such spaces produced a linking of the punitive and abnormality, the production of delinquency, naturalizing the right of punishment, adjudicating based on the norm, the power of examination in rendering bodies docile, and structured roots in the strategies of power. For the L.A. youth policing regime, I focus on Foucault's second proposal that "the delinquent is an institutional production" of the carceral archipelago,

the prison has delinquency built into it, and delinquent behavior is not outside of the law but produced by the law itself.⁶⁰ Furthermore Foucault proposes in his essay “Politics of Health in the 18th Century” that “...the term 'police' does not signify, at least not exclusively, the institution of police in the modern sense; 'police' is the ensemble of mechanisms serving to ensure order, the properly channeled growth of wealth and the conditions of preservation of health 'in general.’”⁶¹ This theory when applied to the history of policing in the U.S. settler state is a history of power, domination, and class warfare against Black, Indigenous, racialized, foreign, queer, and subversive populations deemed so under the hegemony of geographically and historically specific context of the U.S. statecraft.⁶²

For this chapter I interrogate the founding and first ten years of DCI (1946-1956) to illuminate its foundational documents, pedagogical framework, and its ties to the growth of the L.A. youth policing regime within the context of the anti-Mexican moral panic of the zoot suiter. An historical analysis of DCI’s foundational years reveals how this policing training institute inaugurated modern youth policing on the logics and praxis of L.A.’s racialized counter-insurgency policies which produced a multi-decade moral panic centered on youth gangs and juvenile delinquency as the “crux of our crime

⁶⁰ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 301.

⁶¹ “Police Seize 300 in Boys’ Gang Drive: Many Weapons Taken in Roundup Conducted by Hundreds of Officers.” *Los Angeles Times*, August 10, 1942.

⁶² For an expansive understanding of police/policing as state power and force directed against racialized and subversive populations, especially for Black and Indigenous peoples in the U.S. see Neocleous, *A Critical Theory of Police Power*; Jordan T. Camp and Christina Heatherton, eds., *Policing the Planet: Why The Policing Crisis Led to Black Lives Matter* (London: Verso Press, 2016); Stuart Schrader, *Badges Without Borders: How Global Counterinsurgency Transformed American Policing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019); BLA Coordinating Committee, “Black Liberation Army Study Guide, 1977-78” (1977).

problem.”⁶³ From 1946 onward the actions of Mexican and shortly after Black youth became the primary preoccupation with DCI’s mission to train law enforcement in surveillance, police science, and the expansive social system of control targeting L.A.’s racialized youth in conflict with the law.

L.A.’s youth policing regime is formed as a network of private and public institutions which began to overtly integrate with each other starting in the immediate post-war period under the guise that neutralizing youth in conflict with the law, especially those criminalized as Mexican and later Black gang members, was the primary strategy to salvaging L.A.’s Anglo dominance in the face of shifting demographics, increased movement of civil rights organizations, and overall crisis of the political economy and white social order in the back drop of the Cold War. By examining DCI founding as the bedrock of L.A.’s emerging post-war regime of police power, it reveals how a team of professors from USC’s School of Public Administration, along with L.A.’s veteran law enforcement officers collaborated in unique ways to legitimize the further vulnerability to state violence towards Chicano and Black youth Angelinos under the guise of delinquency control. And as the chapter will reveal, the initial goal of targeting Mexican youth delinquents was all within the context of a shifting liberal professionalization of L.A. law enforcement and the expansion of youth incarceration as a racial management tool for the city and state.

Police Power as Home Front Military Power

⁶³ “Teen-Age Crime Biggest Problem, FBI Chief Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 3, 1957.

Los Angeles, like most urban centers during World War II was a hotbed of racial, class, and generational conflict. The southland's booming war economy and the jobs it created provided social mobility for some of the longtime residents and the growing numbers of newly arrived migrants. However, many of the gains felt by Angelinos were mitigated along racial lines. The U.S. military installations that blanketed the L.A. basin included the San Pedro naval harbor, national guard armories, and military housing. Work for the federal government provided a large amount of employment as the entire West Coast of California transformed into a "garrison state," hiring residents to lead air-raid blackouts and secure the coastline by laying down barbed wire on sandy beaches. However, it was the private sector that brought many Angelinos to fill the nation's demands for weapons, munitions, rubber, steel, and foodstuffs for military personnel throughout the theaters of war.⁶⁴ The longstanding hiring practices by many of L.A.'s "open shop" continued to preserve the dense glass ceilings of an Anglo hiring policy that excluded and or severely limited the access to jobs for Black, Chicanx, Filipino, Japanese, other workers of color throughout the city in varying degrees, least mention for women of color.

The war economy overall increased the number of industrial and agricultural jobs arguably for both white and non-white workers, thus providing important yet temporary gains in increased social mobility for Angelinos of color, but not at equal degrees. However the impact of decades of racial housing discrimination both before and after the

⁶⁴ Verge, Arthur C., "The Impact of the Second World War on Los Angeles," *Pacific Historical Review* 63, no. 3 (August 1994): 289–314, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3640968>.

institutionalization of redlining in 1934 and the lower percentage of workers of color to gain managerial jobs or pay parity with their white peers ensured disproportionate poverty in L.A. working class Mexican and Black communities would continue.⁶⁵ This combined with the fury xenophobic jingoism that resulted in the mass expulsion and incarceration of Japanese and Japanese Americans from the city into military prisons to create an exceptionally potent mixture of wartime chauvinism and heightened white supremacy. For Black Angelinos in particular these anxieties were palpable throughout the war years. The meditations by African American writer Chester Himes in reflecting on his move to wartime L.A. captures the contradictions of federally mandated fair employment practices policy juxtaposed with the ramping up of the city's white hegemonic social order. Himes reflects that "Los Angeles hurt me racially as any city I have ever known – much more than any city in the South."⁶⁶ The acute wartime racial contestations that Himes remembers in his biography are also highlighted in his noir depictions of the California war industry based on his time spent in L.A.⁶⁷ The physical and psychological terror against Black Angelinos, new comers or decades old residents, were symptomatic of the continual strength of legal and social apartheid that defined Jim Crow America during the 1940s. In addition, for historians of the Southland, the nearly two centuries of overlapping European and U.S. settler conquests and early 20th century Anglo boosterism informed L.A.'s racialized geography and spatial order towards

⁶⁵ Daniel Widener, *Black Arts West: Culture and Struggle in Postwar Los Angeles* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 32.

⁶⁶ Chester Himes, *The Quality of Hurt: The Early Years: The Autobiography of Chester Himes*, (New York: Paragon Press, 1972), 73-74.

⁶⁷ Chester Himes, *If He Hollers Let Him Go* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1986); Himes, *Lonely Crusade: A Novel* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1986).

residents of color. However like other historical periods, during the war years the sentiment expressed by Himes was always in a state of contestation by sustained activism, which oscillated between outright antagonism or conciliatory, from organizations like the *Partido Liberal Mexicano*, the IWW, Urban League, the NAACP, *El Congreso*, trade unions (especially those with exclusively Black and Mexican membership), and community leaders like Charlotta Bass and Josephina Fiero de Bright.⁶⁸ The rampant discrimination and hyper-segregation in housing, jobs, and public space were met with various forms of contestation to counter the white supremacist social order as enacted and imagined by boosters who professed L.A. as the last metropolitan “white spot” in the U.S.⁶⁹

The transformation of the racial and economic geography of wartime L.A. was centrally impacted by the transformation of L.A. into a “garrison state.”⁷⁰ Prior to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the U.S. War Department began to push for investments in

⁶⁸For a history of the various political and social movements that Bass and Fiero de Bright were involved with prior to and during World War II see Regina Freer, “L.A. Race Woman: Charlotta Bass and the Complexities of Black Political Development in Los Angeles,” *American Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (September 2004): 607–32; Carlos Larralde, “Josefina Fierro and the Sleepy Lagoon Crusade, 1942-1945,” *Southern California Quarterly* 92, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 117–60.

⁶⁹ For discussions of settler conquest, the impact 19th and 20th century racialization, white supremacy boosterism and mechanism of racial control prior to World War II in L.A., see Kelly Lytle Hernández, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 14; Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 13–14; Natalia Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (University of California Press, 2006), 19–20; Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 20–64.

⁷⁰ Here I am referring to the militarization of California’s infrastructure towards the WWII war effort. I do not divorce this from the histories of military infrastructures starting from the Spanish colonial *presidios*, U.S. military forts, bases, shipyards, and aircrafts that have been constructed throughout the landscape beginning in the 1770s. Today the California Governor’s Military Council lists over 42 military installations and Operational Areas.

military industries in both L.A. and San Francisco to serve as a final bulwark for the U.S. Pacific Theater. Starting as early as 1939 federal dollars and contracts were invested in the state's ports, manufacturing, and military installations. This influx of money began to reshape and greatly expand the military industrial landscape as places like Kaiser Steel in Richmond, in Northern California began to greatly increase its ship building output to extraordinary proportions. By the end of 1942 Kaiser opened the Fontana Steel Plant in Southern California which greatly increased the profile of the southlands job prospects for the growth of the wartime economy. The Kaiser shipbuilding and steel empire along with the massive aircraft industry made the Port of L.A., which had been home to the U.S. Naval fleet since 1919, busier than ever as docks, railroads, and military logistical demands brought an even larger influx of Anglo, Black, and Mexican migration to the city.⁷¹ These investment in the military industry and the U.S. entrance into the war at the end of 1941 solidified the L.A. environs as a critical pillar of the military-Keynesianism geographies and spatial relations which would shape Southern California's post war economic boom and eventual bust by the 1970s.⁷²

This moment in L.A.'s booming war industry and the shifts in population and economy, simultaneous with the increased wartime xenophobia and hyper segregation of labor and housing, provided the crisis of legitimacy for the last "white spot." This crisis

⁷¹ Verge, Arthur C., "Second World War on Los Angeles"; Leanord, Kevin Allen, "'Brothers under the Skin'? African Americans, Mexican Americans, and World War II in California," in *The Way We Really Were: The Golden State in the Second Great War*, ed. Lotchin, Roger W. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 192.

⁷² Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 389–97; Ruth Wilson Gilmore, "Globalisation and US Prison Growth: From Military Keynesianism to Post-Keynesian Militarism," *Race & Class* 40, no. 2/3 (1999 1998): 171–88, <https://doi.org/10.1177/030639689904000212>.

was met with various responses which included the burgeoning investment in youth of color crime suppression via a consolidation of police power towards an L.A. youth policing regime. The development of DCI as both a local and statewide solution to what was claimed as rising delinquency across the country coincide with the tail end of both the Great Migration of Black peoples from the South and the estimated one million Mexicans who migrated between 1900-1930s. With a new generation of Black and Mexican youth throughout centers of industry, coupled with ethnic Europeans and Anglo migration from rural to urban cities, a transformation of spatial, class, and racial arrangements during the Great Depression was fertile ground for a new domestic war against an internal enemy.

Specifically, this chapter examines the development and opening of DCI in 1946 and its first ten years of training and impact of juvenile policing tactics in L.A., California, and by the end of the first ten years law enforcement officers from throughout the U.S. DCI was a locally developed carceral institution with national and eventually international reach. Therefore, this chapter focuses on DCI and its entanglements with the media, policy makers, liberal civic organizations, scholars, and law enforcement in crafting policing policy and training. DCI functioned as the key liberal ideological and training institute for the emerging enemy combatant of L.A.'s carceral counterinsurgency mandate in the post-war period, the racialize "gang member." Black and Mexican youth in institutional apartheid conditions of South Central and East L.A. found their social clubs, street organizations, and their association with their neighborhoods. The curriculum and collegiate training in criminology that local law enforcement received

from DCI undergirded the tactics of neutralization through surveillance, arrest, adjudication, and incarceration of young Black and Chicax youth.

Antecedents to Institutionalizing Delinquency Control

DCI brought together a unique set of liberal scholars, juvenile justice professionals, social scientists, and leaders in law enforcement for the purposes of professionalizing and standardizing the way L.A. policing approached Mexican delinquency in the wake of the Zoot Suit Riots. Nationally youth crime had become a folk devil during the 1930s Great Depression era with social scientists especially those from the Chicago School, expanding their “social disorganization” theory that argued “delinquency of youths was a consequence of the waning influence of the social control exerted by traditional institutions such as churches, the family, and local communities in the new conditions encountered in cities by immigrant of rural origin.”⁷³ As a precursor to the now dominate “Broken Windows” theory of policing, this dominate school of thought for delinquency analysis obscures the ravages racial capitalism, redlining, and *de facto* segregation in the poorest neighborhoods of urban cities. So rather than coming together over the concerns of the shortcoming of L.A.’s war economy along racial lines, DCI’s architects came together as a direct response to “social disorganization” of Mexican youth as displayed in the courts and the streets from August 1942 until June 1943.

Beginning in 1942 the LAPD, local newspapers, and a mob of Navy servicemen sought to extinguish another racialized pariah (the first being the more than one hundred

⁷³ Jean-Michel Chapoulie, *Chicago Sociology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), 210.

thousand Japanese residents of the West Coast) of the war years: the “unpatriotic” Mexican youth and other youth of color described by their zoot suit or *pachuca/o* style. Luis Alvarez describes this youth cultural phenomena during the war years as a political moment that “captured the attention of the homefront...” and served as a prism for understanding various discourses and social acts on Americanism and racial anxieties.⁷⁴ Mexican and Chicax youth were by far not the only *zooters* in L.A. as this vibrant youth culture transmitted from Black jazz audiences since the 1930s, could be found in Filipino, Black, Japanese, white, and various working-class neighborhoods throughout L.A.⁷⁵ However, the central focus on the racialized Chicax *pachuca/o* quickly took center stage in the press and in the minds of law enforcement as their tailored loose fitting style was demonized in the press and brutalized by the police, sailors, and vigilantes alike. The events that took place during the “zoot suit riots” were a spectacle in terms of the media coverage and volume of assaults on young people, but the Anglo racial animus as described in the press which centered the criminalized the “half-civilized” Mexican communities of the California can be traced back to the colonization of the southwest after the U.S. War on Mexico.⁷⁶ Analyzing the creation of the schism between the LAPD and the Mexican community, Edward J. Escobar finds that L.A. law enforcement concerns about Mexican crime rate can be traced back to the 1920s when the first

⁷⁴ Alvarez, Luis, *The Power of the Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance During World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 2.

⁷⁵ Stuart Cosgrove, “The Zoot-Suit and Style Warfare,” *History Workshop*, no. 18 (Autumn 1984): 77–91, <https://doi.org/68.119.149.161>.

⁷⁶ Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 209–48.

criminological studies were conducted by various officials including university sociologist, the California governor's office, L.A.P.D, and other civic organizations.⁷⁷

While Escobar's work excavates the discursive history of law enforcement and scholarly investment towards research, profiling, and targeted policing of Mexican communities throughout the first half of the twentieth century, this association of crime with the Mexican colony of L.A. has a longer history founded in conquest and the policing of public and private space through eugenics policies of the Public Health Department. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century L.A.'s white racial anxieties continued to grow as the "Mexican problem" gained traction in popular and scholarly circles during an increase in migration caused by the social upheaval of the Mexican Revolution coupled with the growth of agriculture labor demands in the Southwest between 1900-1930.⁷⁸ However, associating deviance with racial otherness in the city follows a pattern when city boosters, municipal agencies, and public health officials practiced socially criminalizing methods that targeted Chinese neighborhoods at the end of the 19th century. These included the city's health department in collaboration with the LAPD enforcing racially targeted city ordinances that used longstanding orientalist imagery that was weaponized to dismantle Chinese grocers and laundry businesses in the wake of the city's own Chinese Massacre in 1871 and the federal

⁷⁷ Edward J. Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican Americans and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 114–20.

⁷⁸ David Torres-Rouff, "Becoming Mexican: Segregated Schools and Social Scientists in Southern California, 1913-1946," *Southern California Quarterly* 94, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 97, <https://doi.org/138.23.232.177>.

Chinese Exclusion act of 1882.⁷⁹ The Public Health Department used both care and eugenics discourse to racialize non-white Angelinos as biologically diseased and unassimilable into U.S. Anglo culture. Informed by the public workers' views of Chinese hygienic inferiority, the outbreak of communicable diseases in 1916 and 1924 were used by public health officials as examples of the "inherent inferiority" of Mexican hygienic standards. The groundwork laid by public health officials was "buttressed by ideologically defined medical standards, the inferiority of Mexicans soon became 'indisputable.'"⁸⁰ The indisputability of the "Mexican problem" among the Public Health Department was first focused on the lack of assimilation to Anglo homemaking practices and childrearing which criminalized Mexican motherhood. The deviance of Mexican mothers was then transferred to a post-natal deviance of Mexican children, presaging the "social disorganization" thesis of Mexican youth. It was within this atmosphere of heightened scrutiny towards biologically deviant Mexican youth when city officials started articulating their concerns over Mexican delinquents. This is concretely exemplified in the 1923 LAPD's "Bowman Report" and later on in local publications like the *Belvedere Citizen* starting in 1935, which both proposed the need to invest in the study and intervention into Mexican youth criminality.⁸¹

L.A. during the Great Depression was ripe with research, criminal profiling, and continual discrimination of the expanding Mexican communities, less mention Black, Native American, Chinese, and large ethnic European enclaves growing during the

⁷⁹ Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939*, 29–33.

⁸⁰ Molina, 10.

⁸¹ Edward J. Escobar, *Making of a Political Identity*, 124–127.

1930s. This pre-war decade of news media and sociological studies of the Mexican youth criminal informed L.A.'s war time newspapers which worked in direct communication with L.A. law enforcement to manufacture a consensus "among Los Angeles civic leaders...[that]Mexican American juveniles constituted a serious crime problem."⁸² During the short period from 1939-1943 the L.A. press and local law enforcement stoked the fears and imagination of white Angelinos who sought to relegate Chicax youth as a domestic enemy in opposition to the war effort. The propagandistic nature of L.A. "yellow journalism," like that of the 1880s that drummed up the hysteria for the invasion of Cuba, the Philippines, and Hawaii, dovetailed well to the local L.A. garrison state. Mass media outlets and social commentators took advantage of existing racial anxieties to push Chicax youth into the crosshairs of an emerging white mob. While the war on *pachuca/os* was being waged in the realm of public opinion, L.A. law enforcement was also investing significant resources to address public demands to control the crises. One indicator of the scale and particularity of this racialized moral panic is the largest cooperative police raid of the decade that swept through Chicax barrios on August 9-10, 1942 just days after the infamous Sleepy Lagoon Murder. The *L.A. Times* front page celebrated the arrests of 300 "youthful terrorist" accompanied by mugshots of disheveled Chicax youth.⁸³ This display of police power invigorated a steady stream of *pachuca/o*

⁸² Edward J. Escobar, 199; For a specific look at young women zooters and their criminalization in the public sphere see Ramírez, *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory*, 40-45.

⁸³ "Police Seize 300 in Boys' Gang Drive: Many Weapons Taken in Roundup Conducted by Hundreds of Officers."

reports of gang activity and arrest coverage centered on the racialized criminalization of Chicaxs, became a mainstay in the press for the next year.

Heightened white racial anxieties characterized wartime mobilization in California. Up and down the California coast starting directly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. By 1943 nearly one in ten Angelinos served in some capacity in civil defense, working as plane spotters, air-raid volunteers, and national guardsmen. They were stationed directly on the beaches with anti-aircraft guns in anticipation for coastal Japanese attack.⁸⁴ Wartime readiness for an imagined full-scale offshore invasion was nearly equal to the specter of an enemy within. Japanese Angelinos having endured decades of racism in the form of juridical decisions that attempted to rob Issei and Nisei Angelinos of property rights and denied access to public health services due to their un-assimilability would be forcibly incarcerated during the duration of U.S. involvement in the war.⁸⁵ It is within this context of a heightened sense of white nationalism, jingoism, mass surveillance, ethnic cleansing of Japanese Americans, and incarceration that undergirds the concentration of law enforcement and public disdain for the youth delinquency and Chicax zooters during this period.

While the “threat” of Japanese American insurrection was contained with creation of the southwest gulag for families during the war, law enforcement shifted their focus on the growing threat of youth delinquency as promoted by the L.A. press, local law enforcement, and J. Edgar Hoover’s FBI. The focus by state authorities and social

⁸⁴ Arthur Verge, “Daily Life in Wartime California,” in *The Way We Really Were: The Golden State in the Second Great War*, ed. Lotchin, Roger W. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 15.

⁸⁵ Molina, *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939*, 79.

commentators on their assumption on the rise of youth delinquency and the child criminal in the U.S. has a long history. In the nineteenth century a majority white Christian philanthropist movement and later white Progressive reformers organized around the cause of youth welfare and created the country's first houses of refuge and eventually the country's first juvenile court in Chicago in 1899.⁸⁶ These "child savers" used charity and political advocacy that centered a white racial logic and class based framework of redemption and exclusion which would influence the state's approach to youth crime for the next century.⁸⁷ This racial thinking was buttressed by a logic which viewed European immigrant and U.S. born working class white youth as being assimilable back into mainstream white society while non-whites, especially Black youth in the South, as beyond rehabilitation and therefore forced to serve prison time in adult prisons into the twentieth-century.⁸⁸ As leading juvenile justice scholar Barry C. Feld argues, progressive reformers "intended juvenile courts to discriminate between 'our children' and 'other people's children' whom they would acculturate, assimilate, and control."⁸⁹ The mass immigration of Europeans into metropolitan cities and the internal migration of white settlers into the west during the late nineteenth century posed problems for social reformers who saw the expansion of makeshift housing, poverty, and proximity to non-

⁸⁶ Victoria Getis, "Experts and Juvenile Delinquency, 1900-1935," in *Generations of Youth : Youth Cultures and History in Twentieth-Century America*, ed. Joe Austin and Michael Nevin Willard (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 21–22.

⁸⁷ Anthony M. Platt, *The Child Savers: The Invention of Delinquency*, 40th Anniversary Edition (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2009).

⁸⁸ Geoff K. Ward, *The Black Child-Savers: Racial Democracy and Juvenile Justice* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012).

⁸⁹ Barry C. Feld, *The Evolution of the Juvenile Court: Race, Politics, and the Criminalizing of Juvenile Justice* (New York: New York University Press, 2017), 38.

white populations as a threat to reforming white children and the future of “the race.” This in turn coincided with the rise of sociology as a burgeoning field of inquiry in the late nineteenth century. The Chicago School of Sociology would focus some of its earliest studies on youth delinquency among European immigrants in urban cities.⁹⁰ The sociologist and criminologist of USC’s School of Public Policy were some forty years separated from these early studies, yet the pedagogy and curriculum taught at DCI continued to have strong ties to it.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, local state actors and private reformers raised the concern of youth delinquency, and by onset of the Great Depression, the federal government began to promote the specter of youth crime. The FBI under the leadership of J. Edgar Hoover offers one of the clearest examples of the growth of federal involvement in the promotion of juvenile delinquency as a major crime concern for the nation. As the director of the FBI, Hoover began to write a series of Op-Eds for major newspapers across the country including the *L.A. Times* as part of the Bureau’s nearly forty-year courtship with the media.⁹¹ His first *Times* article appeared in 1936, one year after the Bureau of Investigation officially was renamed the FBI. In 1937 Hoover began a multi-part series entitled “For a Crime-Free America!” in which he shared in crime statistics and major victories against and alerts about organized crime. While the first article in the series sets the tone of criminal syndicates as the paramount source of crime, his second article changes focus on the to juvenile delinquency under the title “Children

⁹⁰ Getis, “Experts,” 25.

⁹¹ Richard Gid Powers, “One G-Man’s Family: Popular Entertainment Formulas and J. Edgar Hoover’s F.B.I.,” *American Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (Autumn 1978): 471, <https://doi.org/138.23.234.53>.

in Crime.” The article is a public scolding in which Hoover focuses his criticism on the need for proper parenting and respect for the law among youth, and the growth of crimes committed by those under twenty-one years of age. He underscores that “over twenty-four percent of our murderers, our rapists, our arsonists, burglars, extortionists, bank robbers, and kidnapers are so young that they may be technically called children...thousands of major crimes are each year laid at the door of youth—vicious, dangerous crimes, the perpetration of which often leads to murder.”⁹² While many of this laundry list of crimes depict the ticking-time-bomb in the grammar school classroom, an analysis of the 1936 Uniform Crime Report (UCR) which began to be produced by the FBI in 1930 and was the likely source for Hoover’s statistics, reveals a much more nuanced view. First it should be noted that the UCR is an extremely incomplete analysis of crime throughout the nation. The FBI during this period, as even to the present day it continues to analyze and publish statistics from voluntary submissions by law enforcement agencies thus providing only a partial picture of total crime in the U.S.

It is important to note that while Hoover is focusing on murder and the prevalence of youth crimes during the middle of the Great Depression, the UCR and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) data show that by 1937 both the national crime index and murder rate were in a continual downward trend from their high in 1933.⁹³ While nationally major crime was on a downward trend, Hoover’s use of statistics coupled with his efforts to make parents culpable in the article underscores what critical sociologists

⁹² J. Edgar Hoover, “‘Children’ in Crime,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 19, 1937.

⁹³ Justice Research and Statistics Association, “Crime and Justice Atlas 2000” (Washington D.C., June 2000), 34–38, http://www.jrsa.org/projects/Crime_Atlas_2000.pdf.

term as the origins of “moral panic” in which social anxieties give rise to scapegoating particular groups, a role youth have played throughout the twentieth century.⁹⁴

This growing narrative of the rise in youth crime during the 1930s set the stage for the public debate by the L.A. press to demonize zooters at the onset of the U.S. entrance into the war. The *LA Times* and other outlets wielded their power in what Sociologist Stanely Cohen argues is the consensual nature of the media to construct a “folk devil,” a visual personification through statistics and labels to demonstrate to society what should not be replicated and in fact should be stamped out.⁹⁵ While one article might not affect larger social attitudes or actions, a series of constant articles on Mexican youth crime within the context of economic and social crises of the Great Depression and WWII, does provide fertile ground for paradigmatic shifts in public opinion. Couple this with nearly a century of anti-Mexican vitriol expressed in public policy, law, and popular culture by L.A.’s Anglo ruling elite, and the racial character of the “folk devil” becomes crystal clear.

In their landmark study *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law & Order* Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Roberts provide a critical framework to analyze this conjuncture of media, war, and the garrison state taking place in 1940s L.A. The impact of the saturation by the L.A. press and growing push by Hoover’s FBI to focus on youth crime and zooters can best be understood as racialized

⁹⁴ John Clarke et al., “Subcultures, Cultures and Classes: A Theoretical Overview,” in *Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain* (London: Routledge, 2003), 71–72.

⁹⁵ Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (London: Routledge Classics, 2011), 2.

moral panic that would shape the social relations of the Mexican and Chicana community along lines of race, criminality, and order.

Using a Marxist analysis of the “consensual nature” of society within free market capitalism and the “common stock of cultural knowledge” within the nation state, Hall et al. argue that the media serves to deliver a universal narrative of events in society to reinforce and perpetuate state power. The knowledge produced by the media and received by the public creates a “consensus view of society [that] is particularly strong in modern, democratic, organized capitalist societies.”⁹⁶ By the 1940s in the U.S., the increases in urban manufacturing production centers, decades of rural-to-urban migration, and the mass growth in Hollywood film industries, print media, and radio due to technology greatly aided in the consolidation of a U.S. mass working class culture.⁹⁷ While mass culture producers centered on the consumption of their relatively cheap cultural artifacts they also produced a consensus of American consumer values. They simultaneously produced what constituted a deviation from that consensus. During the New Deal era, federal investments in popular arts and culture, which would increase with the U.S. entrance into World War II, aided in crafting hegemonic narratives of citizenship and dominant notions of shared values. Hall and his co-authors argue that the consensus produced by mass news media allows readers who are outside of the first-hand experience of events, especially those concerning crime, to “comprehend” the issue(s). For crime news specifically, there is a consensus drawn around the negative, the

⁹⁶ Stuart Hall et al. *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law & Order*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 58.

⁹⁷ Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (London: Verso, 2011), 38–50.

illegitimate action/event that is counter to the intelligible values of society. *Policing the Crisis* argues that “one of the areas where the media are most likely to be successful in mobilizing public opinion within the dominant framework of ideas is on issues about crime and its threat to society...It is not merely coincidental that the language used to justify action against any potential group of trouble-makers deploys, as one of its critical boundary markers, the imagery of criminality and illegality, applying it either directly, or indirectly, by association...”⁹⁸ This framework in which crime news is a mobilizing force when wielded against an already marginalized group, in this case Mexican, Black, and working class youth engaged in acts of cultural resistance to the war effort, reveals the role media has in informing public opinion about crime and criminals, but it also mobilizes public advocacy, juridical expansion, and investments in police professionalization as exemplified by DCI.

Mobilizing mob and/or state violence against Mexican communities is part of larger structure of the racial fault lines of California’s history that labeled Mexican, Indigenous, Black, and Asian communities presence as an impediment to Anglo visions of white modernity while simultaneously extracting their labor as essential to the ranching, agricultural, mining, and railroad industries for state building project during this period.⁹⁹ The specter of racial annihilation in the form of lynchings, land dispossession, and “frontier violence” continued to be present in the lives of Native and

⁹⁸ Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis*, 69-72.

⁹⁹ Monica Muñoz Martinez, *The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018); Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Tomás Alamguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

Mexican Californians into the twentieth-century. The institutionalization of L.A.'s juvenile criminal justice in the form of courts, reform schools, and policing practices grew in the twentieth century, it did not end the practices of physiological targeting. As explained by Miroslava Chávez-Garcia, the confinement, interrogation, and sterilization of young Mexican, Chicano, Native American, and African American boys at L.A.'s County's Whittier State School is evidence of a destructive racial logic.¹⁰⁰ During WWII L.A.'s Anglo hegemonic class rule had a moment of crisis in which the influx of federal contracts was coupled with the influx of migrants from southern Black communities and midwestern white migration stressed the housing stock and racial makeup of the city. This perfect storm of tension among social relations and the market set the stage for an expansion of the juvenile carceral geography of the city. L.A.'s law enforcers chose to expand the carceral reach of the state through the demonization of racialized juvenile delinquency and the criminalization of social deviance from middle class white and nationalist social norms.

Sleepy Lagoon and anti-Mexican Hysteria

The narrative of Mexican youth deviance did not start with the death of José Díaz but instead served to legitimize the *LA Times* editorials from FBI director Hoover and other commentators warning of the impending destruction from the increase in youth crime by zooters, gangs, and other forms of so-called deviant youth.. L.A.'s moral panic around youth delinquency and the *pachuco* would exploit the death of José Díaz on

¹⁰⁰ Miroslava Chávez-Garcia, *States of Delinquency: Race and Science in the Making of California's Juvenile Justice System* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

August 2, 1942.¹⁰¹ The death of Díaz, the highly publicized trial and sentencing of 22 youth from the “38th Street” barrio of southcentral L.A., the fight to appeal the sentencing of the 17 young men, and its impact on the “Zoot Suit Riot” in the summer of 1943 is well documented by scholars and in popular culture.¹⁰² However the institutional impact of this moment on L.A.’s juvenile policing regime is less discussed.

In the week following the media storm around the death of Díaz, the L.A. Grand Jury, the L.A. Superior Court, the L.A. County Sheriff Department (LASD), and the LAPD responded with swift force.¹⁰³ By August 10th, 1942 the *L.A. Times* reported that the LAPD conducted its largest tactical sweep on crime since Prohibition. The article states the LAPD made arrests and bookings of more than three hundred people through a collaborative effort of over four hundred law enforcement officers including the LAPD, the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department, and California Highway Patrol. However, the targets of this mass mobilization of law enforcement were not bootleggers, proprietors of speakeasies, or associates of crime syndicates. Instead, this crime sweep targeted, “the gangs, which have been responsible for a *reign of terror* in recent months and are blamed for the deaths of at least two persons in the past few weeks...”¹⁰⁴ These reports were racially targeting young Chicanxs, Mexican, and Black youth labeled by the press and

¹⁰¹ This parallels the rise of London’s “mugging” media coverage and the “cashing in” on the Handsworth mugging cases in November 1972 described in Stewart Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), 81–119.

¹⁰² The following is a list of major monographs the center the Díaz case, Mauricio Mazón, *The Zoot-Suit Riots: The Psychology of Symbolic Annihilation* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984); Edward J. Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity*; Eduardo Obregón Pagán, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon: Zoot Suits, Race, & Riots in Wartime L.A.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Ramírez, *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory*.; Films include *American Me*, etc*

¹⁰³ “Campaign to Wipe Out Juvenile Gans Speeded,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 6, 1942.

¹⁰⁴ “Police Seize 300 in Boys’ Gang Drive,” *The Los Angeles Times*, August 10, 1942.

city authorities as “gangs” for their unpatriotic aesthetic, race, class, and mobility as youth of color in the increasing militarized metropolis. Their style originating among jazz musicians and aficionados, became a symbol of anti-patriotic decadence during World War II by social commentators and as a status of this working-class youth circles at the time. The *Times* article made sure to center its demonization of the zooters because of their youth, mobility, and most significantly, their ethnicity. However, zooters were throughout Los Angeles, in nearly all the ethnic and working-class neighborhoods at the time, Mexican youth from the 38th street barrio specifically became singled out as the cabal shredding the threads of urban civility and wartime nationalism.

The August 1942 raids are a watershed moment in youth policing for the city. First the raid directed by LAPD Chief Horrall brought together over 500 law enforcement officials to target motorized spaces. Rather than previous iterations of police suppression techniques which focused on raiding specific homes or business of known suspects and their associates under investigation, this raid is an early example of the urban “random search” or “stop and frisk” tactic. According to the *Times* reporter, law enforcement officers placed checkpoints at “scores” of intersections on the eastside in order to search and arrest “suspicious youth” for carrying various items labeled as weapons including pocket knives, chains, a toy pistol, and even rocks.¹⁰⁵ The police were able to use the hysteria around the Díaz murder, along with restrictions on civil liberties due to the war to conduct a mass-scale random search based solely on the zip code and ethnic background of Angelinos. While the law has always been racialized in the U.S. and

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Fourth Amendment protections from illegal search and seizure has historically had its limitations for people of color, women, non-citizens, youth, dissidents, and working-class communities, this moment of mass Chicana youth arrest has some significant takeaways for the precarities of youth of color that are indicative of the period. This moment highlights the contestation around race and law during the war and the ways criminalizing Mexican youth would serve to end police power.

Further analysis of the unique character of these police raid aids in understanding the linkages between Mexican youth criminalization and the eventual formation of the DCI. Prior to 1969, law enforcement officers were required to find probable cause to stop an individual and search their persons and belongings.¹⁰⁶ While the random search and arrest of hundreds of Mexican youth drivers and pedestrians could have placed the LAPD in a legal quagmire in court, the heightened garrison state of California, weakening of individual civil liberties during war time, and the historical and social position of Mexican youth in the context of the moral panic around zooters, allowed L.A. law enforcement to bend probable cause in specific ways against young Mexicans as a result of the death of Díaz. Chief Horrall and the LAPD not only worked under the assumptions of over a century of an anti-Mexican “common sense,” the LAPD and social commentators also reinforced the “folk devil” of the racialized gang member. As presented in the news media and the trial of the Sleepy Lagoon 22, the use of the word

¹⁰⁶ However, the Supreme Court decision *Terry v. Ohio*, *Sibron v. New York*, and *Peters v. New York* loosened the Fourth Amendment protections to allow for a lower legal threshold of reasonable suspicion to give judicial clearance and protection for law enforcement officers to detain and search individuals from the late 1960s until the present. Wayne R. LaFare, “Street Encounters’ and the Constitution: *Terry*, *Sibron*, *Peters*, and Beyond,” *The Michigan Law Review* 67, no. 1 (1986): 39–126.

gang gave *carte blanche* for one of the city's first but not the last mass gang sweep. What aids in uncovering the deployment of racialized gangs at this moment can be found in the court documents of the Sleepy Lagoon trial.

The criminalization of Mexican zooters was not only on display in the public sphere but also within the court of Judge Charles W. Fricke who decided the fate of Mexican American defendants in the Sleepy Lagoon case. Judge Fricke barred the defense from allowing the youth defendants to take showers or change their tattered zooter clothes during the duration of the trial, subjecting the youth and their families to continued demonization by the press gallery and prosecution. Additionally, the Judge blocked any objection by the defense to the hyperbolic testimony of law enforcement.¹⁰⁷ None more exemplary than the “expert witness” testimony of Deputy Chief Edward Duran, the head of the L.A. County Sheriff Foreign Relations Bureau, who in sworn testimony declared the inherent blood thirst of the youth Mexican character due to “Aztec Ancestry.”¹⁰⁸ The anti-Mexican racism was at a fever-pitch between 1943-44, yet as other historians have shown this moment was only a new manifestation of white racial anxiety for the growing Chicana and Mexican community in L.A. during the height of home-front patriotism.

For L.A. law enforcement, this coordinated two-day anti-zooter sweep on Mexican and Chicana youth that produced the twenty-two defendants in the Diaz case, represented a paradigm shift in repressive policing tactics. As noted in the *Times* article,

¹⁰⁷ Obregón Pagán, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon*, 71–97.

¹⁰⁸ Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity*, 210–12.

the last time a major joint task force of law enforcement of similar scale took place was during Prohibition.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, an example of multi-agency coordination took place between the federal Immigration Bureau, L.A. Chamber of Commerce, and local law enforcement in early 1931 to raid the L.A. Plaza and other Mexican barrios during the large scale deportation and forced migration tactics of the era of “Mexican Repatriation.”¹¹⁰ This history of LAPD repression, spying, and infiltration of criminalized political and social groups places the arrest of 300 Mexican youth in 1942 as new deployment of these tactics. By World War II, second and third generation Mexican youth whose families either chose to return from repatriation or were able to demonstrate their American citizenship and financial means to avoid repatriation were an integral part of the growing youth subculture of jazz, boogie, and other dissonant youth socialities in the city. It was their participation in these multiethnic social spaces, their provocations with military personnel during the war, and their refusal to submit to the prevailing racial order through their aesthetics, mobility, and extralegal economies that placed them in the crosshairs of the growing anti-youth crime moral panic that would explode throughout the war years.¹¹¹ The method that L.A. law enforcement used to target Chicana and Mexican youth was by labeling them “gangs.” While the term had been deployed towards various white youth in the city by local press and by law enforcement, the term was

¹⁰⁹ While not mentioned by the article, previously in 1907 the joint efforts by the LAPD, federal government, and the Mexican Consultant organized to arrest Ricardo Flores Magón and members of the Partido Liberal Mexicano Lytle Hernández, *City of Inmates*, 116.

¹¹⁰ Abraham Hoffman, “Stimulus to Repatriation: The 1931 Federal Deportation Drive and the Los Angeles Mexican Community,” *Pacific Historical Review* 42, no. 2 (May 1973): 216, <https://doi.org/138.23.234.91>.

¹¹¹ Alvarez, Luis, *Power of the Zoot*, 159–63.

enhanced in a particular way for Mexican youth that would be instructive for the development of DCI. The emphasis on them as racialized gangs is an important departure for understanding the shaping of youth policing, anti-gang suppression, and the overall shift to counterinsurgency as a central modality for L.A. youth policing that would only increase over the next decades in L.A.

The spectacle of anti-Mexican state violence that met the overwhelmingly Chicana youth community was part of a longer history of city addressing the continual presence of the “Mexican problem.” As stated in the introduction, the anti-Mexican logic of the city and state law enforcement lies at the nexus of settler colonialism and imperialism. Mexican-ness was used to demarcate a third sub-group of undesirables, from statehood to World War II.

By January of 1943, 22 of the defendants in the Sleepy Lagoon case were sentenced in *People v. Zamora*; five young women were sentenced to the Ventura School for Girls for refusing to testify, while seventeen young men were sentenced to various imprisonment terms including L.A. County jail and up to San Quintin State Prison.¹¹² Most notably Henry Leyvas, Jose Ruiz, and Robert Telles received the sentence of life in prison. This January verdict invigorated the press and law enforcement to condemn Mexican and Chicana youth to increased levels of arrest for the remainder of the war years. It is this series of actions which saturated the news headlines from the summer of

¹¹² Obregón Pagán, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon*, 95; Ramírez, *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory*, 29–30.

1942 until the overturning of the convictions of the so-called “38th Street Gang” in late 1944.

The public demonization of Chicane zooters in response to the death of José Díaz would be coupled with an increase in the city’s mass deployment of law enforcement at unprecedented levels. At the height of California garrison state, a two-pronged approach was initiated in response to the external and internal threats. The LAPD concentrated massive police power into domestic crime suppression while the federal and local government coffers transferred city resources into Homefront defense. This deployment of resources towards zooter policing put massive strain on the LAPD that was dealing with the personnel crisis of officers leaving for selective service induction. Amid this crisis of personnel and the preparation for a future Axis invasion, creating this anti-zoot dragnet of the 38th street barrio has particular significance to understanding the reach of this moral panic. It represents the intersections of the logic of white supremacy, policing, and social control tactics towards the “Mexican delinquency problem” in L.A. during this period.¹¹³ While the LAPD heightened the visibility of Chicane delinquency, it took place during a period which in fact did not relate to any significant statistical increase in crime among Chicane youth, but instead to a saturation of anti-Mexican policing and an unprecedented arrest rates without prosecutions.¹¹⁴ This new focus on Mexican “gang” suppression shaped the LAPD during the war years and only increased the use of mass arrest of youth as a response to the Díaz case. In fact, in the following year LAPD’s 1943

¹¹³ Edward J. Escobar, *Making of a Political Identity*, 207.

¹¹⁴ Edward J. Escobar, 186–96.

statistical digest recorded arrests of 2,804 Mexican youth, an increase of nearly 1000 total arrests from the previous year. Of those arrests over 2,000 resulted in no formal charges filed against the young people. Escobar concludes that the increased levels of arrests “resulted more from changes in the law and changes in police practice than from changes in Mexican American’s behavior.”¹¹⁵ So while 70% of young Chicano youth stopped, arrested, and processed by the LAPD were not charged with breaking any law, the public, press, and the LAPD leadership were seen as winning the war against “bandits,” “felons,” and “Mexican American gangsterism.”¹¹⁶ This change in police practice during WWII was informed by the three intersecting factors of wartime anxiety towards youth delinquency with a specific focus on Chicano, Black, and working class youth mobility. These included first, the growing white racial anxieties over increasing pressure of migration to L.A; second the increasing demands by workers of color for adequate housing and employment opportunities in the war industry; and finally, the crisis of personnel in the LAPD to both fill vacant positions and meet the demands of the U.S. War Department.

A key player in shifting the narrative in the press and the public of the LAPD being protectors of citizens rather than vice can be credited to Mayor Fletcher Bowron. In 1938 he successfully ran in the wake of the recall of Mayor Frank Shaw on a campaign to weed out corruption and bring back confidence in Angelenos in law enforcement. He would continue his police reform campaigning for his next three successful mayoral bids,

¹¹⁵ Edward J. Escobar, 194–95.

¹¹⁶ Timothy G. Turner, “Significance of Zoot-Suit Gangsters,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 14, 1943; “Policeman Kills Youth Suspected as ‘Zoot’ Bandit,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 8, 1943.

including calling for an end to the LAPD infamous “Red Squad.”¹¹⁷ His investment to increase the positive profile of the LAPD paid dividends for his political career by allowing Bowron to be the longest serving mayor in the city’s history up to that point. As mayor he promised to move the department to a new “proactive” approach of policing rather than being reactive.¹¹⁸ This new approach by the mayor’s office was led by the active collaboration of Bowron with both LAPD Chief Clemence Horrall and Los Angeles County Sheriff Eugene Biscailuz.¹¹⁹ Bowron’s commitment to reforming and actively working with L.A.’s top law enforcement set a framework for a new bureaucratic network for policing youth of color in the city. This important link between city administration and policing would lay the institutional groundwork for the development of and the creation of the Delinquency Control Institute.

One of the first structural changes to the LAPD during the Bowron mayoral tenure was the appointment of Chief Horrall. While the LAPD Police Commission was the legal body that appoints the office of Chief, it was the mayor’s office which championed his appointment as a shift to the new professional orientation of the department.¹²⁰ Another important reform for the LAPD which represented the “velvet glove” of delinquency abatement during the war years was Bowron’s Deputy Auxiliary

¹¹⁷ “Labor for Bowron,” 1941, Box 40a, Election Campaigns 1938-1956, Huntington Library, Fletcher Bowron Papers, 1934-1970.

¹¹⁸ Obregón Pagán, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon*, 71.

¹¹⁹ Sheriff Biscailuz played a significant role in California law enforcement history as he previously was selected by the California Governor to the position as the first superintendent of the California Highway Patrol Henry Sutherland, “Former Sheriff Biscailuz Dies; Held County Posts 50 Years,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 17, 1969.

¹²⁰ Fletcher Bowron, “Radio Addresses Volume 39” (1945-1938), Manuscripts, Huntington Library, Fletcher Bowron Papers, 1934-1970; Fletcher Bowron, “Radio Addresses Volume 40” (1951-1946), Fletcher Bowron Collection, Huntington Library.

Police (DAPS) program started in 1943. While receiving some push back from leadership in the department towards changing the role of the LAPD to that of social service, he argued, like social disorganization sociologist at the time, that the intention of recruiting thousands of young people into DAPS was necessary for the stopping the “wave” of juvenile delinquency through a new institution. He proclaimed that DAPS would afford young Angelinos “respect for the law that they would never have otherwise acquired. The result of this influence in all sections of the city will be future law-abiding citizens.”¹²¹ Bowron lauded the behavior modification and citizenship development outcomes of his law enforcement mentorship program at the Annual Dinner for the Los Angeles Youth Project (LAYP). This county initiative brought together a consortium of county law enforcement, probation, recreation, and the private sector stake holders to similarly attempt to stem a “rise” in delinquency. In the speech he highlighted the upcoming program in which DAPS youth would be sent to Camp Pendleton to stay in barracks, engage in horseback riding, swimming, and target practice with “marine experts.”¹²² The discipling practices of heteropatriarchal activities that center around warfare that are at the core of DAPS are telling of the goals of youth intervention at the time. As Damien Sojoyner has concluded in his analysis of Black public education practices, this use of masculine centered pedagogy serves to further oppress and maintain white supremacy social and political norms to serve as an enclosure.¹²³ It is this form of a deviant youth

¹²¹ Fletcher Bowron, “Los Angeles Youth Project Annual Dinner,” April 1, 1946, 7, Box 35 Speeches and Press Statments 1946-1949, Fletcher Bowron Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

¹²² Bowron, 7.

¹²³ Damien M. Sojoyner, *First Strike: Education Enclosures in Black Los Angeles* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016).

redemption, especially for boys, through heteronormative and racialized disciplining practices that grounds the formation of juvenile delinquency control in the city and in particular the narratives that Bowron would bring as an architect of DCI.

Opening the Institute

The overall increase in youth arrest during the war years did not definitively relate to a quantitative amount of increased crime, rather, it related to the zoot suit hysteria and white sailor mobs, which in turn played a critical role in the minds of local law enforcement, city officials, and criminologists to craft solutions to address the emerging crisis. Foreshadowing L.A.'s future youth criminalization legislation and city policies, law enforcement, the mayor's office, and both city and county recreation departments began to invest in youth activities and intervention programs to address the reported idleness that led to youth crime. Athletic programs and recreation opportunities which had started in the late 1930s began springing in the aftermath of the Zoot Suit hysteria in Chicano barrios including sport leagues and boxing clubs.¹²⁴ In contradistinction to the focus on recreational intervening in the delinquency of the city's Mexican youth, USC's Dean of the School of Public Administration (SPA) Emory Olson sought out solutions to the city's growing delinquency problem by improving the capacity and effectiveness of law enforcement. Dean Olson and other SPA faculty looked to create a policing education program on juvenile crime in response to the moral panic of the Mexican zoot suit riots.¹²⁵ From its inception, DCI main assumptions, like those of city officials and

¹²⁴ José M. Alamillo, "Playing Across Borders: Transnational Sports and Identities in Southern California and Mexico, 1930-1945.," *Pacific Historical Review* 79, no. 3 (August 2010): 390-91.

¹²⁵ John Henry Good, "A History of the Delinquency Control Institute: Its Program to Combat Juvenile Delinquency" (Master's Thesis, University of Southern California, 1967), 60-62.

even some liberal reformers at the time, was that the death of José Díaz (1942), the Zoot Suit Riot (1943), and the nearly daily crime reporting of Mexican delinquency was wholly or at least partially indicative of a Mexican youth crime wave.¹²⁶ In his USC Public Administration master's thesis, George Henry Good retells the history of DCI. He starts with the following excerpt:

In June, 1943, a tragic event occurred in Los Angeles. Fights between servicemen of World War II and gang groups of Negro and Mexican-American youth flared up, resulting in serious violence... Finally, when the military authorities declared downtown Los Angeles out of bounds for military personnel, the tension subsided. Only then did the harassed city official and community leaders realize that the event surrounding World War II, the social conditions in existence long before the war, and the inadequate measures to provide guidance for youths in hazardous areas had resulted in an incident just short of catastrophe.¹²⁷

Writing in the post Watts late 1960s, Good is articulating the hegemonic viewpoint of L.A.'s policing regime. He looks back towards the racial contestation of both Black and Chicana deviance that initiated the much-needed extension of a new approach to aggressive youth policing. Like Olson and others who were crafting a mythology of the zoot suiter, Good argues that the spark that pushed academics, L.A. law enforcement, and other city administrators to develop the country's first delinquency policing academy was moral panic around zooters. Not dissimilar to the future analysis of the Watts Uprising as explicated in the McCone Commission report, the Zoot Suit hysteria was to be countered by increased investment in policing infrastructure and the professionalization of the

¹²⁶ Historical analysis of the arrest data and reported crime demonstrates that changes in spatial policing and laws at the time produced more arrests rather than increase in crime. See Edward J. Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican American and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 195

¹²⁷ John Henry Good, "A History of the Delinquency Control Institute: Its Program to Combat Juvenile Delinquency" (University of Southern California, 1967), 57.

juvenile policing bureau of the LAPD. And as Good simultaneously emphasizes race and obfuscates racism in his analysis of events twenty years in the past, the role of racial animus in creating the conditions for the zoot suit riot either were viewed by DCI framers as tertiary factors at best or non-existence. In fact, in response to the critics of the Zoot Suit Riot which argued that it was anti-Mexican racism that was to blame, including a remark from First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Mayor Bowron and other DCI founders would craft a deracialized framing of the events.¹²⁸ In the wake of the assaults on zooters, the U.S. State Department called on the mayor's office to provide an accounting of the violence with specific details on how race played a role and if Mexican nationals were targeted. Bowron demanded LAPD Chief Horrall send him a briefing of the letter that would then be sent to the U.S. Senate. After reviewing Horrall's draft Bowron responded to him with a memo that directed Chief Horrall to more explicitly emphasize the non-role that racism could have played. Bowron instructed him to change the LAPD's official report by providing "facts" that many leaders from the Mexican community themselves had contacted city officials to intervene in the criminal activities of barrio youth.¹²⁹ The whitewashing by the Bowron administration of role of racism in the Zoot Suit Riots was emblematic of his analysis of the racialized gang problem.

While the mayor attempted to erase the role of anti-Mexican racism in being central to the riot in L.A., the mayor along with other founders of the DCI recruited one of the most central law enforcement officers in the highly racialized Sleepy Lagoon Trail.

¹²⁸ "First Lady Traces Zoot Riots to Discrimination," *Los Angeles Times*, June 17, 1943.

¹²⁹ Fletcher Bowron, "Letter to Chief of Police Horrall," July 19, 1943, Box 1, Fletcher Bowron Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

According to DCI's own records the initial idea for the institute came from a prominent LAPD officer Deputy Chief Ervis W. Lester. Lester was a member of the LAPD starting in 1925 until his retirement in 1945 to work as an administrator for California prison system, the Adult Authority.¹³⁰ Lester had a particular investment in the creation of a police training institute for the suppression of youth delinquency. The LAPD during the 1940s was internally shifting in terms of the chain of command and youth policing structure during the war years under the leadership of Chiefs Arthur C. Hohmann (1939-1941) and Clemence B. Horrall (1941-1949). Prior to 1939 the LAPD's departmental structure and chain of command had the city's Mayor as the top position. Youth arrests during this period were handled by the Crime Prevention Division (CPD).¹³¹ The CPD having existed since the 1920s took a social work approach to policing youth that sought to reduce crime by redirecting youth to community-based services. These included collaboration with social service organizations like the Los Angeles County Coordinating Council (LACCC). Wolcott writes, "The CPD primarily sought to reduce delinquency... by constructing recreation programs that would attract boys (girls were an afterthought at best) and introduce them to guidance from male role models such as police officers...through simple exchanges...crime prevention officers believed that they could teach boys to respect rather than to prey upon communities."¹³² This model attempted to balance social work with the threat of arrest to divert youth, especially white youth with

¹³⁰ Ervis W. Lester, "Some Aspects of American Police Problems," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 40, no. 6 (1950 1949): 796.

¹³¹ Los Angeles City Archives, Erwin C. Piper Technical Center, Box C2003, *Los Angeles Police Department 1938*.

¹³² Wolcott, *Cops and Kids*, 158.

minor offenses, into non-detention programs like sports leagues and LAPD sponsored summer camps instead of court or juvenile hall. This process was solely up to the discretion of the CPD officer, but by the end of the decade, juvenile formal adjudication to the court had increased. Wolcott writes that by 1940 the petitions to court “increased from 29 percent in 1930-31 to 48 percent in 1940... In addition, the LAPD was more likely to petition felons to court...in 1940, they referred 70 percent.”¹³³ This reliance on the court by 1940 was part of a larger shift to crime suppression by the LAPD. Chief Hohmann sums up the view that the LAPD had during this period when he told his officers of the juvenile division that “The Commander of this division...must maintain constant surveillance over the activities of his entire personnel to obviate any tendency toward retrogression into...the particular field of social welfare work.”¹³⁴ Chief Hohmann’s statements reflect the larger consensus in Hoover’s prognosis of the growing problem of youth crime. Just like the parents who have fallen for the “quackery” of psychologist and have not centered discipline, the LAPD must reassert their duty to suppress any criminal element regardless of age or condition.

The CPD’s prominence in the department was on the wane in 1939 and eventually eliminated from the lists of divisions.¹³⁵ It was replaced by the Juvenile Welfare Division consisting of the following three units: investigation, radio motor patrol, and jail. This

¹³³ Ibid., 165.

¹³⁴ Janis Appier, “We’re Blocking Youth’s Path to Crime: The Los Angeles Coordinating Councils during the Great Depression,” *Journal of Urban History* 31 (2005), 210.

¹³⁵ Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report 1939, Los Angeles City Archives (LACA), Box C2003.

shift yielded a reported 4126 arrests in 1939.¹³⁶ In 1940 the division was once again scrapped and renamed the Juvenile Bureau¹³⁷ which became part of the detective division and resulted in total of 3574 arrests. In 1941 when 4,174 arrests made, the Bureau became the Juvenile Court Department¹³⁸ with three deployment areas: investigative, patrol, and special services. In 1942 with 5,682 arrests, the Juvenile Court Department became the Juvenile Control Bureau¹³⁹. In 1943 with nearly doubling its arrest number to 8,482 the department became the Juvenile Division under the Patrol Bureau¹⁴⁰ which became the permanent division for juvenile cases for the rest of the decade. By the end of the war in 1945, the Juvenile Division was responsible for 9,457 youth arrests, the highest number of arrests for the entire decade and nearly triple the number of arrests in 1940.¹⁴¹

As mentioned earlier, the Mayor's office diverted any criticism of racial animus by law enforcement, naval officers, or white Angelinos who either stood by or actively participated in the targeting of Chicano, Black and other non-white zooters during the riot. Instead, city officials and law enforcement capitalized on this moment of moral panic to push forward a law enforcement solution to the episode of racial contestation.

¹³⁶ Arrests in the LAPD annual reports represent only those who were booked by police officers in which they were given a notice to appear in court. This does not include youth who were stopped, detained, given tickets, patted down, or cited and released from custody with only a warning.

¹³⁷ Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report 1940, Los Angeles City Archives (LACA), Box C2003.

¹³⁸ Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report 1941, Los Angeles City Archives (LACA), Box C2003.

¹³⁹ Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report 1942, Los Angeles City Archives (LACA), Box C2003.

¹⁴⁰ Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report 1943, Los Angeles City Archives (LACA), Box C2003.

¹⁴¹ Los Angeles Police Department Annual Report 1945, Los Angeles City Archives (LACA), Box C2003.

While the targeted zooters were still recovering from wounds sustained by the white mob, a select group of law enforcement leaders and public officials were called to meet with USC SPA Professor Dr. John M. Pfiffner and LAPD Deputy Chief Ervis Lester in the summer of 1943. Pfiffner, a USC Sociology faculty member since 1929, was well positioned to call a meeting with L.A. law enforcement top brass to begin building a regime of delinquency control to intervene in what law enforcement officials believed to be the rising tide of youth criminals. Chief Lester, an LAPD officer since 1925, oversaw LAPD's Personnel and Training division and months earlier served as an expert witness on Mexican youth delinquency for in the Sleepy Lagoon trial.¹⁴² Dr. Pfiffner's expertise in training city personnel at USC's civic center campus and Chief Lester's racialized police logic that positioned Mexican youth as biologically criminal would root DCI's structure in both bureaucratizing juvenile law enforcement and undergirding it policing pedagogy as a racial project.¹⁴³ Dean Olson who oversaw the construction of DCI viewed this new venture as continuation of an already twenty-year relationship USC had with L.A. law enforcement. USC faculty and resources since the opening of SPA in 1929 had intersected with L.A. law enforcement in the form of classes in public administration and government studies at the opening of USC's Civic Center campus.¹⁴⁴

For nearly one year at USC a consortium of criminal justice experts was convened by Deputy Chief Lester and Dr. Pfiffner. They would select USC faculty, representatives from the mayor and county supervisor's office, and even state criminal justice officials all

¹⁴² Edward J. Escobar, *Making of a Political Identity*.

¹⁴³ John Henry Good, "A History of the Delinquency Control Institute: Its Program to Combat Juvenile Delinquency" (University of Southern California, 1967), 60–61.

¹⁴⁴ Good, 4.

of whom were to shape the parameters of how L.A. would improve the capacity of its police to impede youth delinquency. After a year of various planning meetings and consultations of criminal justice officials throughout the state, in June 1944 USC President Rufus B. von KleinSmid held a luncheon at the behest of Dr. Pfiffner to present the mission and vision of DCI to other sectors of the L.A. law enforcement institutions. The invited guests included L.A. Sheriff Biscailuz, LAPD Chief Horrall, California Youth Authority (CYA) Director Karl Holton, and L.A. County Probation Department (LACPD) Chief John M. Zuck This vision was to create a police training institute housed in USC in which sixty law enforcement officers (three cohorts of twenty) would take university classes and conduct field work in juvenile justice theory and administration. While the LAPD, Probation, and the Sheriff's Department management had taken advantage of USC courses in public administration in the past, this would be an entirely new field of academic and law enforcement study. Criminology as an applied field in the U.S. academy had only started formally in 1910 at Northwest University School of Law where the idea of connecting "law and science" to the practice of administering judicial and policing first formed.¹⁴⁵ Northwestern, which created the national Traffic Institute in 1936, would also serve as the model for how academia could produce a practicum based model for law enforcement by using a public-private partnership.¹⁴⁶ So the field while having a model of success was still in its infancy and therefore meant that USC and L.A.

¹⁴⁵ Jennifer Devroye, "The Rise and Fall of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology," *Journal of Criminology and Criminology* 100, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 7–32, <https://doi.org/169.235.64.162>.

¹⁴⁶ L. J. McEnnis Jr., "The Background and Development of the Traffic Institute of Northwestern University," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 42, no. No. 5 (February 1952): 663–73, <https://doi.org/47.33.104.118>.

law enforcement would be setting a standard for how police, probation, and other law enforcement agencies would model their juvenile policing programs.

Not only did the cohort of L.A.'s top policing apparatus review and accept the plan but they agreed to have their offices be formal partners in creating the goals, methods, and pedagogy of DCI.¹⁴⁷ This committee of city, county, and state top law enforcement leaders demonstrate the intersections of policing, probation, and incarceration institutions that converged to create the institute. DCI was to be not an isolated training program solely for L.A. but was meant to be statewide project that would serve as an intellectual asset for building and transforming the policing of the state's youth from a discursive venture based on the perspectives of individual departments to that of a homogenous, modern, and evidence-based set of practices. This transformative goal would be clearly articulate by the framers of DCI and cosigned by state police departments in the Fall of 1944.

To achieve this statewide buy-in from law enforcement agencies, who up to this point in history had been very reluctant to secede any of their autonomy to state or other outside forces, was for the committee to provide a space for collaboration from the small number of juvenile officers in the state as well as police chiefs who desired to respond to the growing amount of young people in conflict with the law. Although the L.A.P.D. had a dedicated division to juvenile delinquency for over two decades, the same could not be said for the rest of the state or country for that matter. A survey of California police

¹⁴⁷ DCI Founding Committee, "A Prospectus For A Delinquency Control Institute At The University of California: A Committee Report," 1945, Box 9, School of Public Admin Records, Folder DCI 1963-1964, University of Southern California School of Public Administration records, Collection no. 0295, University Archives, Special Collections, USC, University of Southern California.

departments in early 1940s revealed that less than twenty-five percent of California law enforcement agencies had any dedicated juvenile bureaus.¹⁴⁸ Some of this can be contributed to the lack of sworn officer personnel in smaller police departments spread throughout rural municipalities outside L.A. Basin and Bay Area. In addition, the CYA had established itself as the de facto juvenile justice department for the local courts and many law enforcement agencies and cities without the infrastructure to run their own juvenile incarceration facilities therefore funneled youth directly to county courts and then into CYA. While the Youth Authority was charged with incarcerating and offering programs for juvenile courts who adjudicated young people to lock-up, the state lacked a specific juvenile justice prevention or law enforcement department. It was this vacuum of carceral bureaucracy that the private-public venture of DCI would aim to fill.

The political landscape of the war years and the near ubiquitous racial logic that Mexican zoot gangs needed to be quashed by law enforcement and disciplined with citizenship programs is essential in providing the conjunction of political forces to create DCI. During the entire episode L.A.'s and the country's zoot suit panic and continual reports from FBI of the growing statistics of juvenile crime, the state's juvenile corrections department was in ongoing conversations with state leaders at the behest of California Governor Earl Warren.¹⁴⁹ The moral panics surrounding zoot suiters of color did not only have L.A. investing in law enforcement strategies, but quickly became a

¹⁴⁸ "Conference of Law Enforcement Officers in Delinquency Control 11-9-44: Resolutions Presented by the Resolution Committee," November 9, 1944, Box 9, Folder DCI: Miscellaneous Memoranda 1944-47, University of Southern California School of Public Administration records, Collection no. 0295, University Archives, Special Collections, USC, University of Southern California.

¹⁴⁹ Alvarez, Luis, *Power of the Zoot*.

state mandate as early as July 1943.¹⁵⁰ In order to entice departments into building juvenile bureaus and thus manufacturing both a large pool of eligible police officers to be part of the DCI cohort model and an institutional need for professionalization training, the DCI planning committee sought out ways of accessing buy-in from a growing carceral state. In consultation with CYA Director Karl Holton, they found that state's juvenile prison administration was also seeking to hold a statewide convening of law enforcement and juvenile delinquency. The committee utilized this opportunity and offered the USC campus and de facto the DCI committee to host the "Law Enforcement Officers Conference on Juvenile Delinquency Control" November 9th and 10th 1944.¹⁵¹ This conference brought together police from over sixty California cities, the California Attorney General's office, the CYA, and USC's own public administration faculty to discuss the growing concern over youth delinquency during the war years. In particular, the opening plenary led by both Attorney General Kenny and CYA Director Holton addressed the state's lack of incarceration facilities at the county level to incarcerate youth in the state.¹⁵² While the main conference focused on addressing statewide issues of youth detention, a select group picked by the DCI planners sought to finalize an outline for the police training institute to unveil to the conference participants in the hopes of having it adopted by a statewide body of law enforcement. So, on the second day of the conference three resolutions were presented for adoption by the conference

¹⁵⁰ "Racial Peace Here Pledged: Warren Declares All of State's People Will Be Protected," *Los Angeles Times*, July 10, 1943.

¹⁵¹ "Plans Outlined to Fight Causes of Delinquency," *Los Angeles Times*, November 10, 1944; DCI Founding Committee, "Prospectus For DCI," 6.

¹⁵² "Plans Outlined to Fight Causes of Delinquency."

attendees and would set the trajectory for L.A. and California's youth policing regime for the remainder of the century. The first two resolutions were declarations by the policing agents that every department in California would commit to create a juvenile bureau and add specialized training on juvenile crime control to their established in-service curriculum. The only exception was for those small departments that could not designate more than one sworn officer to the designated juvenile bureau. The final resolution concerned the creation of a dedicated training institute for police at USC and stated that all conference attendees commend "the School of Public Administration and the Graduate School of Social Work at USC in developing material for training programs for officers...[and] that every effort be made to develop this material into an organized crime prevention institute."¹⁵³ These three resolutions solidified USC's path towards constructing the state's and eventually the nation's premier juvenile control policing training institute. To add to the legitimacy of these resolutions, the plan asked and received signatories from the California Peace Officers Association (CPOA), California's Sheriff's Association (CSA), the CYA, the California Department of Justice (CDJ), the District Attorney's Association of California (DAAC), and the California War Council(CWC).¹⁵⁴ The concentration of policing and juridical state agents alongside the Governor's ad-hoc War Council again demonstrates the connectivity between juvenile policing and the welfare-warfare nexus of increased state capacity in administering public

¹⁵³ "Conference of Law Enforcement Officers in Delinquency Control 11-9-44: Resolutions Presented By the Resolution Committee."

¹⁵⁴ "Progress Report of the Delinquency Control Institute" (University of Southern California, 1949), 31, Collection 0295, Box 9, Papers of the University of Southern California School of Public Administration, University of Southern California Libraries Special Collections, Los Angeles.

service (i.e. law enforcement) and rising war economy of places like L.A.¹⁵⁵ Just as it was important to the California war effort was to ensure a steady flow of labor to military industries to secure a victory abroad, so too was the need to ensure a victory at home by quelling the rise of discontent among a growing youth of color population. These L.A. youth who were not satisfied with either the fallacy of FDR's "four freedoms" under domestic racialized capitalism or with realities of living in the last "white spot" of the U.S.

Following the conference Dean Olson and Dr. Pfiffner worked with a committee of 22 other members of USC faculty and administrators alongside representatives from the LACSD, LAPD, the American Law Institute, L.A. Housing Authority (HACLA), LACPD, L.A. County Bureau of Public Assistance, L.A. County Superior Court, Governor's Committee on Youth in Wartime, CAG, and CYA. local and statewide law enforcement to formulate the funding and pedagogical plan for the institute.¹⁵⁶ This culminated in "A Prospectus for the Delinquency Control Institute" completed on February 23, 1945 which included the objectives of DCI both to the state's larger goals of increasing the capacity for juvenile policing and for the cohort of 60 law enforcement officers. The prospectus called for an annual funding of 33,000 a year for paying staff and researchers as well as providing fully subsidized scholarships for each law enforcement participant's tuition along with USC covering room, board, and material overhead for those officers who are attending the university from outside of the L.A.

¹⁵⁵ Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crises, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 24–26.

¹⁵⁶ DCI Founding Committee, "Prospectus For DCI."

area.¹⁵⁷ And all of this money would not be taken from the USC general budget but would need to be fund raised from public and private investors with the goal of DCI's director to sell the line that investing in training would pay dividends like an insurance company, that crime would be reduced for business and therefore impact their bottom line. In fact, one of the first private donors were the Automobile Club of Southern California, the Hollywood Turf Club Charities, the Colombia Motion Pictures Foundation, alongside the CYA funding.¹⁵⁸ The ability for DCI to gain financial backing from a diverse group of sources by the primer statewide body of law enforcement agencies demonstrate the legitimacy and scope that DCI would use to influence policing in L.A. and beyond.

DCI had the benefit of statewide lawmen acknowledge the need for professionalization amid the growing "crisis" of increased youth crime and lack of formalized or uniform juvenile policing tactics. This self-evident logic demonstrates the "common sense" adoption that youth crime was on the rise. A statewide adoption by not only police and sheriff representatives, but also corrections, courts, and the ad hoc civil defense council shows the discursive carceral and state administration bureaucracy that DCI would be integrated in first years and eventually expanded. DCI from its inception would be a critical piece of the burgeoning post-war carceral state and emerging shift in police professionalization during this period.

¹⁵⁷ For a generalized comparison, this would be an annual budget of nearly \$500,000 in today's money according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator.

¹⁵⁸ "1949 Progress Report," 4.

An example of DCI shaping the discourse on youth policing can be seen in a 1949 interview with L.A.'s local ABC affiliate radio station. A key part of DCI's plan was to sell itself to the public and utilize L.A.'s motion picture and radio broadcast network to its benefit. USC Dean Emory Olson was tasked as an important spokesman for the department and stated, "Those of us who are interested in good public administration believe that law enforcement agencies should operate as efficiently as our large businesses do. We hope that our Delinquency Control Institute will become as well known as the National Police Academy operated by the FBI in Washington DC, and the Traffic Institute at Northwestern University."¹⁵⁹ The architects of DCI were thoroughly engaged in the professionalization efforts taking place throughout the country of law enforcement. Before WWII law enforcement in urban cities were viewed as wholly corrupt and the center of major media controversies. DCI was the imagined as the epicenter for professionalization and modernization of youth policing for the city, the LAPD juvenile bureau, but also reached the county and eventually the nation and globe.

The 1945 "Prospectus for a Delinquency Control Institute" additionally contained in it a pedagogical framework for the new field of juvenile delinquency. The School of Public Administration was working to create a curriculum for a field that did not exist, that of juvenile criminology for students who were already in the field. To do this work, DCI started with a 7-point program which DCI faculty member Dan Pursuit outlined in the 1948 *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*: They are as follows:

¹⁵⁹ "Report of the People," Transcript (Los Angeles: ABC, May 31, 1949), Collection 0295, Box 9, USC School of Public Administration.

- To provide an adequate training program in delinquency control for law enforcement agencies
- To provide in particular for California Law enforcement agencies
 - 60 better-trained juvenile officer each year
 - Heads of juvenile bureaus in local enforcement agencies
 - Leader and instructors familiar with the best delinquency control practices
- To offer an integrated curriculum of the best police principles, practices, and procedures, appropriately supplemented by pertinent knowledge in related fields
- To quicken and stimulate law enforcement agencies through intimate contact with practitioners(sic) and academic leaders.
- To provide, through field work, observation, and practice of techniques in delinquency control
- To carry on research and inquiry into the problems of delinquency control so that the Institute's curriculum shall keep pace with knowledge in the field
- To make the information developed by the Institute available to law enforcement agencies anywhere.¹⁶⁰

These goals were to be met in the classroom with their nine courses taught by USC professors as well as “field experts” from law enforcement, probation, the DA’s office, and the California Youth Authority. The courses include Special Police Techniques, Conditioning Factors in Juvenile Delinquency, Delinquency Prevention Techniques, Administrative Aspects of Delinquency control, Techniques of Learn and Teaching, Legal Aspects of Delinquency Prevention, Clinics in Delinquency Control, and finally, Field Work.

Since DCI would be tasked to train law enforcement in a participatory way, one of the first of steps Dean Olson and Prof. Pfiffner took was to the recruiting of former Cleveland probation officer and juvenile court referee Dan Pursuit.¹⁶¹ Pursuit joined the

¹⁶⁰ Dan G. Pursuit, “A University and Law Enforcement Work Together in the Control of Juvenile Delinquency,” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 38, no. 4 (December 1947): 416.

¹⁶¹ The role of referee in juvenile court is not completely uniform in U.S. jurisprudence, but the following definition from a 1961 California Law Review paper provides the following “A referee is a hearing officer, with the powers of a juvenile court judge, who hears the cases assigned to him by the presiding judge of the juvenile court,” Aiden R. Gough “Referees in California’s Juvenile Courts: A Study

DCI planning group in 1945 as a professor in SPA and as the first director of the institute. He served a critical role as an academic who could teach from practical experience in the field of juvenile justice. This allowed him and DCI to gain support from law enforcement, judges, and the California's DA's office. All these groups would need to be coaxed into supporting the vision of DCI which for L.A. officials was not a large leap. With the already established USC presence in both the city and county at the Civic Center campus in the heart of downtown, DCI main task would be utilizing local police officials as recruiting tools for other jurisdictions.

Now that the infrastructure was in place, DCI would need to convince non-L.A. law enforcement Chiefs to reduce their personnel by sending selected officers to L.A. for three months. California Attorney General Kenny was one of the major boosters of DCI from its inception. In April of 1945 he sent over twenty personal funding requests letters to major companies and prominent donors throughout the country. In these letters he included a brief description of DCI and invoked the moral panic of a growing juvenile delinquency problem for L.A. However, while his position as the top law enforcement official for California provided legitimacy to the newly formed institute, nearly all the responses came back with no commitment to financial support. Some of the potential donors believed the mission of their company or foundation did not align close enough with that of DCI. Others commented more poignantly that they believed it should be the

in "Sub-Judicial Adjudication" *Hastings Law Journal*, Vol. 19, 1, 1967, p4,
https://repository.uchastings.edu/hastings_law_journal/vol19/iss1/2

job of the state to subsidize crime control efforts and that housing DCI at a private university did not seem appropriate.

DCI's proposal to potential donors of placing public safety efforts into the hands of the private sector in 1945 may have seemed out of step of during the height of California's massive participation in the U.S. military war effort taking place in the Philippines. But in southern California, USC had in many ways already become the premier institution for building up the city's law enforcement capacities. Unlike the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) or the two California State Universities (CSU) in the southland, USC was the oldest research institution in the region and a mainstay of the city's law enforcement infrastructure. In 1929 USC's School of Public Administration had established their Civic Center Division to work directly with L.A.'s managerial class of municipal employees one block from city hall on the corner of Second Street and Spring Avenue in the heart of downtown. And by the time of the move to support city workers with a special interest in policing, they began offering classes to city and county employees. Thus, USC had a nearly forty-year head start as the city's inaugural research university and especially during a period of transition for L.A. from a dusty town whose economy was largely cattle and small scale agricultural, to a burgeoning urban industrial metropolis.

DCI's pedagogical program consisted of nine classes that dealt with juvenile crime control, the understanding of various juvenile policing techniques, using community organization, basic criminology, field work with selected juvenile policing jurisdictions, and a series of "soft skills" including public speak, writing reports, and

building networks with the community. This course work would guide each cohort toward a central understanding of the particularity of juvenile crime policing as proposed by the SPA faculty and shaped by Director Pfiffner. An examination of the curriculum helps in understanding how the law enforcement officers would then take this curriculum to then implement these techniques into policing the youth of L.A. and how they might either inform or change their already established techniques.¹⁶²

The influence of DCI on L.A. youth policing can also be seen by the changes in youth detention throughout the state. At the establishment of DCI in 1946 the California Youth Authority was in charge of three detention centers (Preston School of Industry, Ventura School for Girls, and the Fred C. Nelles School for Boys) and four detention camps (Calaveras Big Trees Park, Los Guillicos School for Girls, Fricot Ranch School, California Vocational Institution, Pine Grove Camp). Numerous youth on any given day were incarcerated in state, but this would drastically change as migration increased to Los Angeles, federal funding for policing increased, and as DCI began to graduate law enforcement professionals who took new expertise to reign in the “youth hordes.”

In just ten years, five more detention centers opened (Camp Ben Lomond and El Paso de Robles School for Boys in 1947, Northern Reception Center in Sacramento, Southern Reception Center in Norwalk both in 1954, and Mt. Bullion Camp in Mariposa

¹⁶² While the DCI Collections do contain some of the materials for investigating this history, I was only able to find copies of the three of the original curriculum books. These included the Sociology 166 Conditioning Factors in Juvenile Delinquency, Public Administration 156 Delinquency Prevention Techniques, and Public Administration 152 Social Treatment Aspects of Delinquency Control. The content of these books includes a course outline, syllabus, reading content, suggested readings, and sample assignments. A more thorough analysis of these three texts will need to be conducted of these and the other syllabi in future projects.

in 1956). This increase represents the massive growth of carceral technology throughout the state. For comparison, the previous seven detention facilities were established within a forty-five year period (1891-1946).

Although DCI advertised at first to all California law enforcement and then nationally and internationally, LAPD officers were still a primary target. According to the rosters of students from 1946-1951, LAPD officers accounted on average for 1 out of every 5 students in each DCI cohort. Moreover, the sites of field work that students were taken to visit represent L.A., including the LAPD, LA County Sherriff, Pasadena, Glendale, Long Beach, Santa Monica, and Alhambra.¹⁶³ Looking over the smaller jurisdictions it is important to note that significant racialized geographies which each of these represent. Pasadena in the early 1940s began to be one of the first to open housing tracks that allowed Black families to move into. The Northeast section of the city would quickly become one of the bastions of Black communities in the east San Gabriel Valley and notorious for police harassment and violence of these communities by the 1960s and 1970s (*Journal Negro Pasadena*). Santa Monica is also an important jurisdiction for two reasons. The first is the challenge by Black and Chicax wartime worker of the Douglas Aircraft plant who began to move into the Pico Boulevard area of Santa Monica and examples of organizing for the end of commercial segregation in department stores like Sears-Roebuck in 1947 led by the NAACP.¹⁶⁴ Secondly, Santa Monica had a Chicax and Mexican barrio that would in the 1950s make up “*cuatro esquinas*,” four neighboring

¹⁶³ John Henry Good, Master Thesis, “A History of the Delinquency Control Institute: Its Program to Combat Juvenile Delinquency” (1967), p81

¹⁶⁴ Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 146–47.

working-class Mexican communities and youth street organizations associated with them.¹⁶⁵ By the end of their twelve-weeks of training, DCI's law enforcement students would have been well versed in the various crime control techniques by local law enforcement in the hyper segregated suburbs of L.A.

The 1940s were still a provincial time for most law enforcement in California and around the country. Police departments were not required to keep statistics on their arrests rates or crime trends, and especially not with the federal government. Even though the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting data collection program had started in 1929, it would only process data voluntarily sent to them which few law enforcement officials did. And even when police and sheriff departments did send in their data, their ways of categorizing crimes and types of arrest did not follow a uniform style. Policing was very much a local concern with limited intervention from the larger state bureaucracy.¹⁶⁶

One of the main areas of U.S. policing in the 1940s that typifies the provincialism of a vast majority of departments is the type of training received by officers. During the early 20th century police forces both in rural and metropolitan cities alike were generally not concerned with the educational background or prior experience of new cadets or of continuous learning for veteran officers. As stated earlier in the chapter, L.A. in the late nineteenth and into the early twentieth century, law enforcement was embroiled with controversy for their entanglement with the city's vice district in downtown and other illicit activities. During an era defined by growing calls for social reform and the

¹⁶⁵ Miguel Marcello Chavez, "Los Cuatro Esquinas: The Chicana Chicano Movement in the West Side of Los Angeles, 1963-1979" (Dissertation, Los Angeles, University of California, 2010).

¹⁶⁶ Gerald Woods, *The Police in Los Angeles: Reform and Professionalization* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1993), 57.

burgeoning politics of the late progressive era, L.A. law enforcement were often the target of public criticism. One of the main groups that criticized the LAPD's tactics were Chicaxs and Mexican nationals during the time of the Mexican Revolution, 1910-1920. An increased amount of anti-Mexican fervor, and in particular the revolutionary character of L.A. residents like Ricardo Flores Magon placed the Mexican community in the crosshairs of both the open-shop industrialists and the white-spot boosters who pushed for aggressive policing of "violent" Mexicans.¹⁶⁷

While the harassment, detention, and infiltration of Mexican revolutionary and labor organizations brought only criticism from the labor press, the major media outlets like the *Los Angeles Times* focused more on the "lack of morals" by individual officers as it related to the continuation of the vice districts of downtown. As a consequence of this pressure in the prewar years the LAPD recruited Berkeley Chief of Police August Vollmer in 1923-1924 in an effort to bring about reforms and update the use of technology and uniformity for the department. His approach to policing brought a new strategy for the LAPD to take on the massive jurisdiction of the sprawling metropolis from the valley to the ports by moving officers from foot patrol to squad cars and implementing the first communications system for the department. While the reform efforts of Vollmer were short lived in his brief stint as Chief, the faculty at the University of Southern California would soon take an interest in 1929 and begin offering classes to civil servants including specialized classes offered to law enforcement.

DCI and the Shaping the Policing of Black and Chicax

¹⁶⁷ Edward J. Escobar, *Making of a Political Identity*, 69–73.

A significant change in youth policing in L.A. that dovetailed simultaneously with the founding of DCI was the appointment of Chief William Parker to the LAPD. Parker was a career LAPD officer that climbed the ranks for over twenty years to become Chief. His experience as a veteran LAPD officer, along with his military experience, shaped his leadership style. During his tenure as Chief, Parker would be named one of the country's top law enforcement agents alongside FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. Each represented a modernizing force for urban policing. In the post WWII period professionalization of policing became a more prominent topic than ever before. Secondly the national conversation about youth delinquency and "disorder" was led by and influenced by both. Both discussions centered on how urban law enforcement would best be suited to meet the rising tide of disorder and delinquency.

Professionalization of urban law enforcement in California and arguably the nation could be traced to Chief August Vollmer of the Berkeley Police Department. Vollmer innovated policing technologies like the car radio, beat cop walking, and other innovations. He was recruited by the LAPD in 1923 to be Chief of Police. During his tenure he met a very resistant LAPD that was continual under media scrutiny. During the 1920s and 30s the LAPD was notoriously involved in high profile media scandals that revolved around their connections to the vice districts of downtown. More importantly LAPD had a notorious "Red Squad" that singled out radical socialists and labor organizations that attempted to impede on the open shop. Needless to say, Vollmer's effort to professionalize the police did not make much movement on a police force that was wrapped up in the underground economy and capital.

While various aspects of professionalization were implemented, it was not until Chief Parker began his tenure in 1950 that real movement on professionalization took precedence. One of Parker's first changes was to institutionalize the use of statistical data on arrests, personnel, and LAPD structure. Data collection for the LAPD was not something new as the city council had been receiving yearly arrest data catalogs since the early 1920s. However, Parker reorganized the statistical data collection and made it publicly available in large volumes. Importantly, he also made changes to the youth division.

In December of 1953 Chief Parker addressed the L.A. City Council in response to a reported gang related death in downtown. In responding to questions about the Juvenile Gang Squad which stated had nine officers appointed to it, he pronounced that “the Juvenile Gang Squad are primarily assigned to the problems involving people of Latin origin.”¹⁶⁸ Nine years had passed since the twelve defendants of the Sleepy Lagoon trial had been overturned proving that the young men of the so called “38th Street Gang” were not involved in the tragic death of José Diaz. This same year DCI was starting its 16th and 17th cohort of juvenile law enforcement and other professionals, and in the wake of the 1951 “Bloody Christmas” affair where seven young men in custody (five of them Mexican) were beaten by an estimated fifty LAPD officers, the anti-Mexican roots of DCI continued to instruct L.A. juvenile policing.¹⁶⁹ The 1950s saw not only the growth of the youth policing regime but also other aspects of the city's carceral capacity. The

¹⁶⁸ O.W. Wilson, ed., *Parker on Police* (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1957), 214.

¹⁶⁹ Edward J. Escobar, “Bloody Christmas and the Irony of Police Professionalism: The Los Angeles Police Department, Mexican Americans, and Police Reform in the 1950s,” *Pacific Historical Review* 72, no. 2 (May 2003): 179–80.

“Mexican Problem” and in particular the Mexican juvenile gang problem was a topic law enforcement, probation, the City Housing Authority, and the Mayor’s office were attentive to, especially as the city’s Mexican population grew in population and in their activism. From the razing of *barrios* in Chavez Ravine (Alta Loma, Bishop, Palo Verde) to the continuation of deportation through collaboration with the INS and LAPD, Chicano L.A. was the target of escalating Cold War domestic hegemony. Yet Mexican youth gangs would transition from being the central pariah by 1955 as the Black population continued to grow in the city of L.A. and the L.A. youth police regime would build on over a decade of focus on Mexican delinquency to shift its concentrated focus towards Black youth.

By 1955 DCI provided the institutional backing, technical support, and training for the nearly all the LAPD, LASD, and LACPD officers assigned to leading the juvenile division in their respective agencies. In fact, in 1947 their inaugural year, one of their LAPD graduates, Sergeant Edward M. Davis would later serve as LAPD Chief from 1969-1978. Additionally, being housed in USC’s School of Public Administration provided an outside liberal legitimacy for confronting any mounting criticisms of the L.A. youth policing regime towards the rights of Chicano and Black youth in the coming decades. DCI was an essential cornerstone of L.A. law enforcement through its curriculum, professionalization, and guidance in creating the L.A. school of youth policing which would shape the language, policies, and tactics of all parts of the youth policing regime in the following decades.

Chapter Two

Building Towards Rebellion:

Anti-Black Policing and LACPD Group Guidance Program

In the summer of 1955 Angelinos were bombarded by a series of *Los Angeles Times* stories describing the bleak outlook of a state under siege due to the increase of California youth in state detention. “Youth Authority Plans Institutions of 1965 for Correction of Today’s Toddlers” reads the headline in the last of seven articles by future travel editor Jerry Hulse. Over the course of week Hulse provided an expose on the growth of L.A. youth court system and state’s detention regime as the grim reality of the growing enemy in our midst, juvenile delinquents. He writes in the preface of the first of seven articles “the reader will be taken inside a notorious cell block. On a long, one-way ride. The characters will include young murderers, armed robbers, thieves.” Throughout the week long exposé Hulse hones in on the details of the youth folk devil, seeing a section of L.A.’s youth destined to a life of disposability in youth and then adult cages of the slowly forming sunshine carceral archipelago.¹⁷⁰ While Hulse’s interviews with judges, law enforcement, and other managers of L.A.’s youth detention complex was not unique the pages of the *Times*, the timing could not have been more perfect for the massive growth that L.A.’s Probation Department would embark on. In less than a year the county’s resident would overwhelmingly support the passage of Proposition A to

¹⁷⁰ <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2002-jan-26-me-hulse26-story.html>, *LA Times* “What Becomes of the Juvenile Delinquency After Court Trail” June 26, 1955; *LA Times* “Bleak Delinquent Picture Painted” July 3 1955.

publicly fund the Probation Department's largest youth detention facility expansion to that point in history. The ten years leading up the massive revolt in and beyond the streets of Watts in August of 1965 are of central concern in this chapter. Specifically, this chapter interrogates the history of the growth of the Probation's carceral capacity with specific focus on the role of gang intervention with its Group Guidance Program.

From 1944 to 1966 the Probation Department created and assigned intervention workers to use behavior modification and surveillance to engage Mexican and later Black youth gangs in the city and county. The goal of the program was to lead youth who were not already under the auspices of the L.A. County Juvenile Court into counseling, gang diversion programming, and preventative social services.¹⁷¹ The Group Guidance program was the county's inaugural "boots on the ground" program to actively identify and attempt to intervene in with youth identified by law enforcement or social service programs who were affiliated or identified as active in gangs following the war against Mexican zooters from 1942-1943. Historians have identified the ways local and federal officials implemented anti-juvenile crime initiatives during WWII in response to growing criminalization trends of youth being the focus of enforcement, suppression, and additionally to meet the needs of the growing moral anxieties of adolescence during the war.¹⁷² My focus on the history of the growing reach of Probation and the emergence and

¹⁷¹ Malcolm W. Klein *The American Street Gang: Its Nature, Prevalence and Control* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 44.

¹⁷² Gerald D. Nash *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 120; William M. Turtle, "Daddy's Gone to War:" *The Second World War in the Lives of America's Children* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 6; James Gilbert *A Cycle of Outrage: America's Reaction to Juvenile Delinquency in the 1950s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

eventual dismantling of the Group Guidance program in the wake of the Watts Uprising will chart an often under historicized yet critical part of the carceral state. Additionally, the chapters extend the historiography of L.A.'s role in the rise of mass racialized, gendered, and classed caging by tracing the discursive ways that a growing moral panic surrounding racialized youth gangs was informed rather outside overlapping policing imperatives of the 1950s and 1960 which were U.S. Cold War counterinsurgency, the repression and targeting of Black youth involvement in the Civil Rights movement, and an era of massive shifts in law enforcement professionalization.

Tracing the history of the growth, impact, and eventual abandonment of the Group Guidance program in 1966 provides a significant vantage point to review at one of the city's most important youth social and criminalizing moments, the Watts Rebellion in 1965. It was during the rebellion that Group Guidance probation officers were called upon as some of the first local officials to survey the damage and conduct interviews with young people to quell the violence. According to the LAPD narratives which was largely reproduced by the hastily created Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots in 1965, the riots were led by "roving gangs" and Black youth in "guerilla" fashion who were looting, burning, and fighting with police officers. While LAPD officers were most notably on the streets, the Probation Department deployed members of the Group Guidance program who were positioned as the best deterrent to target a small group of "extremists" who were committing much of the looting. The strategic sending of gang intervention workers into the streets was a way for the city to qualify the media, police, and by December of 1965 the state's narrative that young Black male gang members

were the primary drivers of the rebellion, rather than the combined weight of decades of anti-Black police harassment, the social abandonment of Watts exemplified by some of the city's most inadequate housing, Black unemployment rates, and the apartheid conditions inflicted via business and governmental practices inside of Watts and throughout L.A.¹⁷³ Historicizing the Group Guidance program reveals an important shift in the history of youth crime and gang intervention debate taking place during this period. In the early 1960s research groups at UCLA and USC evaluated the effectiveness of intervention workers in curbing gang related crime. The reviews of the program in-light of the Watts Rebellion were significant because their findings pushed the LACPD to terminate the program. Probation would eventually turn back focusing on youth associated with street gangs with the creation of the Specialized Gang Supervision Program of the 1980s, which was an anti-gang enforcement program that was stripped of the social work imperatives of Group Guidance.¹⁷⁴ Tracing the implementation of the program in the historical wake of the Zoot Suit hysteria of the 1940s, the use of academic institutions and private resources to finance and review the program, and its eventual dismantling in the wake of the Watts Rebellion highlights the significance to an historical interrogation and analysis of Group Guidance in order to further reveal the emerging War on Youth.

In this chapter I answer the following questions: What was the Group Guidance program and how did it specifically impact the racialized and gendered lives of young people labeled as gang affiliated? In what ways did the program serve as both a pre-arrest

¹⁷³ Gerald Horne *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Boston: De Capo Press, 1997), 99.

¹⁷⁴ Klein *The American Street Gang*, 44, 175.; Irving A. Spergel *The Youth Gang Problem: A Community Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995)

intervention and simultaneously as an extension of the growing anti-Black racialized carceral regime in L.A.? Finally, how did the dismantling of the program set the stage for an increased counterinsurgency model of policing in in the post-Watts Rebellion period? Interrogating the history of Probation and Group Guidance with a specific focus from 1955-65 will expand this history of the “War on Youth” by tracing the genealogy of racialized anti-gang enforcement policy and hegemonic narratives of Black, Mexican, and overall youth criminalization, and the pioneering role that L.A. had in crafting this aspect of the carceral state.

Gangs, Demographics Shifts, and L.A. Probation in the mid-1950s

In 1955 the war on zoot suiters had been all but extinguished as bee-bop and boogie woogie youth culture which provided the sonic backdrop of zoot culture began to transition into new music and style forms including jump blues, R&B and eventually Rock and Roll which became the mainstay of youth entertainment in mid 1950s L.A.¹⁷⁵ The Korean War boosted the L.A. war industrial sector again but unlike the WWII hysteria that specifically targeted Mexican zooters as blood thirsty gangs who needed to be reined in as part of the “war at home,” the relative lack of a *redux* of the total war economy however did not end the media’s nor carceral regime’s focus on youth gangs. As the introduction of the chapter explicates, L.A.’s media found youth criminality and their detention an excellent way to inform and entertain readers.

¹⁷⁵ Steven Loza, *Barrio Rhythm: Mexican American Music in Los Angeles* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 80–83.

For instance, *Los Angeles Times* columnist Jerry Hulse from May to July 1955 produced two multipart exposes on the L.A. juvenile system. The first was a series of four articles from May 8th to May 11th and the subsequent volley was from June 26th to July 3rd. In both series Hulse presents a picture of a system both in crisis due to massive population and decaying infrastructure, while also discussing the cutting-edge changes and juvenile reform of the period. The first series focuses on the L.A.'s juvenile court system and starts with an article entitled "Tragedy of Youth Parades in Court" with specific perspective of Judge William B. McKesson who oversees "the largest court of its kind in the world and through it are funneled the tragedies of teen-agers(sic) from 46 cities."¹⁷⁶ The May 11th article focuses on L.A. County Probation Department (LACPD) Chief Karl Holton. Holton began his career at Probation and become Chief Probation Officer form 1938 until 1943, at which time he transferred to serve as the first director of California's Youth Authority, eventually to only return to L.A. Probation as the Chief in 1952. Holton pleas to the public for more investment in Probation due to the massive caseload of eighty-five youth per one Probation officer and the increase in juvenile court petitions that overcrowd Central Juvenile Hall.¹⁷⁷ His request for more Probation funding is couched within an updated 1954 bond measure which granted a 1.96 million bond debt to the county to pay for a new juvenile hall at Rancho Los Amigos in Downey. The new juvenile hall would be opened in 1957 and named Los Padrinos (the Godparents) juvenile hall. The article offers some assurance to the public that through the expansion of the new

¹⁷⁶ Jerry Hulse, "Tragedy of Youth Parades in Court: Juvenile Judges Try to Unravel Problems of Troubled Teen-Agers," *Los Angeles Times*, May 8, 1955, B1.

¹⁷⁷ Jerry Hulse, "Probation Officer Is Juveniles' D.A.," *Los Angeles Times*, May 11, 1955.

juvenile hall the County is doing everything it can to combat the growing moral panic around gangs by focusing ten probation officers who are working in the unique intervention program of Group Guidance at that time. Hulse's first series of articles provide a striking narrative aligned with Probation and their carceral compatriots by sharing how just like the state, the county is under siege from the growing war waged through juvenile arrests and cases.

The following Hulse series of seven articles traces the various sites of youth detention for young Angelinos sentenced by the juvenile court. Their carceral fates are displayed in the pages of the *Times* which shares examples of young people sent to the LACPD detention sites or waiting to juvenile hall to be sent to the California Youth Authority. Hulse suggests "the reader will be taken inside a notorious cellblock. On a long, one-way ride. The characters will include young murderers, armed robbers, thieves."¹⁷⁸ Hulse provides in the first of seven articles an intimate description of C.Y.A. facilities which many youth are sentenced to from L.A. County. These include the notorious Fred C. Nelles institution within L.A. County situated in the city of Whittier. The article ends with a series of photos from Nelles and one caption under a photo of youth in military-style formation states "Juvenile delinquents at Fred C. Nelles School for Boys in Whitter march to work. Once an institution where brutality caused two teen-agers to kill themselves, the school now offers trips to the beach and movies for obedience, Lost Privilege Cottage for bad boys."¹⁷⁹ The caption attempts to gloss over the daily acts

¹⁷⁸ Jerry Hulse, "What Becomes of the Juvenile Delinquent After Court Trial?," *Los Angeles Times*, June 26, 1955.

¹⁷⁹Ibid.

of brutality subjected to the young boys at Nelles which included not only physical torture and humiliation, but also the eugenics violence of taxonomic I.Q. and other exams that allowed for permanent incarceration, criminalization, and for a significant number of Black and Brown children especially, forced sterilization. These acts of institutional violence are reduced after the tragic “suicide” of two young Mexican boys, Benny Moreno and Edward Leiva, whose deaths led to reforms of the Youth Authority but still maintained in a framework of punitive punishment. Young boys at Nelles could gain recreational privileges only for strict obedience and, for less than that be placed in what can best be described as a juvenile Secure Housing Unit or SHU in which basic amenities are stripped away. These narratives of youth punishment in the Hulse article provide a view into the punitive and “under siege” common sense of the L.A.’s youth policing regime during the 1950s and the role local hegemonic media like the *Times* played in priming the public for its expansion.

Hulse’s expose also reports on the Ventura School of Girls, which famously incarcerated the five young women zooters who refused to provide testimony against the male defendants for the Sleepy Lagoon trial and, as Catherine Ramírez reminds us, their incarceration was not appealed by any defense committee and they were incarcerated until they turned 21.¹⁸⁰ The final article in the series interviews the head of the CYA Herman Stark, who discusses the need for more funding for expanding CYA to incarcerated youth who are hardened criminals “as any adult criminal.” During this

¹⁸⁰ Catherine S. Ramírez, *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

period, the narratives of “hardcore” criminal youth by the media and internally by the carceral state are central in amassing the hegemonic power for which to expand the “War on Youth” crime. The article ends by explicating the hetero-patriarchal pillar of the youth prison system. Hulse argues that for the CYA the lack of sufficient sites of incarceration is not just a numerical overcrowding issue but is also a threat for heteronormativity. He writes that because of the high number of youth in detention that “homosexuals are allowed to mix with others resulting in the possibility that more normal inmate could possibly become infected by those with the perverted habits.”¹⁸¹ The convergence of heteropatriarchy and youth incarceration is not out of place for L.A. during this period or for the carceral logics of the expanding regime of prisons and detention sites. As Eric Stanley writes “Gender normativity, understood as a series of cultural, political, legal, and religious assumptions that attempt to divide our bodies into two categories (men/women), is both a product of and a producer of the PIC.”¹⁸² The LAPD in the 1950s had officers within the vice division focused on entrapping queer Angelinos in cruising spaces. In his autobiography, then beat cop and future chief Daryl Gates retells his earliest assignments as an LAPD officer, being transferred to vice in 1951 to surveil the cruising spaces and entrap men looking or otherwise coaxed into consensual public sex. In his chapter entitled “Gamblers, Drunks, Prostitutes, and Scumbags,” Gates explains that the department under Chief Parker focused on deploying significant resources to vice and that one tactic of the LAPD officers was to “operate” an individual through coaxing

¹⁸¹ Jerry Hulse, “Bleak Delinquent Picture Painted,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 3, 1955.

¹⁸² Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith, eds., *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex* (Oakland: AK Press, 2011), 6.

same sex sexual contact in a public restrooms which at this time was a felony under state law both in public and private settings.¹⁸³ As my investigations into the LACPD's archives on juvenile detention reveal, policing heteronormativity was a key component of the behavior modification goals of the department for young boys especially. While Gates' intimate retelling reveals how the professionalism moment within L.A.'s policing apparatus inaugurated a stronger focus on the intersections of policing and gender, this was not its first iteration but instead can be seen as a continuation of the settler colonial structural logic grafted on the landscape and institutions of L.A.

The preoccupation with sexuality in the youth prison system and criminalization of queer life was part of the larger U.S. penal concerns of the 1950s.¹⁸⁴ As Treva Ellison describes "Police targeting of gay and lesbian peoples began to increase in Los Angeles in 1950...often headed by the LAPD's vice squad, which before the 1950s refined its tactics of violence, harassment, and abuse in what is now known as South Central throughout the late 1930s and 1940s..."¹⁸⁵ The policing of vice in South Central as, Ellison rightfully points to as the proving ground for white/heteronormative "quality of life" policing, at the time largely concerned the white supremacist social order that labeled Black and white (particularly Black men and white women) fraternizing in the jazz clubs of Central Avenue "transgressive" both racially and sexually. The LAPD patrolled, harassed, and brutalized Black musicians and attendees in an almost constant

¹⁸³ Daryl F. Gates, *Chief: My Life in the LAPD* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), 42–43.

¹⁸⁴ Regina G. Kunzel, "Situating Sex: Prison Sexual Culture in the Mid-Twentieth-Century United States," *Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 8, no. 3 (n.d.): 258.

¹⁸⁵ Treva Ellison, "The Sanctuary Politics of Gay and Lesbian Police Reform," *Radical History Review*, no. 135 (October 2019): 97, <https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-7607845>.

barrage of surveillance and violence during the height of the L.A. Jazz scene.¹⁸⁶ Yet the use of vice officers was not unique to Central Avenue nor without its controversy as the 1949 L.A. Grand Jury brought against members of LAPD vice and their connections to women sex workers on the behalf of street syndicates which ultimately forced LAPD Chief Horrall to resign paving the way for Chief William Parker who under the fallout of the scandal made professionalization of the department and ramping up vice detail a key component. It is this continuum of gendered policing that demonstrates the intersecting and constituting nature of policing its instructional carceral logic is a gendered/racial project. For young people within the custody of the LACPD, the institutional panic around queer youth within the county's jail system is concretized during a period of rampant internal reform of the LAPD. Youth policing and incarceration became more bureaucratic and informed by the social sciences in L.A., the more racialized and gendered its punishment and surveillance regime became. The Hulse articles, the LAPD vice squad, and social science literature of the period reveal the heteropatriarchal imperatives of youth policing and punishment which is critical for interrogating the gang intervention efforts of the Group Guidance Program. In addition to the youth policing focus on heteronormative by Probation, there was also the anxieties on a massively growing population and the specifically the racial and class factors of these shifts.

Starting in the mid-1950s the LACPD Chief and probation officers who oversaw the juvenile court and prison regime were growing concerned with having enough

¹⁸⁶ Anthony Macias, *Mexican American Mojo: Popular Music, Dance, and Urban Culture in Los Angeles 1935-1968* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008); Daniel Widener, *Black Arts West: Culture and Struggle in Postwar Los Angeles* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

bedspace to incarcerate. This was in large part due to the massive influx of post WWII migration attracted to the work and housing opportunities in the sprawling metropolis and growing suburban housing tract development. The city's population increased from 1.9 million in 1950 to 2.4 million people in 1960. The county was even more dramatic with its increase going from 4.1 million to just over 6 million people during the same period.¹⁸⁷ The changing demographics and growing population in terms of the number of increased crimes and strain on the police and court system was worrisome to the carceral regime of the city. However, it was clear that the concern for population growth was not equally distributed but instead racialized, and particularly they were concerned with Black immigration to the city. The 1957-58 Annual Report submitted to the L.A. County Board describes the population shift in the following way:

In the face of what is probably the greatest mass migration in the history of man, the governmental agencies of California and particularly, those of Los Angeles County have been faced with a host of monumental problems...shortages of services and physical facilities...even to a lack of pure air...the many problems created by the influx of large numbers of persons from *varied geographical and environmental backgrounds* have caused an increase in the number of law infractions...¹⁸⁸(my emphasis)

A half century earlier the booster class led by Chandler and Otis welcomed the various Midwest, southern, and North Atlantic migrants to subvert the significant number of Mexican, Chinese, Japanese, and Indigenous Californian population of the city. However, by 1950 the use of geography and environmental origins of the newcomers was employed by the Probation Department had more to do with “backgrounds” of those coming to L.A.

¹⁸⁷ L.A. Almanac <http://www.laalmanac.com/population/po02.php>

¹⁸⁸ Karl Holton, “Annual Report 1957-58” (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Probation Department, 1958), 1, University of Southern California.

The post-war migration boom in L.A. did have many Anglos and ethnic whites make the move to the southland to purchase newly built tract homes which overall made the county white population grow, unlike New York which saw an overall decline in whites during this same period.¹⁸⁹ The Probation Department were not in opposition to the real estate and finance class which were anticipating a large amount of future “WASP” suburbanites to fill in the new track homes and the coming architectural order of spaces of white leisure with the construction of Disneyland (1955) and Dodger Stadium (1957).¹⁹⁰ Probation was instead concerned with containing the growth of race and class undesirables all in the shadow of the Zoot Suit Riot just a decade before.

The policing regime of the city and for LACPD’s jurisdiction of the entire county, the logic of white supremacy historically undergirded the anxieties it had with the Black, Indigenous, Mexican, and with impoverished whites. By 1950 the racialized organizing logic of the city was clearly articulated by the then “top cop” LAPD Chief William Parker. In his first public radio address at his new post, Parker focused his energy on speaking about the police as a larger force of moral good that connects its legacy to the “pioneers” of the U.S. to combat the wickedness of society, those who choose to break the moral social contract. And he made this sweeping prose on the settler imaginary of the white west at the height of Black in-migration to the city. He argued in part “As society increases in number, it becomes more complex and additional regulations become necessary to preserve it from disintegration...Los Angeles is the white spot of the great

¹⁸⁹ Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*, 15.

¹⁹⁰ Avila, 175.

cities of America today. It is to the advantage of the community that we keep it that way.¹⁹¹ It is this framing of the city as the *white spot* that neither the policing regime nor Parker is inventing, but the historical legacy that it is attempting to maintain. As Mike Davis excavated in *City of Quartz*, Spanish imperialism was retrofitted for Anglo dominance through the mission landscape, a settling of the land for recuperating “Aryan supremacy” of the city.¹⁹² It is within this ethno-historical mapping of L.A. as city under siege of a pending “disintegration” that helps illuminate the political stage in which Black and Chicano gangs politicized and targeted by the LACPD. Before returning to the implications of the Probation department’s concern of growing Black migrants a review of the youth policing practices of the LAPD, which was the central agency that sent juvenile petitions to the Probation Department, is needed.

During the 1950s, both Los Angeles youth policing regime as well as the nation’s federal bureau chief J. Edgar Hoover became more and more concerned with youth crime and delinquency. In the first few years of the decade, the discourse on juvenile delinquency continued to center on parent responsibility and discipline. In a typical letter to the editor in 1953 one resident argues for a stricter accountability of parents, specifically “In many cases fathers who claim they can’t handle their offspring are simply too lazy to try and the public is endangered by their neglect of the old-fashioned woodshed discipline.”¹⁹³ Here, the answer is stricter household accountability and call for a previous time when parents understood their role. This rhetoric places the sole

¹⁹¹ O.W. Wilson, ed., *Parker on Police* (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1957), 5-8.

¹⁹² Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (London: Verso Press, 2006), 30.

¹⁹³ “Juvenile Crime,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 21, 1953.

responsibility on the household and relinquishes the State from any wrongdoing or intervention beyond arrest and incarceration. Though this was a popular sentiment among some concerned citizens, by the end of the decade, it would be coupled with a call for increased police presence. The war on youth crime would also extend beyond the notions of discipline and began exclusively linked to the discussion of the moral fabric of the nation.

In the 1950s, Los Angeles was shifting dramatically in terms of demographics, which was cause for alarm for the booster of the “bourgeois utopia”. This massive population increase strained the housing market and continued to force contestation of racial and class boundaries throughout Los Angeles. Black migrants severely impacted by the continuance of racial covenants and job discrimination in the post-war manufacturing industries either attempted to move the suburbs or struggled to survive in the growing Black ghettos of South Central. Josh Sides argues that “Numerous excellent studies have emphasized the ways in which segregation deepened in the postwar era, creating a new underclass of “hyper-segregated” black Americans.”¹⁹⁴ This hyper segregation would be one of the driving forces for the increase of Black youth arrests, the other would be the appointment of a new Chief of Police.

In 1950, the LAPD inaugurated William H. Parker as the Chief of Police starting his career as one of the premier reformers of not only the LAPD, but of national law enforcement. Parker came from the internal ranks, serving as an officer since 1927, only

¹⁹⁴ Josh Side, *L.A. City Limits African Mexican Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California, 2006), 96-97.

leaving the LAPD once for twenty-six months to serve as an Army Captain during WWII. As just previously mentioned Parker's inaugural address is a key racial transcript for understanding the law-and-order center of youth gangs and it is almost a reverberation of two of Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, the freedoms from fear and want. Parker calls for the elimination of "parasites" that are spreading fear throughout Los Angeles. This draconian language is also reminiscent of Hoover's call for stopping the moral rot of the U.S. However, what Parker does in his speech is identify the "rot" as a "parasite"--an organism that finds a host and drains life from it with no benefits to the host. Parker is engaging with what Michele Foucault calls *biopolitics* and asserting the *biopower* of the State. Foucault argues within the intelligibility of biopower:

The more inferior species dies out, the more abnormal individuals are eliminated, the fewer degenerates there will be in the species as a whole, and the more I—as species rather than individual—can live...And the reason this mechanism can come into play is that the enemies who have to be done away with are not adversaries in the political sense...they are threats, either external or internal, to the population and for the population.¹⁹⁵

Foucault's analysis is helpful in unpacking Parker's address in that it translates his vision of the LAPD in biological terms. Parker does not see the LAPD as solely a force to uphold the law, but as the vaccine with which to eradicate the bio-threat to Los Angeles. This is what Foucault argues is what allows the state to murder, to eliminate the threat because it is no longer a human and cannot access rights, because only the sovereign, the State, has that power.

¹⁹⁵ Michele Foucault *Society Must Be Defended: Lecture at the Collège de France 1975-1976*, ed., Maruo Bertani and Alessandro Fontana (New York: Picador, 1997), 255-256.

This notion of the sovereign power of murder is further supported by Parker's language about the pioneers who developed the nation, especially as Chief of the Los Angeles police. Los Angeles and California as a whole during the nineteenth century after the U.S. war with México became the "vacant" frontier where white settlers and their families could re-make themselves in the image of the American Dream. The reference to Los Angeles as the white spot of the country, at a time of massive shifting demographics, is an attempt to rekindle the hopes of the clearing process of Manifest Destiny and "frontier justice" in which Indigenous Californians and Mexicans vanish from the land. The white spot also represents the continued dominance of the "open shop" in which Los Angeles maintained a strangle hold on organized labor and especially organized labor. Secondly, his invocation of modernity represents a new model of policing for not only Los Angeles but for the U.S. at the time. The police represent "the thin blue line", which Parker is famous for coining, between civilization (modernity) and barbarism (communism, civil rights).

Under Parker, the police officer was no longer solely the criminal investigator but an essential tool in the modernizing project of the U.S. Parker envisioned a police force that would stamp out all provocateurs of the open market including organized crime and "the fifth estate." Robert Fogelson argues that during this period Parker, along with Hoover and a small cohort of police officials saw the U.S. doomed from within due to the moral breakdown of the nuclear family, class separation, and racial desegregation. Fogelson writes that Parker and his cohort worked from a position that U.S. society was under "an all-out attack on constituted authority that was inspired by Communist and

other left-wing radicals in the 1950s and by militant Blacks and dissident students of the 1960s.”¹⁹⁶ Parker was unapologetic with his militarism and view of the Los Angeles criminal element, especially with his view of youth.

Parker led the LAPD towards the path of mass youth criminalization that would set a precedent for how LA’s youth policing would continue until the end of the century.

Davis argues that the LAPD,

...in the 1950s and early 1960s dichotomized youth offenders into two groups. On one had were mere ‘delinquents’ (mainly white youth) susceptible to the shock treatment of juvenile hall; on the other hand, were ‘juvenile criminals’ (mainly Black and Chicano)...destined to spend their lives with the state prison system. Essential to the LAPD worldview was the assertion that ghetto gang youth were comprised of the latter.¹⁹⁷

Parker’s dichotomy of LA’s youth in conflict with the law, supported by the *Times*, through the use mug shots of Black and Mexican youth in cases of homicide became an essential tool in fanning the flames of war on youth. However, it is critical to note that for the entire decade there were only two years (1953 and 1959) in which the amount of Black and Mexican arrests (17 and under) for homicide exceeded that of white youth.¹⁹⁸ Notwithstanding in 1955 the *Times* was in a frenzy over youth delinquency and the growing number of youth being arrested, adjudicated to juvenile court and sentenced to LA County’s juvenile system or the California Youth Authority. Between May and June there were eleven articles published dealing with the question of youth incarceration, the effectiveness of sentencing, and the possibilities of alternatives.

¹⁹⁶ Robert Fogelson, *Big-City Police* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1977), p147

¹⁹⁷ Davis, *City of Quartz*, 295-296.

¹⁹⁸ *Los Angeles Police Department Statistical Digest* (Los Angeles: Planning & Research Division, 1952-1959) 44, 49.

Although the *Times* was writing some articles critical of youth incarceration, including the fact that in 1955 LA County constructed “the largest [juvenile] court of its kinds in world”¹⁹⁹ they were ignoring the rising trend of Black youth (17 and under) arrests. By 1956 Black youth for the first-time outpaced Mexican youth in arrests. At the beginning of the decade in 1952²⁰⁰, Black youth (under 17) represented 18.7% of those arrested while in 1959 they represented over one out of every four arrests at 28.5%. What is staggering about both numbers is that Black people in Los Angeles in 1950 comprised only 8.7% of the total population and by the end of the decade had grown to 13.5%.²⁰¹ In comparison white youth (17 and under) arrests decreased from 53.8% to 46.9% during the same period. LAPD’s arrest priorities were clearly shifting alongside the shifting demographics in important ways. (see figure 1)

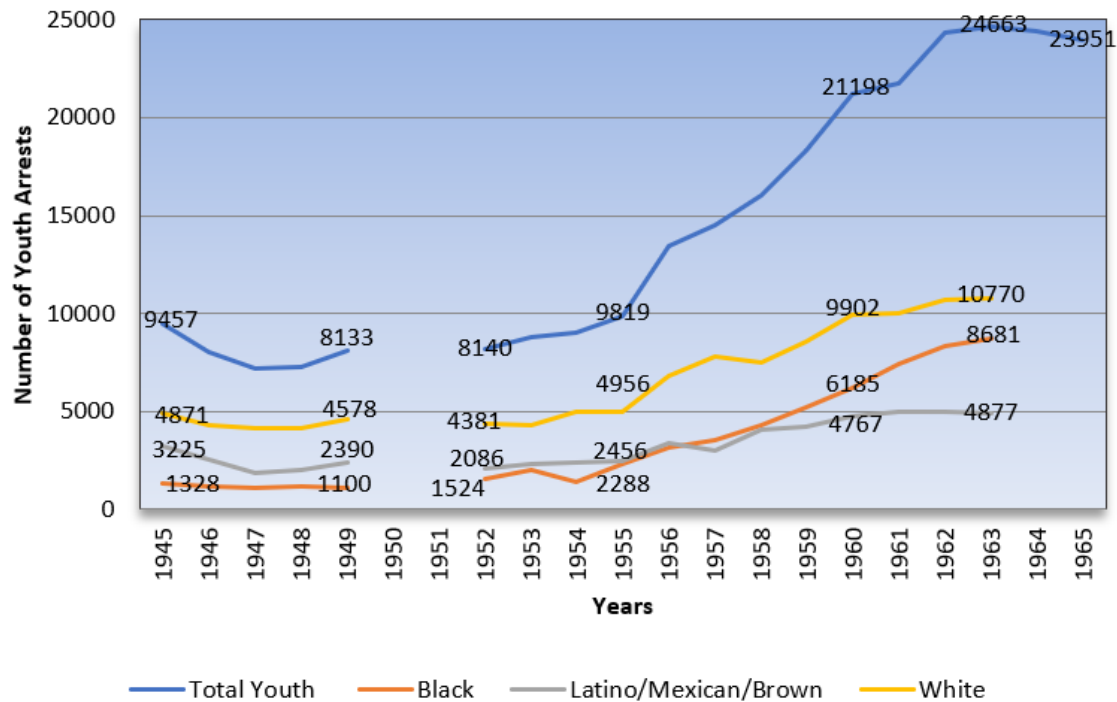
While it must be clearly stated that the number of arrests does not necessarily mean convictions and detention, what it does demonstrate are the ways that young people of color during the 1950s, and especially Black youth and Mexican youth were having disproportional contact, surveillance, data gathering, juvenile court petitions, and juvenile detentions. And this increase contact began to shape the other areas of the carceral state in L.A. with the LACPD as I will show the ways the department’s Group Guidance Program began to concentrate exclusively on Mexican and Black gangs and nearly completely decriminalizing white gangs throughout L.A. during this period. This dual

¹⁹⁹ “Tragedy of Youth Parades in Court,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 8, 1955.

²⁰⁰ I could not locate the records for the years 1950 and 1951 at the time of writing this paper.

²⁰¹ Avila, *Popular Culture*, 30.

LAPD Youth Arrests 1945-1965 (10-17yrs)



(Figure 1: LAPD Youth Arrests 1945-1965)

process of the carceral state defines the parameters of innocence and guilt and thus codified within the juridical standards of civil society. As Lisa Marie Cacho clarifies that the remedy to white innocence is not a strengthening of “color blind” judicial system. Instead, “racist and sexist attitudes and actions have so much power to do so much damage precisely because the presumption of (white) innocence normalizes, in fact, demands violence against black and brown bodies.”²⁰² Cacho comes to this intervention by interrogating the use of the “stand your ground” statute in Florida and how it was used

²⁰² Lisa Marie Cacho, “The Presumption of White Innocence,” *American Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (December 2014): 1089, <https://doi.org/198.188.4.57>.

in the 2013 non-guilty verdict of George Zimmerman in his murder of Trayvon Martin juxtaposed to the brutalizing of Marissa Alexander's twenty-year conviction in 2012 for firing a warning shot into the air. Twenty-first century racialized jurisprudence is based on over a century of post-reconstruction precedent that Khalil Gibran Muhammad sharply names the "condemnation of Blackness." Through the research and publications of northern eugenicist, sociologist, and statisticians, the construction of Black criminality and the white innocent in the late 19th and early twentieth century, produced federal and local racialized policing regimes that could make liberal claims of "law and order" yet continue to be lock-step with an anti-Black apartheid governance. And while both Cacho and Muhammad works looks at the realities of the southern and northern Atlantic there are important connections to how these policing logics manifested in L.A. Probation during this period.

In the mid-1950s the LACPD like the LAPD was becoming professionalized, changing to meet the governance needs of the modern multiethnic metropolitan southland. One of the first steps structural steps was to begin the process of decentralization from a L.A. metro focus to a "area offices" structure in 1954. This meant for the first time ten different local area offices were spread throughout the nearly 4,000 square miles of the county which continued to attract workers into the steel, shipyards, oil, and aerospace manufacturing sectors. In their 1957 Master's Thesis, LA. Probation officer Murray Barnett recalls that this move towards a decentralized Probation coincided with a shift to youth delinquency prevention. He writes that it "has brought probation to the community...there is still a great deal of education and public relations to be

accomplished, and the decentralization has been a tremendous boon in this regard...delinquency prevention has become an increasingly important function of the department.”²⁰³ The shift to decentralize and provide more autonomy to the 11 area offices of the county to conduct adult and juvenile supervision, also brought a new focus on the juvenile probationer. The “delinquent” became a much larger priority of the carceral apparatus of the county and largely from the Metro Area office which focused primarily on L.A.’s central and eastside city limits.

Prior to the decentralization shift the work of adult and juvenile probation was thought to be two separate functions of LACPD and two separate set of policing principals. In fact, the separation in ideological approaches to youth in conflict with the law stemmed from the juridical statues of California which placed adult probation under the Penal Code and juveniles under the Welfare and Institutions Code. While this statute separation created two silos of probationary work in the early twentieth century for L.A., by the 1950s a new consensus on combining the probation approaches of the two was becoming common place.²⁰⁴ Increasing the primacy of youth delinquency with the LACPD continued to grow in the post-war period. One specific way to interrogate this change in focus from adult supervision to youth delinquency is by examining the number of studies conducted by the city and county to address the moral panic around youth crime alongside the Anglo and business sector’s anxieties of the increasing demographic shifts, white flight, and growing civil rights movement in the southland.

²⁰³ Murray Barnett, “The Decentralization of the Los Angeles County Probation Department” (Master’s Thesis, Los Angeles, University of Southern California, 1957), 41–42.

²⁰⁴ Barnett, 51.

One significant study that reveals the growing youth surveillance and detention apparatus of the LACPD is *Measuring Delinquency: A Study of Probation Department Referrals* which analyzes the “big data” computation of the department’s punch-card system on youth referrals. Funded by California’s Rosenberg Foundation, University of Pittsburgh sociologist Joseph W. Eaton and Kenneth Polk of UCLA, the study analyzes the 8,216 juvenile court referrals from 1956. The authors preface their study with the adage that “to the public it often seems that known acts of delinquency, like the national debt, are increasing without an end in sight,” and also note that this comprehensive study was in fact first to focus on the understudied “delinquent of Mexican-American origin” but the authors believed that to understand Mexican delinquency there needed to be a comparison between Black and Anglo youth.²⁰⁵ Additionally while this is an academic study, it was principally funded by private capital. The authors Eaton and Polk acknowledge that the initial idea for this study came from Karl Holton, Chief Probation Officer and Dr. Elisabeth Frank, Director of Research at the LA Welfare Planning Council. While the recommendations and analysis of the data do not specifically represent an official department position by the LACPD, it is an institutional analysis with origins in the city’s carceral bureaucracy. As the author’s note, the Welfare and Planning Commission requested that in 1958 they take responsibility for the study’s completion. This study, its methods, and findings reveal the more influential role that the

²⁰⁵ Joseph W. Eaton and Kenneth Polk, “Measuring Delinquency: A Study of Probation Department Referrals” (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1961), v–vii.

Probation became in L.A.'s youth policing regime and how race, gender, and class intersected with the construction of the juvenile gang.

The study is dependent on data extracted from the recent adoption of a punch-card computing system which inputs twenty different data points of every youth referred to Probation. Started in 1953 as part of Chief Probation Officer Karl Holton's series of reforms to modernize the department, the punch card system was on the cutting edge of juvenile crime profiling. The authors Eaton and Polk comment that while the cards do not contain any specific socio-economic or clinical variables of the youth, "the present machine records in Los Angeles provide a more comprehensive picture of delinquency than can be obtained in most American cities."²⁰⁶ The innovation on youth profiling extended beyond the Probation Department in L.A. The authors note that the county had already been collecting data on youth using another data sharing structure of the Central Juvenile Index (CJI) which "used by police agencies to check on prior records of juveniles that come to their attention."²⁰⁷ The county wide CJI database in 1956 alone had 83,127 cards for juvenile in conflict with law enforcement for infractions or other non-booking contacts with law enforcement. But the CJI was not exclusive to the LAPD, LACSD, or other local city police agencies. In fact, 63% of the 83,127 entries were reported by police and 37% by schools, social and other non-law enforcement bodies. With over one-third of the entries being sent by non-law enforcement agencies, it reveals just how significant L.A. county officials from school administrators to beat cops were

²⁰⁶ Eaton and Polk, 2.

²⁰⁷ Eaton and Polk, 4.

increasingly interconnected and invested in widespread analog data collection of youth. The use of data collection for CJI on young people who had not been formerly charged or prosecuted with a crime before a magistrate of the court shows how L.A. juvenile surveillance is an integral root for what would later be CalGang, established as the intelligence gathering and sharing database for California law enforcement starting in 1988 as part of the STEP Act. While it is true that the “War on Gangs” in L.A. most commonly can be seen with the creation of specialized police units like LAPD’s CRASH Unit and LACSD started its Gang Reporting, Evaluation and Tracking System (GREAT) in the late 1980s and then institutionalized with the passage of STEP, CJI created a blueprint to profile young people without notification and without a criminal conviction requirement to be labeled a gang affiliate, reveals just how deep the roots of the carceral technology and the investment in the “War on Gangs” comes from the 1950s and the key role that Probation had alongside law enforcement.

When interrogating Eaton and Polk’s report, a critical data point is the ways in which by 1956 the number of referrals to LACP were racialized by the sociological consensus of the time. They argue that age and sex are more related to variables of delinquency but that “students of delinquent behavior cannot ignore the fact that skin-color or the use of Spanish in a child’s home are indices of socio-cultural difference which have etiological significance.”²⁰⁸ In their findings they demonstrate how white youth in 1956 are by far the most delinquents referred to Probation with 62.2%, but that Black and Chicana youth “had about three times as high a rate of delinquency per

²⁰⁸ Eaton and Polk, 23.

100,000 population,” with delinquent referrals for Chicanxs were 21.4% and Black youth were 14.1%.²⁰⁹ The authors’ analysis of the type of criminal acts that youth were referred to Probation Department is also very revealing of the racialized targeting done by law enforcement and other referral organizations. Of the 604 referrals for “Bodily Harm,” Black youth were overrepresented with 17.1%, with Mexican American youth at 12.5% and Anglo-white’s at 5.4%. Specifically, the biggest discrepancy between youth within this group of offenses was for Assault and Battery referrals with male Black youth being 11.4%, Mexican Americans at 8.2%, and White at 2.7%. For male Chicanx youth the largest discrepancy for offense was under the section called “Human Addictions” and specifically with referrals for Narcotics. White youth and Black youth were relatively identical for their percentage of offenses in this category at 4.3% and 4.2% respectively. However, for Mexican youth their highest non-traffic related referral to the court was the Narcotics offense with 14.1%. For girls a different yet related set of disproportionalities based on race were also present in the statistics. In interrogating the largest category of types of offense, “Human Addiction” was over one-third all referrals for women with 618 compared to 66 for body harm and 181 for Property. Within this category the “Illegitimate Sex Relations” was highly disproportionate with the largest category falling under Black girls with 47.5% while Anglo-white girls had 27.5%, and Mexican American girls were at 25.8%.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Eaton and Polk, 24.

²¹⁰ Eaton and Polk, 29.

The disparity between Black and Chicana youth to their white counterparts in the statistical analysis call for a more thorough interrogation on what crime statistics actually tell us. As a measuring tool what they reveal to the researcher is the priorities of policing and enforcement policies much more than any measure of inherent criminal or “anti-social” dispossession of the young people. In his landmark text *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity*, Edward Escobar critically engages this specific question on statistical data. In it he combs through the carceral archives and specifically the use of arrest statistics of law enforcement during the Zoot Suit Riots. Escobar engages the work of two pioneers in the field of U.S. criminology, Edwin H. Sutherland and Donald R. Cressey whose names are associated with prestigious awards in the field of criminology to this day. Using their text *Principles of Criminology*, which was first published in 1934, Escobar troubles the commonsense interpretation of the accuracy and limits of the using arrest statistics. He quotes both Sutherland and Cressey on the matter in which they write, “The statistics about crime and delinquency are probably the most unreliable and most difficult of all social statistics. It is impossible to determine with accuracy the amount of crime in any given jurisdiction...at any given time. Some behaviors labeled, delinquency or crime, by one observer but not by another. Obviously, a large proportion of all violations goes undetected. Other crimes are detected but not reported, and still other are reported but not officially recorded.”²¹¹ Therefore it can be understood that the delinquency statistics like those that Probation was using in their 1956 study, even with the advancements made in their card-catalog computing system, provided only a partial

²¹¹ Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity*, 121.

picture of the types of crimes and which communities were actually committing more acts of crime. If these statistics are in fact understood as unreliable in understanding the total amount of crime in a given geography, then what can these statistics actually reveal? Escobar follows up this statement with an intervention by Marxist sociologist Richard Quinney. Working from the framework of Sutherland and Cressy, Quinney argues that, “while arrests statistics give only an indication of the extent of crime, they also ‘reflect the policies and behaviors of the agencies administering criminal law...(they are) a mixture of the incidence of criminality and the administration of criminal law.’”²¹² Statistics and especially crime statistics in the post-war Welfare-Warfare state apparatus of L.A. were critical tools for validating the bureaucratic reach of social control. With the influx of Black, Asian, rural whites, and expanding Mexican residents, which was accompanied by stronger demands to end the sunshine racial apartheid in especially housing, jobs, civic representation, and policing abuse, the adopting statistical analysis for law enforcement and probation which were refined after WWII were part of the what Naomi Murakawa names as the regime of “liberal law-and-order.” It was as Murakawa argues a particular response by the state to reinforce “black criminality, to fuel carceral state-building, and to fortify the legitimacy of the carceral state,” beginning in the immediate postwar period.²¹³ A central component of this strategy was to respond to the “lawless” violence of anti-Black vigilante terror, especially the use of lynching, by investing in more professionalizing of police. The employment of statistics was a critical component of the

²¹² Escobar, 121–22.

²¹³ Murakawa, *The First Civil Right*, 13.

state's intellectual wing (academia) to ward off the scathing criticisms of police terror by Puerto Rican, Mexican, and especially Black peoples outside of the South. Additionally it was a tactic to thwart the efforts by major civil rights organizations like the NAACP, Urban League, LULAC and the most scathing indictment brought to the United Nations by the Civil Rights Congress in their 1951 petition *We Charge Genocide*. While the use of statistics was a method to deflect criticism of class, raced, and gendered logics of U.S. policing, it was also utilized by the L.A. Probation department criminology collaborators to further displace the internal critique within the academy, especially by Black sociologist, of the inherent subjectivity of using these statistics in furthering the mythology of racialized and especially Black criminality.

This truism of criminal statistics is a central argument in the critical historical work *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, Khalil Gibran Muhammad provides in great detail the ways the first criminology schools and the growth of sociology in the late nineteenth century in the U.S. has deep roots in the use of criminal theory informed by the anti-Black apartheid social reality that was crafted in the aftermath of the reconstruction with the compromise of the 1877. Muhammad argues that the use of statistics began to legitimize the ways in which anti-Black terror was used in the South and later in the North, to demonstrate that reasons that policing of Black suspects and the disproportionate arrest rates in Black communities provided the objective proof that the systemic denial of Black citizenship was based on the eugenic logic of Black inferiority due to the abrupt end/reform of chattel slavery. Muhammad argues that that these statistics would usher in the age of Jim Crow through

the lens of the academy's "objectivism".²¹⁴ Muhammad focuses on the Northern centers of Black migrations, specifically New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago. By the 1920s and 1930s a paradigm shifts from two separate tracks of policing white racism and internal policing of Black "criminals" became central. He argues that during this period the criminological turn was to focus on "writing crime into class" where structural inequality became the focal point for critique, specifically police racism and selective policing practices which allowed for vice business and criminal syndicate organizations to exist while arresting and brutalizing the proprietors of the business, largely young Black peoples.²¹⁵ As a response to this type of targeted and racially and class based discretionary policing, Muhammad uses the 1921 sociological study *The Negro in Chicago* by Black sociologist Charles S. Johnson and a 1930 address to the Society of Negro Life and History by University of Buffalo criminologist Nathaniel Cantor as some of the earliest serious critiques on the use of crime statistics by both law enforcement agencies and scholars of crime. The both emphatically state that national crime statistics were useless in understanding or addressing crime, but instead were example of anti-Black violence committed by police and harsh sentences by judges.²¹⁶ While a growing number of Black sociologists and Black counter-hegemonic organic intellectuals were joined by some in the white sociological community to defend the deep rooted anti-Black racism in policing and statistical analysis, the "common sense" of using arrest records as

²¹⁴ Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 29–30.

²¹⁵ Muhammad, 227.

²¹⁶ Muhammad, 240–43.

objective indicators of inherent Black criminality continued to maintain a foothold from the 1930s to the middle of the 1950s, and arguably are still employed today.²¹⁷

By the time L.A. Probation was financing the study of delinquency in the mid-1950s, the mainstream sociological view of disproportionate arrest data for Black, and in the L.A. geography both Black and Chicaxs, arrest records were a weapon of the Southern Dixiecrat strategy to obfuscate structural white supremacy and the violence of racial capitalist order. The strategy was used to quantitatively argue the dangers of enforcing federally mandated civil rights legislation, especially the desegregation of public institutions. While race liberals in Congress viewed civil rights legislation to focus racism as individual acts rather than structural, “race conservatives and southern Democrats (argued) civil rights liberalization was criminogenic.”²¹⁸ Most famously in July 1956 eighty-three southern members of Congress penned “Warning of Grave Dangers” to accompany the infamously named “Southern Manifesto” which was produced just a few months earlier. Like the “Manifesto”, their goal was to try and stop the furthering of the *Brown v. Board* decision of 1954 and prevent the passage of the 1956 Civil Rights Bill which eventually was passed the following year.²¹⁹ Arguments made in the “Warnings” paper included focusing on the arrest rates of Black peoples for felonies and or violent misdemeanors of Northern cities compared the lower rates in the former confederacy to show how “law-and-order” was a virtuous outcome of segregation

²¹⁷ Deidre O’Neill and Bill Wayne, “On Intellectuals,” Historical Materialism, October 8, 2017, <https://www.historicalmaterialism.org/blog/intellectuals>.

²¹⁸ Murakawa, *The First Civil Right*, 57.

²¹⁹ Justin Driver, “Supremacies and the Southern Manifesto,” *Texas Law Review* 92 (2014): 1084–85.

and anti-Black social order of the South. This Dixiecrat argument for utilizing crimes statistics to demonstrate the dangers to civil society of integration was so potent, that Mississippi Senator John Eastland submitted into the Congressional record in 1960 a breakdown of the incarceration rates of Black and white populations in fourteen Northern and Western states compared with eleven Southern states.²²⁰ In Eastland's analysis he used the slightly lower statistics of Black and white arrest rates, even if they still showed the disproportionate arrest records of Black southerners compared to white, as "objective" proof of the need to maintain de facto apartheid for the sake of southern white society. It is this deployment of crime statistics in service of white supremacy, which in this case as in many instances are specially using arrest or conviction rates, that reveals the insidious ways the "hard numbers" of crime during the 1950s were critical part of the state's reproduction of racialized law-and-order and the targeting of youth of color.

L.A. Probation along with the various state and private architects of the "War on Youth" used the statistics of L.A.'s rapidly changing demographics and increasing juvenile court petitions sent overwhelmingly by county law enforcement officials to push for an unprecedented growth in the powers of the office of the Probation Chief and massive youth detention facility expansion. The 1950s was a critical turning point in increasing the role that Probation would impact on the lives of young people in conflict with the law and specifically expanding the narratives and materials resources focused on racialized juvenile gangs as the crux of crime problem. One of the most concrete

²²⁰ Murakawa, *The First Civil Right*, 61.

examples of this was the massive expansion of publicly funded juvenile detention facilities which served either as sites of in-county incarceration through their camp system or as temporary transfer centers which were juvenile halls for which to hold youth until they transfer to either the CYA or into the state hospital system. In 1955 Probation oversaw a total of six juvenile camps, one girl's school, and one juvenile hall. By 1965 the number of camps would more than double to fourteen junior and senior youth camps, four juvenile halls, and one replaced girl's school. Overall the investment in detention services increased from \$1.9 million to just over \$10.6 million in annual spending on juvenile detention services.²²¹ This massive increase of over 450% in detention spending was during a period of continual expanding L.A. county population. While the city of L.A. continued to grapple with a postwar housing shortage especially of increasing segregated Black communities in South Central and Watts, a type a carceral suburban boom in the form of juvenile detention facilities was taking place. A transforming geography of white flight via finance and real estate capital was taking place while county public funds were also spreading to the environs of the county as well in the form of the construction of the juvenile forestry camps.

The process of constructing a juvenile carceral landscape began in earnest in November of 1956, when the County voters passed the Juvenile Detention Bond Proposition A. This bond measure supported by "all four major newspapers...the Los Angeles Chamber of Commers, The Los Angeles Realty Board, and the Probation

²²¹ Cresap, McCormick, and Paget Management Consultants, "Los Angeles County Probation Management Survey" (Los Angeles, April 16, 1965), 2.

Committee” granted over fifteen million dollars to publicly fund the expansion of the juvenile hall and juvenile camps under the jurisdiction of the County.²²² Probation Chief Holton and civilian advisory Probation Committee promoted the construction bond as a significant measure to meet the needs of the expanding county population by “one million in four years” and the rising juvenile court petitions being submitted by law enforcement and to a lesser extent by school and social service officials.²²³ Specifically, Holton and the committee pitched to voters that the bond would replace the deteriorating girls El Retiro School for a “modern structure” school for girls, completion of a second girls center, and doubling the number of boy’s detention camps from six to twelve.²²⁴ The Citizen’s Committee for Proposition A was endorsed by a cadre of L.A.’s carceral boosters including judges, law enforcement, and chaired by James E. Ludlam who was attorney and at the time general counsel for the California Hospital Association. The proposal for votes to approve expanding juvenile detention facilities was one of four County measures on the packed L.A. County ballot and passed with eighty-percent of voters in favor of the proposition, the highest “yes” votes of any of the county’s measures.²²⁵ The overwhelming support of public spending on expanding youth caging facilities while not unique at the time of increased infrastructure spending in the post-war military Keynesian Golden State, is one of the key infrastructure projects. From the onset youth corrections, which was formalized in 1941 under the California Youth Corrections

²²² “Youth Needs Stressed by Boy’s Crime Record: Overcrowding of Juvenile Hall Described in Pearly to Urge Proposition A Support,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 23, 1956.

²²³ “Area PTA Supports Bond Issue,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 26, 1956.

²²⁴ “New Facility for Girls Slated in Proposition,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 29, 1956.

²²⁵ Benjamin S. Hite, “Results of the Official Canvass of General Election State Measure, County Questions, Special Municipal Question” (County of Los Angeles, November 6, 1956), 11.

Authority Act, began to expand the states three youth juvenile detention facilities and transfer youth from state prisons and county jails into converted military camps by 1944. And by 1956 the CYA had constructed and opened twelve different forestry camps, detentions schools, and reception centers throughout the state.²²⁶ With this history of massive construction in the context, Proposition A was not only popular but a critical part of the growing post-war youth policing regime that included the mass growth juvenile detention facility that was expanding throughout the state. A confluence of social forces including the moral panics around youth crime, civil rights and anti-communist panic, an emerging set of scholars and expanding funding for an “L.A. School” of youth criminology, surplus military camps in the L.A. environs, and increased state capital investment into local youth detention sites through changes in the Welfare code, all worked in concert for the imperatives of growing prison regime which used Probation as a key conduit to in engage in low-intensity warfare against racialized/criminalized youth.

²²⁶ “The History of the Juvenile Justice Division” California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, <https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/juvenile-justice/history/>

Chapter Three

“Fighting the Vietcong”:

Watts, Counterinsurgency, and the Permanent War on Youth “Gangs”

In less than four months after the Watts Riot, California Governor Edmund G. Brown’s commissioned a research team to assess the causes of the rebellion and how to prevent future uprising in California through an “objective and dispassionate study of the Los Angeles riots.” The final product was entitled “Violence in the City—An End or a Beginning?” Governor Brown, a former “tough on crime” city attorney in San Francisco appointed John A. McCone as the head of the commission. McCone was a former executive in California wartime shipbuilding industry which positioned him as part of the California business class. He then served as director of the CIA from 1961 until April 1965 and was darling of the conservative Cold War establishment.²²⁷ The report is imbued within liberal anti-Black racism, the social pathology of Black families, and shows the influence of McCone’s own counterinsurgency experience in his leadership in covert U.S. imperialism operations against the Black masses in Panama and the Dominican Republic, were riddled throughout the report.²²⁸ “Violence in the City” was intended by Governor Brown to put an “end” to any potential credence to the demands of Black Californians at large and specifically to Black L.A. To erase any of the growing insurgent or political analysis of those that took to the streets in response to the quotidian

²²⁷ Max Felker-Kantor, *Policing Los Angeles: Race, Resistance, and the Rise of the LAPD* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 34.

²²⁸ Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Charlottesville, VA: Da Capo Press, 1997), 151.

police terror, substandard housing, redlining, job discrimination, and political subordination to a white liberal capitalist power structure locally and in the state. Watts in the post World War II era began to shift from swampy farmland to a particular degraded Black colony within larger Black South Central. By 1965 Watts was popularly maligned intra-communally by many Black Angelinos in the more established and “upstanding” petite-bourgeois Black professional class on Central Ave and other older established Black neighborhoods. This was often done through rhetorical disparaging of Watts residents as recent arrivals from the South as opposed to more the established metropolitan Black residents. But Watts also was a materially subjugated area of the city as adult residents were part of the concentrated super-exploited class of low wage Black workers and unemployed adults which at the time of the riot contributed to an over forty percent family poverty rate in the two-square miles of South Central at the time of the uprising.²²⁹

The McCone Commission’s racial and state biases were severely criticized by other sociologist and think tanks that were concerned with the growing inequality in L.A. Almost immediately several other reports point out the deficiencies in the methodology and conclusions of the Governor’s official report. These included even conservative sources like the 1966 survey of the L.A. Riots by U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity and the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. Yet even with these criticisms, the McCone commission’s conclusions were the blueprint for

²²⁹ Horne, 50–53; Laura Pulido, *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left: Radical Activism in Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 49.

how L.A. youth policing regime would respond. The report centered on the lawlessness and leadership of a small sector of the Black community as opposed to popular supported uprising based on historical and current material conditions. The blame was squarely on new arrival Black migrants, Black youth gangs, and Black nationalist tendencies like the Nation of Islam which had already been targeted by the FBI's Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO) as early as 1958.²³⁰ By excavating the nexus of local policing forces which ramped up the hegemonic discourse on Black and Chicano gang panic in the context of an anti-Black settler outpost that is L.A., this chapter reveals the discursive history of the beginnings of a youth counterinsurgency complex via a racialized "War on Gangs."

At the center of the McCone commission's ire was what they described as the gang element. While not one individual gang was named in the report to have been found culpable, nor to have the capacity or foresight to create a "master plan" for burning and looting the non-Black owned business sector, the report instead proposed a vague catch-all analysis. It stated that no one Watts gang could be blamed but "rather it appears to have been the work of several gangs, with membership of young men ranging in age from 14-35 years."²³¹ These conclusions were in step with McCone's national intelligence sensibilities but also the local policing *intelligentsia* as was formed in the wake of Zoot Suit Riot. The twenty years of youth gang hysteria in L.A. intersected in new ways in the wake of Watts at a time when simultaneously at the federal level the FBI led by J. Edgar

²³⁰ Ivan Greenburg, *Surveillance in America: Critical Analysis of the FBI, 1920 to the Present* (New York: Lexington Books, 2012), 115–16.

²³¹ John A. McCone, "Violence in the City--An End or a Beginning" (Sacramento: Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, December 2, 1965), 23.

Hoover was in an all-out assault against the Black (Civil Rights) and Red (Communist) menaces, let alone those who embodied both during a time of an escalating war in Vietnam. The Watts Uprising was nearly one-year to the day from the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution which thrust the U.S. overtly into Vietnam.. During the riot, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that Chief William Parker of the LAPD, himself a devote anti-communist and veteran of World War II, had stated that trying to quell the riot was like “fighting the Vietcong.”²³² And it was not lost on Parker nor the larger police regime that just a few months earlier the United States Airforce had just completed the longest sustained aerial bombing campaign in world history against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.²³³ Parker and the drafters of the McCone commission were actively engaged in attempting to obfuscate the material conditions of racial capitalism and anti-Black apartheid that were constitutive of the shape and timing of the Watts uprising. The comparisons to U.S. military fighting the North Viet Minh and the various cadres of South Vietnamese nationalist to that of the conditions of the LAPD and Black Angelinos in Watts is telling.. The centering of Black Street organizations as counterinsurgents to the LAPD’s imperial occupiers in Watts/Saigon erases the “beautiful fiction,” as Mark Neocleous argues, of the militarization of police thesis. Parker and the LAPD were not promoting or revealing a novel transformation to a military mindset against Black youth street organizations. They were merely revealing more nakedly something that Black, Chicax, poor, labor radicals, and other “enemies” of L.A.’s ruling class have understood, that “police

²³² Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s*, 64.

²³³ Lloyd C. Gardner, “Lyndon Johnson and the Bombing of Vietnam: Politics and Military Choices,” in *The Columbia History of the Vietnam War*, ed. David L. Anderson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 168–90.

power...is first and foremost a weapon of the state.”²³⁴ And just as in World War II the nation-state was at war both abroad and at home during the duration of the Cold War.

This chapter interrogates the construction and deployment of the “Black juvenile internal enemy” by L.A.’s policing regime in the wake of the Watts uprising. While the LAPD wielded influence in shaping both racialized hegemonic discourse and brute force policy of criminalizing Black street organizations, other organizations of the police regime like the LACPD, juvenile gang researchers, and the *L.A. Times* created what I argue as a permanent Black youth enemy combatant in the minds of the law enforcement, the political wings of the local ruling class, and the larger L.A. population. In post-Watts L.A., youth policing became hyper focused on surveilling, arresting, and neutralizing a perceived future Black uprising led in part by Black youth. This ideology was latest development of the L.A. youth policing regime and was also responding to the slow yet expanding structural abandonment march of the shrinking manufacturing sector in South Central and South East L.A. While starting slowing in the 1960s, L.A.’s deindustrialization expediated after Tom Bradley’s election in 1973, with the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, and the prevailing contradictions of L.A.’s Black communities redlined in districts that were according to the McCone Commission somehow simultaneously “not urban gems, neither are they slums.”²³⁵ Unlike the Northeast and Midwest cramped tenement projects, L.A.’s detached single family homes style gave architectural cover to the growing freeway barricaded ghettos and barrios in South

²³⁴ Neocleous, *A Critical Theory of Police Power*, 7.

²³⁵ McCone, “Violence in the City--An End or a Beginning,” 3.

Central and East L.A. During the 1960s civic organizations, a small group of liberal politicians, and radical collectives began to grow, and some received local funding especially as Johnson's War on Poverty programs began to expand into L.A.²³⁶ But while some acknowledgement of structural inequality could be tolerated, to highlight the economic apartheid of L.A.'s largest non-white racialized community of South Central needed to be downplayed. This was accomplished in part by the equal parts "cultural of poverty" thesis which demonized Black motherhood and youth policing regime's focus on Black gangs.²³⁷ These two of the strongest reactionary arguments from both liberals and conservatives served as an essential "data-driven" obfuscation of the racial, class, gender, and the settler colonial imposition of L.A.'s political economy. This imposition instead as Elizabeth Hinton argues buttressed the Johnson Administration and "Moynihan's claims introduced Black family life into the crime control equation."²³⁸ The manufacturing of what the LAPD and the LACPD often referred to as the "hardcore" juvenile gang member was an essential node in the federal and local administration of the War on Poverty and the War on Crime that would dominate politics in during the late 1960s.

Prior to World War II California's Southland was remarked by some Black commentators as being demonstrably different for Black social life and aspirations of economic equality without the blaring specter of Southern Jim Crow evisceration through

²³⁶ Robert Bauman, *Race and the War on Poverty: From Watts to East L.A.* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 6–8.

²³⁷ Alex L. Swan, "A Methodological Critique of the Moynihan Report," *The Black Scholar* 5, no. 9 (1974): 18–24; Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016), 57–62.

²³⁸ Hinton, *From the War on Poverty*, 61.

housing, employment, and civic apartheid. Considering the stark realities of the Southern and Northern Jim Crow, W.E.B DuBois in his first visit to Los Angeles' Black Central Avenue remarked in the NAACP's *The Crisis* at both the "sharply drawn" color line in L.A. and the unique situation of Black housing. He observed "They are without doubt the most beautifully housed group of colored people in the United States."²³⁹ As Black migration increased to L.A. many Black families searched for housing outside the red-lined Central Avenue neighborhood from the 1930s onward, Black socioeconomic life became much closer with the rest of the West in having increased rates of poverty, segregated unions, and no Black city council members until Gilbert Lindsay and former LAPD officer and future Mayor of L.A. Tom Bradley were elected in 1962. To obscure the growing contradictions of racial capitalism, especially in the post WWII era, the failures of local and national legislative relief to overturn Jim Crow apartheid were put on display to the world during the Watts Rebellion. The contradictions were abounded within L.A.'s liberal modern metropolis aesthetics whose civic boosters boasted a decade of innovative highway construction, corporatized amusement destinations, and growing suburban housing tracks at the cost of Black, Chicanx, and Asian financial stability to varying degrees yet all below that of Anglos.²⁴⁰

The discursive history of the post-WWII delinquency policing investment, research, and hegemonic discourse, which I have described in the previous two chapters,

²³⁹ Darnell Hunt and Ana-Christina Ramón, eds., *Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 12.

²⁴⁰ Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*, 224–30; See the comparison to medium family income and housing values between Anglos, Black, Chicanx, and Japanese households Pulido, *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left: Radical Activism in Los Angeles*, 54–55.

set the stage for the post-Watts L.A. policing regime necessarily to name a permanent Black insurgency in the form of gangs as the reason to expand police power. A growing nationwide and local Black radical militancy began to surge in the city and country through various tendencies of the Civil Rights Movement which engaged in civil disobedience, armed self-defense, and labor militancy. Unique to the L.A. landscape was the post-Watts youth policing regime in L.A. which was designed off decades of studies of the “Mexican juvenile gang.” Drawing from this archive of Mexican delinquency studies and policing, L.A.’s youth policing regime was set to compare and contrast the Chicano *barrio* to the Black “ghetto.” The executives of the police regime (LAPD, LACPD, City Council, and their academic researchers) attempted to further mask the dire conditions of poverty and discrimination towards Black Angelinos by arguing that there were similar conditions in East L.A., but that Mexican youth did not engage in a riot in the summer of 1965. But this comparison was not meant to understand the histories of anti-Black racism and the legacies of chattel slavery on the conditions in Watts or South Central at large, but instead used to set apart the Black working class youth as a unique risk to the legitimacy of state. Their “anti-social behavior” needed to be quelled. And one of the many responses that state chose based on these racialized assumptions was to circumvent the mounting social crisis of Black rebellion that would only increase into the late 1960s and early 1970s in L.A. and nationally but promoting the “criminal gang” as the instigator for the Uprising. As one of many private and public responses to Watts, the L.A. youth policing regime manufactured a permanent Black youth gang figure which would be wielded against Black youth social clubs in South Central, used to surveil

young Black activists, and attempted to drive a deeper ideological wedge between the liberal Black elite and the masses of poor working-class Black Angelinos.

The “condemnation of Blackness” wielded against Black youth participating in or just adjacent to street social clubs is not something that was invented in L.A. Nor was it solely part of the federal buildup of the war on crime which defined the Johnson Administration.²⁴¹ What this chapter argues is that in the L.A. youth policing regime in 1965 concentrated its’ continuum of counterinsurgency towards South Central L.A.’s Black youth social clubs as part of the deepening crisis of racial capitalism as unemployment, residential segregation, poverty, and police occupation continued in spite of the L.A.’s own mythology of not having Southern *de jure* segregation nor Northern Black slums. After two decades of white flight (people and capital) out of the city’s previously mixed ethnic white neighborhoods along the westside of the Alameda corridor, combined with the dismantling of the Pacific Electric Street Car (which had a critical transportation hub in Watts) starting in the 1940s, the conditions of Black segregated abandonment were consistently met with political struggle in the forms of both established and nascent forms of resistance.²⁴² Charlotta Bass and *The California Eagle* for example, which had started publishing in 1879 until she took over as editor in 1912, was a progressive daily Black newspaper published from the Central Ave corridor. They had always promoted the civil rights and social cohesion of Black communities in

²⁴¹ For a thorough historical analysis of the use of sociology and crime statistics to tie Blackness to crime starting in the late 19th century see Muhammad, *Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*.

²⁴² For more on the demise of the Pacific Electric see Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*, 192–97.

L.A. and the U.S. By the 1940s the paper's political sections became increasingly supportive of Black radical and Black communists' organization like the Civil Rights Organization, Progressive Party, and individual Black socialists like Paul Robeson.²⁴³ By the late 1950s and early 1960s Black South L.A. had become increasingly a space for political action in the spectrum of Black national politics including liberal integration, labor rights, cultural nationalism, and socialism.²⁴⁴ And with each of these iterations the LAPD monitored the movements of these organizations either overtly with liaisons within the community relations approach or outright surveillance. For example, in 1957 the L.A. Mosque No. 27 of the Nation of Islam became embroiled in surveillance, brutality, and then eventual homicide in 1962 when the LAPD shot six members and killed Ronald Stokes.²⁴⁵ These overt actions of police harassment did not deter daily acts of resistance to the anti-Black racial capitalist social order of the city with desegregation pickets in front of department stores, labor strikes, and "pioneering" actions by Black homebuyers attempting to break through the racially restrictive covenants that dominated the Southern California landscape. It was within this climate of growing mass of resistance, the continual anti-Black racial discrimination in the growing aerospace manufacturing industry, as well as deepening repression against Black progressive action

²⁴³ Regina Freer, "L.A. Race Woman: Charlotta Bass and the Complexities of Black Political Development in Los Angeles," *American Quarterly* 56, no. 3 (September 2004): 607–32; Marne L. Campbell, *The Making of Black Los Angeles: Class, Gender, and Community 1850-1917* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 69–108.

²⁴⁴ There is an increasing amount of research that details the history of the political spectrum of Black politics before from the WWII to 1965 including Widener, *Black Arts West: Culture and Struggle in Postwar Los Angeles*; Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Josh Sides, "'You Understand My Condition': The Civil Rights Congress in the Los Angeles African American Community, 1946-1952," *Pacific Historical Review* 67, no. 2 (May 1998): 233–57.

²⁴⁵ Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s*, 122–26.

that dared to challenge the palm trees and sunshine narrative of L.A. that the McCone commission would attempt to preserve. As noted earlier, the Black families of Watts had over a forty percent poverty rate at the time of the Uprising. Additionally the crisis of legitimacy for the U.S. state that was attempting to win the propaganda struggle of the Cold War while seven northern cities burned in the summer of 1964 should be understood as part the landscape for how the McCone commission and the city's policing regime response to Watts. The ruling class, the white middle class, and with a gesture to appeal to the Black middle class, the McCone commission placed Black youth gang figure in opposition to both social order and racial uplift.

Imbued within the structuring order of U.S. racial capitalism, anti-Black and anti-poor logics seek out a “criminal element” to be in contradistinction of the state, its agents, and the ruling class during a time of local and national crisis of the impending collapse of *de jure* apartheid and an escalating war against the Vietnamese liberation forces that already defeated the French imperialist empire which was rapidly declining in Southeast Asia and Africa. In L.A., the policing regime used the findings by the McCone Commission to obfuscate the material realities of Black South Central L.A., which in 1965 is where 40% of all Black residents in L.A. County lived, that their exploration and economic misery is not because they are positioned as a superexploited class.²⁴⁶ Rather the hegemonic narrative being crafted by the policing regime, in gendered and racialized

²⁴⁶ Additionally, the census data shows that 81% of South Central residents were Black in 1965 California Fair Employment Practice Commission, “Negroes and Mexican Americans in South and East Los Angeles: Changes Between 1960 and 1965 in Population, Employment, Income, Family Status; An Analysis of a Special U.S. Census Survey of November 1965” (San Francisco: California Department of Industrial Relations, July 1966), 10.

ways, is that the larger lumpen Black youth “criminal element” is impeding the progress of Black Angelinos through their engagement in rioting and anti-social behavior and must be the changed through technologies of the youth policing regime, i.e. surveillance, probation, incarceration, behavior modification in schools, and other discipling institutions. By unraveling the discursive history of criminalization of Black youth via Black youth street organizations by the L.A. youth policing regime, this chapter reveals a counter-hegemonic understanding of the start of L.A.’s “War on Gangs” as a particular tactic of class war against South Central’s Black underclass in the wake of the Watts rebellion.²⁴⁷

McCone and Criminalizing a Generation

Governor’s Edmund G. Brown’s McCone Commission produced “Violence in the City” as an analysis that towed the line of twenty years of L.A.’s homegrown delinquency policing regime. A key methodology of the study was to conduct interviews with selected “sworn witnesses,” collect 10,000 surveys, as well as collect “detailed interviews of several hundred witnesses, not only in Los Angeles, but also in other cities throughout the United States...”²⁴⁸ Already meeting the needs of LAPD Chief Parker’s narrative in centering Black youth and especially Black juvenile gangs, along with communist, subversives, and vice as threatening the “Thin Blue Line” the Commission report actively ignored the testimonies of many the Black interviewees. Many of the

²⁴⁷ Here I am thinking with Osuna’s analysis of Mexico’s Drug War as class warfare that is raced and gendered in a neoliberal political economy. During this period it is the crisis of the Keynesian Welfare-Warfare state. Osuna, “Securing Manifest Destiny: Mexico’s War on Drugs, Crisis of Legitimacy, and Global Capitalism.”

²⁴⁸ McCone, “Violence in the City--An End or a Beginning,” 100.

Black professionals and other residents who provided testimonies of the long history of LAPD violence and while not openly participating were “sympathetic” of the conditions that created the insurrectionary thrust of the uprising, yet these sentiments were not highlighted in the final report of “Violence in the City.”²⁴⁹ But the public-facing McCone Commission was not intended to take an honest assessment but instead to uphold the narratives of the state by arguing that a small segment of Black gang youth in an otherwise docile Black community were the culprits of the uprising. A contemporary at the time, Robert M. Fogelson argued in 1967 that the data and analysis conducted by other groups to analyze the conditions that sparked the Watts Rebellion including the California Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Bayard Rustin’s “The Watts ‘Manifesto,’” and contemporary scholars Robert Blauner and Harry Scoble concluded at least in part the central role that a history of police harassment and failures of the liberal welfare state had in Watts. Each of these reports instead proposed that in fact it was a popular uprising in the South Central community. In analyzing the various conclusions that were much stronger critiques of the material realities of Watts, as opposed to the Black pathologizing and push for investment in policing in the McCone Commission findings, Fogelson concludes in part that “future riots can be prevented only by transforming the southcentral ghetto, not simply by elevating the riffraff(sic)—a recommendation which is highly irresponsible and downright dangerous when exploited, as it was by the McCone Commission, to obscure the legitimate grievances of Los

²⁴⁹ Robert M. Fogelson, “White on Black: A Critique of the McCone Commission Report of the Los Angeles Riots,” *Political Science Quarterly* 82, no. 3 (September 1967): 344, <https://doi.org/198.188.4.57>.

Angeles' Negroes(sic).²⁵⁰ The elevating of “riffraff” was McCone’s conclusion that that it was a small segment of Black rioters led by “several gangs” that agitated and inflamed the riot beyond the control of the LAPD.²⁵¹ However, the obscuring of legitimate grievances and the report’s erasure of Black resident testimony does not represent a miscarriage of justice by the McCone Commission nor of Parker’s LAPD. Instead, if we take seriously the regime(s) of power and the material conditions of Black youth in particular in South Central in the early 1960s, the McCone Commission’s conclusions were just a continuation of the over twenty-years of development of L.A. police “common sense.” Centered in a carceral logic, the Commission racialized Black “juvenile gangs” beyond just anti-social behavior but placed them as an insurgent cadre of the Black underclass that engaged in guerilla tactics with Molotov cocktails during the Watts Uprising. Gerald Horne argues that in fact anti-worker and anti-radical subversion tactics conducted by LAPD’s Red Squad, FBI, California Senate Factfinding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities (SUAC), and internal purging of socialist and communist by group members like the NAACP was responsible for eliminating radical left organizations in South Central by 1965 which left a vacuum of radical political organization to even possibly organize a labor or working-class riot.²⁵² The goal of the commission was not to transform Watts and greater South Central but to maintain law and order for the preservation of apartheid policies in housing, employment, and education. The uprising was not only a threat to property, but also possible rupture in the

²⁵⁰ Fogelson, 347.

²⁵¹ McCone, “Violence in the City--An End or a Beginning,” 23.

²⁵² Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s*, 11–12.

political landscape by exposing the propaganda of the state that argued for Watts and the communities of South Central being content with the conditions of urban L.A. as opposed to Southern Jim Crow.

This last point on propaganda is critical for understanding how the L.A. youth policing regime positioned racialized street organizations as gangs as the culprits for Watts as imbued by the reality of U.S. Cold War occupation. As George Creel, the head of the Committee on Public Information during World War I, arguably one of the key architects of the U.S. state propaganda, stated that in WWI not only was there a struggle on the battlefield but a struggle in popular opinion. He writes, “Back of the firing-line, back of armies and navies...another struggle waged with the same intensity...It was the fight the *minds of men* for the ‘conquest of their convictions.’”²⁵³ At the time of the Watts Rebellion, the U.S. was actively engaging in propaganda campaign in South Vietnam through the CIA, U.S. military, and their proxies during and after the Ngo Dinh Diem presidency. Scholars have concluded that a key factor for U.S. sending formal military troops into Vietnam was predicated on the fabrication of false aggression from the Vietminh towards U.S. warships during the so called “Gulf of Tonkin Incident.” For the Johnson Administration, this was the spark that officially started a military war of aggression after the failed attempts at covert imperialist destabilization of the Vietnamese nationalist forces.²⁵⁴ As mentioned at the start of this chapter, John A. McCone prior to

²⁵³ George Creel, *How We Advertised America* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1920), 8.

²⁵⁴ Chad W. Seagren and David R. Henderson, “Why We Fight: A Study of U.S. Government War-Making Propaganda,” *The Independent Review* 23, no. No. 1 (Summer 2018): 76–78, <https://doi.org/198.188.4.57>.

leading the Governor's commission was President Kennedy's CIA director. As part of his tenure he led intense covert and destabilizing campaigns against Cuba under Operation MONGOOSE, pushed the Kennedy administration to commit troops into Laos while leading the Special Counterinsurgency Group (SGC), and was an ardent anti-Communist who before his departure from the CIA in early 1965 failed to convince the Johnson Administration for a large scale bombing campaign of North Vietnam as opposed to the "strategic bombing" of Operation Rolling Thunder.²⁵⁵ This experience in counterinsurgency national intelligence combined with two decades of intellectual and infrastructure building of the racialized youth criminalization, L.A. policing regime and the California Governor used the McCone commission to propagandize the public, political officials, and liberal reformers against any material analysis of Watts. They attempted to portray Watts as not being the result of preventable conditions of oppression, poverty, police harassment, but instead used the analysis in order to escalate the occupation of Black and Chicane working class communities and obfuscate the massive amount of urban abandonment during the era of suburban sprawl and the struggle for ruling class financial power between the old guard of Downtown and the rising Culver City westside.²⁵⁶ The suturing of L.A. juvenile policing profiteering and financial redevelopment forces produced a unique brand of state propaganda to obscure the lived violence of anti-Black apartheid, poverty, dismantling of public housing due to

²⁵⁵ For a full internal assessment of John McCone's tenure at the CIA see David Robarge, *John McCone: As Director of Central Intelligence 1961-1965*, Classified Biographies (Washington D.C.: Center for the Study of Intelligence, CIA, 2005).

²⁵⁶ Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*, 126–27.

anti-communism, and the overall push of warfare-welfare Keynesian political economy to increase the police power in the ruse of “gangs.”

The findings and conclusion in the McCone Commission report set a tone for sociological and criminological research on L.A. gangs during and after this period by centering a liberal and white supremacist logic equating involvement in street organizations and later “gang banging” as a social-behavioral deficiency of Black and Chicax communities.²⁵⁷ While many scholars of gangs offer a strong analysis of the role of segregation and structural racism as determinants of gang involvement, much of the analysis of reforming the youth policing regime is based on behavior modification with a focus on peer groups, “street culture,” and other individualized behavior analysis. Many sociological and criminological studies being conducted during the 1970s and 1980s of L.A.’s Chicax and Black gangs do not deviate from the analysis or conclusions of the McCone report which does acknowledge poverty and conditions of discrimination but reduces them to actions by individuals in an otherwise color-blind “social democracy.” The studies on L.A. gang culture followed in the wake of Watts were marred by the logic of the prison regime, the hegemony of “bootstrap” liberalism, and continue to be the solutions by state and non-state actors after 1965. One thoroughly analyzed example by historian Daniel Widner in his exceptional history of Black cultural production and arts in *Black Arts West* is the creation of the Watts Writers Workshop.

²⁵⁷ For a list of conclusions that focus their analysis “gang culture” see James Diego Vigil, *Rainbow of Gangs: Street Cultures in the Mega City* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002); James Diego Vigil, *Barrio Gangs: Street Life and Identity in Southern California* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988); Terrance A. Sweeney, *Streets of Anger, Streets of Hope: Youth Gangs in East Los Angeles* (Glendale: Great Western Publishing, 1980); Joan W. Moore, *Homeboys: Gangs, Drugs, and Prison in the Barrios of Los Angeles* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978).

Started by Bud Schulberg, a white liberal Hollywood son and writer, the Workshop was part of a wave of missionary-oriented liberal responses to Watts. Schulberg along with others in the entertainment and upper echelons of L.A. society went to Watts after the 65 uprising to “help” the community through the lens of cultural liberalism. Widner writes “Cultural liberalism was born as an ad hoc response to the explosion of South Los Angeles in 1965. The goal of using creative writing and drama as a path to racial integration, social inclusion, and nonviolence generated excitement, publicity and public and private support.”²⁵⁸ Widner documents that individual poets and writers in the Workshop would later join some of the most radical movements of the local Black liberation movement including the L.A. chapter of the Black Panther Party, but there is no denying the missionary and pacifying vision of Schulberg initial goal of the workshop of which he said connecting Watts residents “and what you might term the outside world.”²⁵⁹

The response by the state as articulated by the McCone Commission and the policies by the youth policing regime was to push for an investment of private capital into cultural project and public funds in law enforcement “community relations” to modify the behavior of the “unruly” Black masses. Even with recommendations for housing and economic investment, the conditions of Watts remained unchanged nineteen years later according to the L.A. County Human Relations Commission. These conditions of simultaneous private investment in cultural art productions funded by foundations like

²⁵⁸ Widener, *Black Arts West: Culture and Struggle in Postwar Los Angeles*, 109.

²⁵⁹ Widener, 113.

the Rockefeller Foundation and social abandonment of public monies underscore what can named as the plantation logics integral to material conditions in Black South Central during this period and beyond. Sadiya Hartman argues that the plantation was both a site of white terror and white enjoyment. That “above all, the simulated jollity and coerced festivity of the slave trade and the instrument recreation of plantation management document the investment in and obsession with ‘black enjoyment’ and the significance of these orchestrated amusement as a part of a larger effort to dissimulate the extreme violence of the institution and disavow the pain of captivity.”²⁶⁰ Hartman’s analysis of plantation slavery as it is remembered/historicized by former slavers and popular discourse today obfuscates the anti-Black quotidian terror that the plantation complex was. In thinking with Hartman here the liberal hegemonic discourse led by McCone analysis of the Watts Uprising is informed by the anti-Black logic of erasing the totality of daily targeted Black suffering in Watts during this post-war period. At no point did any city official and very few liberal organizations demand that the underpinnings of racial capitalist exploitation and occupation of South Central by the counterinsurgency forces of the LAPD ever be abolished or transformed to meet the needs of the people. Undergirded by decades of anti-communist/anti-radical and anti-Black policies, logics, and settler governing institutions inside and outside of L.A. that produce the conclusions of McCone and other groups that it is the Black youth gangs and police-community relations as the culprits. A shift to focus on Black youth gangs conceals the manifestations of police

²⁶⁰ Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 23.

power in the U.S. being in service of the racial capitalist state which has created and maintains the conditions of Black suffering to uphold its own legitimacy and social reproduction. It is with this interpretation of Hartman that I propose is on full display in the ways that L.A. state actors like the LAPD, LACPD, and the liberal political class began to expand their concentration of Black youth gangs as the central crime and social problem in South Central. It is this hyper focus and use of criminalization of Black youth as affiliated or members of gangs during and after late 1965 was placed on a continuum in oppositions to the “thin blue line” that guarded “civilization” which propelled the growth in anti-Black gang studies, policies, and practices of the LAPD, LACPD, and non-police law enforcement.

From 1965 to 1975 the construction of the Black youth gang member “insurgent” was cast in the fires of Watts to both propagandize the public away from any material understanding of the conditions of racialized poverty, to obscure the quotidian violence of Black existence in a continually imposed state-social abandonment South Central and East L.A. communities and criminalize the civil rights and more radical tendencies of a growing social movements locally and globally during this period. As mentioned in chapter one, Hall et al argue that crime, as constructed by the state, is news at face value. And with the history of anti-Black sociality in U.S. culture and institutions, in addition to the central historical role that statistical charting of Black criminality came into legitimizing the “objective” field of criminology and sociology in the early twentieth century, the Black youth gang member was the “folk devil” as one the ways to cover the

sins of a liberal political apparatus steeped in racial capitalist arrangements of L.A. urban policy and development.

In crafting their own narrative of the Black delinquent insurgent, the Probation Department, which was the department most responsible for youth surveillance and in charge of the incarceration system, played a critical role in providing the resources to crafting this narrative. It also was an essential force and benefactor of the racialized (which is always classed and gendered) popular discourse of the supposed scourge of Black gang growth which was becoming more popularized by both state and liberal non-governmental agencies.²⁶¹ As discussed throughout this dissertation, the law enforcement professionalization era that began in the post-WWII period was what brought about the new field of juvenile criminology. It was through an era of mass reform of the criminal justice system at the federal level to provide “equal justice” particularly to Black citizens that the youth policing machine become more aggressive in their tactics to harass, arrest, and incarcerate in the name of a more sophisticated form of policing. Naomi Murakawa in their analysis of the liberal political construction of mass prison expansion starting in post-WWII era argues that by the 1960s the Johnson Administration response to Watts in which Johnson echoed the McCone commission with a focus on the reported use of Molotov cocktails and that Black youth in the streets in Watts were no different than the Klan. Murakawa assess “Johnson’s conflation of the Watts rebels with the KKK converged with the logic of race conservatives: the law was now clean, so the

²⁶¹ For a discussion on the classed and gendered ways of understanding race see Nikhil Pal Singh, “A Note on Race and the Left,” Online Journal, *Social Text Online* (blog), July 31, 2015, <https://socialtextjournal.org/a-note-on-race-and-the-left/>.

lawbreakers were truly to blame.”²⁶² So the passage of liberal legislation including the Civil Right Act (1964) and the Voting Rights Act, which was literally signed by President Johnson just 5 days before Marquette and Ronald Frye were pulled over on Avalon and 116th in Watts, that race neutral “law and order” now constituted U.S. social relations and Dr. King’s Civil Rights Movement needed to end, let alone those who chose to engage in direct action or rioting.

Creating the Black Gang Member

Since WWII the L.A. youth police regime was crafting new training and public administration techniques to standardize youth policing. However, by the 1960s a new critical part of policing institution in L.A. like the LAPD and LACPD was also the building out an intellectual bureau to conduct “research” to support their own legitimacy and “expertise” in expanding police power in L.A. While histories of U.S. law enforcement discuss the watershed moment that Johnsons Omnibus Crime Bill had in providing for the first time federal funding for military hardware transfer and funding of local police department through the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), much less attention has been focused on the importance of “police science” that began to be conducted within the local policing institutions in same period. This type of internal statistical and research tasks was being done “in-house” and transforming law enforcement information officers who previously focused on statistical data analysis for the purposes of creating “crime trends” as well as sharing this data with City and County officials as part of annual budget requests, now were developing sociological and

²⁶² Murakawa, *The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America*, 78.

anthropological divisions to identify criminality, enforcement tactics, and surveillance. In 1965 a research report entitled “The Juvenile Gang...its’ Structure, Function, and Treatment as Perceived by the Gang leader” is the *twenty-fourth* such research project conducted by the LACPD’s Research Office. The study is an analysis of interviews among members of ten different social clubs that the report identifies as “violent gangs” which the department’s Group Guidance Program is currently working with. The methodology of the report reveals that the Probation officer authors admit that there is an implicit propagandistic nature in the narrative and findings of the report in regard to how they connect reported violent crime to “anti-social” behavior of select youth gangs. The authors write "instead of presenting statistical findings, the statements of the boys are used as ‘data’. Therefore, this document is a report on a subjective and/or impressionistic ‘research’ project."²⁶³ By putting both “data” and “research” in quotation marks places into question the actual intent of the methodology used in the report or for what purpose other than a type of voyeurism of the criminalized underclass that the report could be used for. A couple of paragraphs later the LACPD researcher discloses that their study is primary to evaluate the effectiveness of the Group Guidance program through the responses of the young people being interviewed. The researchers in specific ways go above and beyond to not include any serious investigation of the deteriorating material conditions of historically and policy led segregated L.A. neighborhoods of which the youth interviewees come from. Instead these structural forces would be obfuscated by

²⁶³ Roger E. Rice and Rex B. Christensen, “The Juvenile Gang: Its Structure, Function, and Treatment as Perceived by the Gang Leader.” (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Probation Department Research Office, 1965), 7, USC Probation Department Records.

pulp commentary on the use of language, temperament, and “bravado” of the youth during their 90 minute interviews rather than a serious grappling of demands for employment, social welfare investment, and growing contestation against white political power by various civil rights and labor organizations during this period which was often met by police harassment, surveillance, or even infiltration using Parker’s “G-2” intelligence unit and most infamously under Chief Edward M. Davis reformation of the Red Squad era Public Disorder Intelligence Division (PDID) starting in 1970.²⁶⁴

The violence of L.A. law enforcement and especially Parker’s LAPD and Pitches’ LASD targeting Black and Chicax communities for continual containment in the racialized landscape of 1960s L.A. was widely discussed among community members during this period and had also been a historical counternarrative from within Black and Chicax communities themselves. Leading up to the Watts Uprising there were multiple flashpoints in L.A.’s Black civil rights and Black nationalist political activities (or fabricated activities) that provide a snapshot into increased use of L.A. law enforcement in the lives of Black Angelinos. For example, in 1961 there were two major police riots covered in L.A. media in which police targeted young Black men who dared to cross the color line into white leisure spaces. In both Griffith Park and Venice Beach that year, Black youth were the target of first white antagonism which escalated into a response by law enforcement. In the former, seventy-five LAPD officers were called into suppress the response of Black parkgoers protesting the ticketing of a 17yr-old Black youth for not

²⁶⁴ For an extensive accounting of the deployment of LAPD counter-intelligence tactics, often at the behest of white nationalist and anti-communist organizations see Frank Donner, *Protectors of Privilege: Red Squads and Police Repression in Urban America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 245–89.

having a ticket to ride the merry-go-round. In the later incident forty-five LAPD officers responded to Black protest of two Black youth being arrested on suspicion of theft. The following year in 1962 seven members of the Nation of Islam's Mosque No. 27, located in South Central, were shot and one member was killed by LAPD officers who had been engaged in months of surveillance which was coordinated by multiple Southern California law enforcement agencies.²⁶⁵ The hegemonic narrative of "juvenile gangs" erased this history of police-initiated antagonism during a growing period of Black and Chicano civil rights protest. To control the narratives and media coverage of Black and Chicano youth being the targets of police harassment and brutality, a new "research" arm of L.A. youth policing regime was deployed in an attempt to connect Civil Rights activism, spontaneous protest to police harassment, and Black youth social club growth in particular as a larger problem of anti-social behavior that had to be corrected by swift action of the law enforcement to maintain order.

This counter-insurgency strategy employed by the LAPD was not unique to L.A. but was a growing trend in urban police professionalization. A central goal of the 1960s police professionalization process was to shore up police legitimacy during the deepening social and political crisis for law enforcement and self-proclaimed U.S. democracy during an increasing and expanding Black freedom movement that intensified in the South but also expanding the contractions of U.S. "democracy" outside of Dixie. This process was described by Marxist criminologists as part of "new strategies of

²⁶⁵ Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present*, 2003, 167–74; Edward J. Escobar, "The Dialectics of Repression: The Los Angeles Police Department and the Chicano Movement, 1968-1971," *Journal of American History* 79, no. 4 (March 1993): 1483–1514.

community penetration and ‘citizen participation’ that sought to integrate people into the process of policing and secure the legitimacy of the police and to a larger extent to secure the legitimacy of the U.S. State Department’s position in combating the spread of Communism.”²⁶⁶ The extended integration of academic research into U.S. policing like the LACPD’s own Research Division was eliminating the line(if there was such a strong line) between criminology as a field of academic inquiry and into a post-WWII arm of the national security state. In the research reports that L.A. law enforcement began to create were in many ways defining the field of criminology and creating their own logic for crime, criminality, and their tactics of counterinsurgency with in house academics research team.²⁶⁷ The changes in normalizing the “independent” or “objective” rigor of academic research (which is always vexed by the power relations of U.S. exceptionalism within a settler state) being conducted by the same state actors who are the ones materially benefiting and function in service of their being a “crime problem” that demonstrates the development of the U.S. Prison Regime in the later 1960s to the present Interrogating the targeted physiological terror inflicted on imprisoned intellectuals, Dylan Rodriguez posits that “it is precisely the structured solidarity between technologies of coercive visualization—including the ‘virtual’ rendition and projection of imprisoned

²⁶⁶ Center for Research on Criminal Justice, *The Iron Fist and The Velvet Glove: An Analysis of the U.S. Police*, Second (Berkeley: Center for Research and Criminal Justice, 1977), 7; For an historical analysis of U.S. federal policy on race in the post-WWII period as part of U.S. Cold War strategy see Mary L. Dudziak, “Desegregation as Cold War Imperative,” in *Critical Race Theory: The Cutting Edge*, ed. Richard Delgado and Jean Stegancic, Second (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000).

²⁶⁷ In the report the LACPD Research Office Staff included five researchers and was led by Dr. Stuart Adams who would later be a national criminal justice consultant for the U.S. Department of Justice with the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) Rice and Christensen, “The Juvenile Gang: Its Structure, Function, and Treatment as Perceived by the Gang Leader.”,” i.

people's bodies, intentions, and movements through high technologies of surveillance—and a proliferated, militaristic, and *normal* violence that crafts and reifies the prison regime as a way of life.”²⁶⁸ The Watts uprising was a reaction to daily violence of policing and state abandonment that threatened to deepen the crisis of state legitimacy by demonstrating that property could be destroyed and thousands could participate in challenging the sanctity of property without being prosecuted. So, the logics of a developing U.S. prison regime needed to be reproduced through both increased surveillance of South-Central Black youth gangs and the subsequent increased occupation of Watts and its environs by law enforcement. And with over twenty years of intellectual support for the youth policing apparatus from USC's Delinquency Control Institute in particular, internal conducted police academic research was just as a significant tool of law enforcement as surveillance, the law, and military power to extract and control life of L.A.'s insurgent/criminalized populations.

Returning to LACPD's "The Juvenile Gang" report the authors note their preoccupation with Black youth surveillance and criminalization, with half of the participants interviewed being from Black youth gangs, are not representative of the total distribution of youth gangs in the county or the expanding population. In 1965 less than ten percent of the county's entire population was African American yet Black youth were specifically targeted. In their study the authors state their methodology for understanding the "juvenile gang member" was to focus on eight "gang clusters" within the county.

²⁶⁸ Dylan Rodríguez, *Forced Passages: Imprisoned Radical Intellectuals and the U.S. Prison Regime* (University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 157.

However they state that, “five of them are composed of Negro boys, four have members who are mostly Mexican-Americans, and one is a mixed membership...this is not a representative sample of the gangs in Los Angeles County, in that there are fewer Negro gangs than Mexican-American.”²⁶⁹ Through a not-so-subtle admittance of the distorted narrative and flaws of their own research, the LACPD decided to focus more exclusively on Black than Chicana gangs while also simultaneously completely erasing the existence of Anglo and ethnic European gangs throughout L.A. county which in 1965 was over 70% white in a population of over six million people. As Alex Alonso and even researchers during this period had found, white gangs were prevalent throughout L.A. county and even to the point of engaging in anti-Black vigilantism to keep apartheid in the southland intact.²⁷⁰ And while the existence of white youth gangs like the “spook hunters” in the bordering cities of Southeast L.A. like Lynwood and Southgate were known by Probation to have similar characteristics as Black and Chicana gangs, they did not instigate the same carceral response from the city’s youth policing apparatus. The history of L.A. white vigilantism which kept Indigenous, Mexican, Chinese, and Black peoples subjugated through the use of both policy and the hangman’s noose during the nineteenth century is historically undergirded by white supremacy which provided protection for the use of white violence in service of the white rule in California post

²⁶⁹ Rice and Christensen, “The Juvenile Gang: Its Structure, Function, and Treatment as Perceived by the Gang Leader.” 4.

²⁷⁰ Alex Alonso, “Out of the Void: Street Gangs in Black Los Angeles,” in *Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities*, ed. Darnell Hunt and Ana-Christina Ramón (New York: New York University Press, 2010); Howard L. Myerhoff and Barbara G. Myerhoff, “Field Observations of Middle Class ‘Gangs,’” *Social Forces* 42, no. 3 (March 1964): 328–36, <https://doi.org/198.188.4.57>.

1850.²⁷¹ By the time of Watt this central structuring logic of California and L.A. governance was used in pathologizing Black and Chicana gangs in L.A. to deploy the ideas of “anti-social” behavior in opposition to what can be described as white being.²⁷² That in fact white gangs were absent from the Probation Department’s analysis of the youth gang hysteria in 1965 because their actions while deviant in some aspect to white middle class society, they were in fact playing their historical role in white being. Of being part of a common surveillance force and if needed extrajudicial force to keep white property safe from Black social life. But whatever the popular white supremacist organizations in L.A. (white youth street organizations, white homeowner associations, John Birch Society, The American Nazi Party headquarters in Glendale) had in exacerbating the pathologizing of Black and Chicana L.A. through the specter of gangs, the LACPD was already by 1965 well established in surveillance, harassment, and arrest of Black and Chicana youth.²⁷³

The LACPD report on gangs goes even further to reveal by their own admission of the counterinsurgency tactics that are at the center of their “intervention” model. As

²⁷¹ For a review of the role of white violence in the form of vigilantism and policy see Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (California: University of California Press, 1994); Layne, “Account of the First Vigilance Committee in California – 1836”; “Journal of the Senate – Regular Session, Statutes of California Passed at the First Session of the Legislature, 15th of December, 1849 – 22nd April, 1850” (Senate Statute, California, April 22, 1950); Eric H. Monkkonon, “Homicide in Los Angeles, 1827-2002,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 26, no. 2 (2005): 167–83; César López, “Lost in Translation: From Calle de Los Negros to Nigger Alley to North Los Angeles Street to Place Erasure, Los Angeles 1855-1951,” *Southern California Quarterly* 94, no. 1 (2012): 25–90.

²⁷² Dylan Rodríguez, “Policing and the Violence of White Being: An Interview with Dylan Rodríguez,” *Propter Nos* 1, no. 1 (Fall 2016): 10.

²⁷³ By 1965, the year after Barry Goldwater lost the national presidential election, the John Birch Society in California had reached its zenith with 12,000-15,000 members throughout the state. Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 218.

discussed in the previous chapter, the Group Guidance section was started by the LACPD just after the Zoot Suit Riots to focus on the surveilling Chicana gang members who were not under court-ordered supervision. In the section IV “The Structure of the Gang” the authors of the report call to attention the older members influencing the younger members as a key problem for Group Guidance workers. And like any counterinsurgency (COIN) tactic made by European or U.S. colonial forces during this period, the “winning of hearts and minds” was just as critical to LACDP Group Guidance workers as it was to U.S. propaganda officers in Indochina during this same period.²⁷⁴ Some of the tactical goals for taking away the influence of older Black and Chicana gang members who were seen as a barrier to the younger members were to find them a job, “enlist in the service” or “on more than one occasion, the street worker has ‘assisted’ law enforcement in a somewhat more structured removal from the community.”²⁷⁵ By the LACPD’s own schema the first method for bringing older youth back into the fold of “pro-social behavior” it is to get them into the entry-level service or small section of industrial workforce for Black workers, which by the mid-1960s began a period a “selective deindustrialization” that meant increased job scarcity in the higher paying manufacturing jobs which either became more competitive due to closure or inaccessibility due to racial covenants and hostility in surrounding counties of Orange, Riverside, and San

²⁷⁴ For a brief background on the use of Counterinsurgency (COIN) see, Gregory D. Miller, “On Winning Hearts and Minds: Key Conditions for Population-Centric COIN,” *Small Wars Journal*, February 8, 2016, https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/on-winning-hearts-and-minds-key-conditions-for-population-centric-coin#_edn5.

²⁷⁵ Rice and Christensen, “The Juvenile Gang: Its Structure, Function, and Treatment as Perceived by the Gang Leader.”, 37.

Bernardino.²⁷⁶ The other solution is to throw the Black South Central youth, which Chief Parker and the LAPD's executives already referred to as "Vietcong," into bootcamp and be plunged into the killing fields of Vietnam which the U.S. was actively engaged in sending thousands of conscripts and volunteers starting in 1964. Both solutions adhere to the social-behavioral solutions offered by the youth policing regime in L.A. That these young people must fall-in-line as low-wage workers that will not address the material needs of the high rates of family poverty in the area or they must become disciplined into soldiers in the U.S. anti-Communist containment strategy.

The final tactic that Probation admitted to employing in their quest to gain more influence of youth gang members was a "more structured removal" or arrest by law enforcement of older members of the gang. It is unclear if this is meant to detail the fabrication of charges against an individual, to place them under more strict surveillance in the hopes of catching them engaged in criminalized activities, or both. What it does clearly reveal is the discretionary power that law enforcement has to seek out a criminalized target and destroy them. And this is in fact the central point of the program, to destroy the gang and autonomy of Black youth sociality while leaving intact the material conditions of civic divestment from working class South Central. The LACPD report states the following outlining this sentiment:

It is not possible for the guidance worker to reach all the boys in one gang. However, disseminating the violent gangs' ranks by drawing off a good percentage of its core members into a serviced group has much the same effect as incarcerating them. The Group Guidance worker, through various forms of

²⁷⁶ Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present*, 2003, 176; Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*.

'sabotage,' group work, and other methods of manipulation, is able to divert leadership from the few 'gang Psychopaths,'(emphasis added)²⁷⁷

The model the LACPD Group Guidance Program, which is supposed to be a preventative measure to future contact with law enforcement, is by their own admission an aggressive act of counterinsurgency targeting Black and Chicax youth nearly completing ignoring white gang activity throughout the entire county. The carceral logic behind a program that engaged in "sabotage," "manipulation," in effect "incarceration" of targeted Black and Chicax gangs in South Central and East Los Angeles. Neutralization of the "insurgent" group through peeling off proto insurgents through manipulation of the hearts and minds of the young people is the approach that Group workers would focus on until disbanding of the program in 1966. With the sociological approach, which is centrally a carceral logic, eliminated during this period all that is left is policy of outright warfare.

This 24th internal research document by the LACPD is completed by their 26th internal research report completed just a few months later entitled "Riot Participant Study: Juvenile Offenders" in November in 1965. The study analyzes the majority of the 534 juvenile cases processed by the L.A. County Juvenile Court related to Watts Uprising. This study reads as the future playbook of the L.A. youth policing regime with a literal visualization of criminalizing of Black youth. (figure 2)

²⁷⁷ Rice and Christensen, "The Juvenile Gang: Its Structure, Function, and Treatment as Perceived by the Gang Leader.," 71.

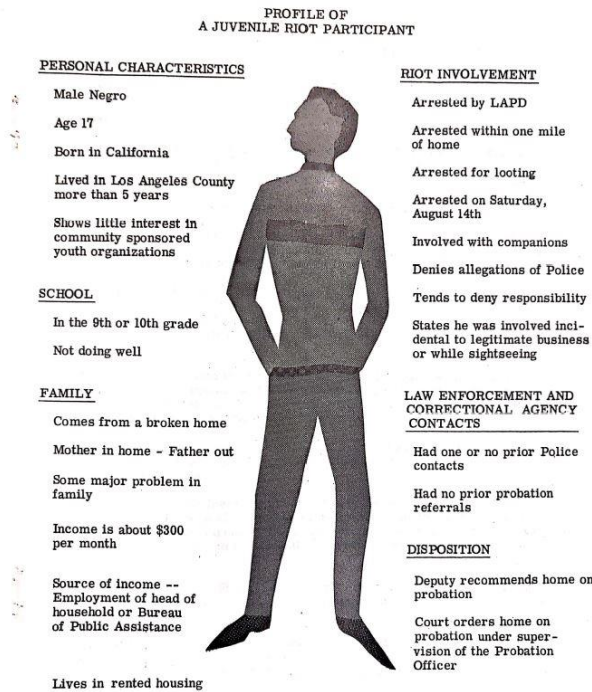


Figure 2 “A profile of a Juvenile Participant” from LACPD The Juvenile Gang: Its Structure, Function, and Treatment as Perceived by the Gang Leader

The 1960s: War and Peace Officers

The 1960’s conjure up sentiments of a new age of student organizing and cultural/political radicalization. However, for Black and Chicano youth from the segregated working-class neighborhoods of Los Angeles it was a period of unprecedented harassment, arrest, and criminalization. At the beginning of the decade youth arrests (ages 17 and younger) represented almost twenty-five percent of all the arrests made by the LAPD. Just five years later in 1965, youth constituted nearly one out of every three arrests recorded by the LAPD (figure 3). The statistical arrests report from the LAPD, which were part of Parker’s professionalization changes to the department, only provide a partial picture of the totality of surveillance, harassment, and brutality handed out to youth during this period. As mentioned in the previous chapter L.A. County’s Juvenile

Database which provided permanent records from social service agencies and schools of acts that were criminalized by non-police police, let alone all the stops, field IDs, detainments, and usage of police informants that did not end up as a recorded arrest, tell a much more total story of the massive amount of racialized youth gang policing was happening.

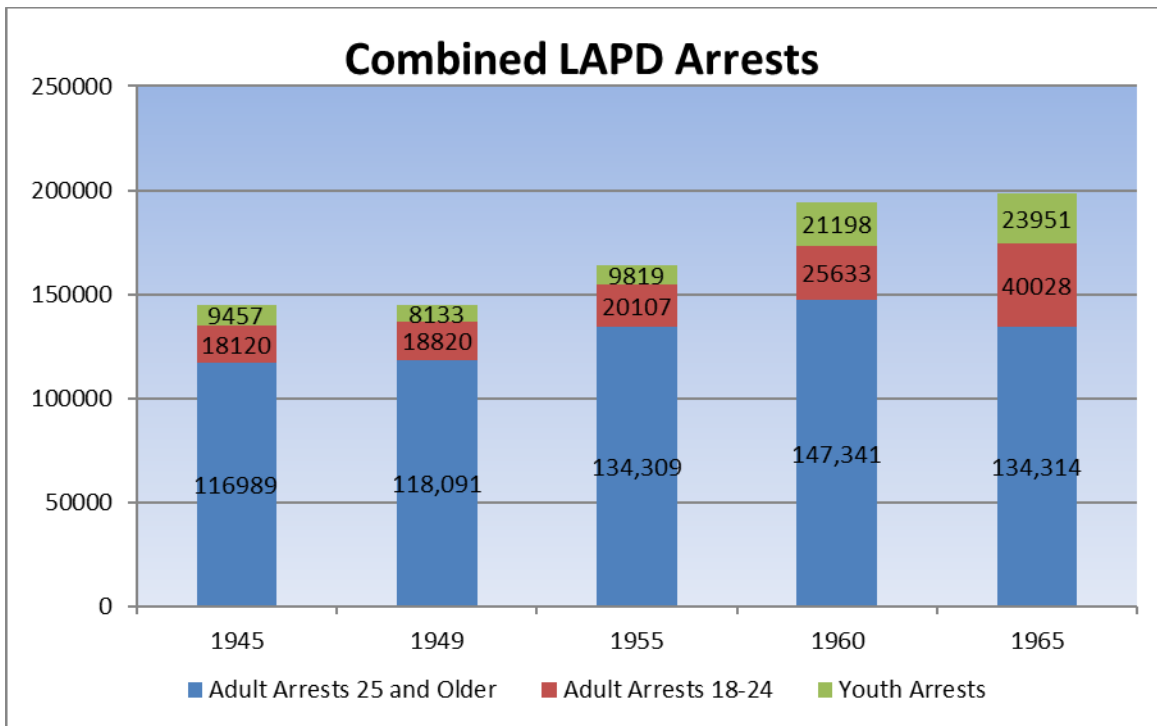


Figure 3: LAPD arrests from Statistical Digests 1945-1965.

This staggering number grew during a period when LAPD, now already with over a decade of Parker’s leadership, became increasingly more conservative and combative with not only youth and communities of color throughout the city, but also against city officials. Frank Donner writes, “ He was a John Birch Society hero...his picture was reproduced on the front cover of its official organ, *American Opinion*...He was also a

participant in the weekly right-wing radio discussion group, the ‘Manion Forum’...[in which on May 30, 1965] he denounced the courts as coddlers of criminals, deplored their concern for civil liberties, and decried what he saw as the ‘socialist trend’ threatening American society.”²⁷⁸ Parker’s increased militarism and conservatism would be one of the contributing factors that led to the Watts Rebellion in the summer of 1965.

While street organizations were being criminalized in a permanent war by the L.A. youth policing regime, young people were also resisting the continual conditions of police occupation of their communities. In the historical and popular imagination of L.A. the Chicano struggle for school desegregation and equality is of great significance.²⁷⁹ The student organizing at five East L.A. high schools to challenge the discriminatory practices of the L.A. school board continues to serve a key moment in the Chicano movement. And this moment of Chicano youth resistance is a part of a larger wave of young people in L.A. and beyond in the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and early 1970s.²⁸⁰

While young Chicanos were engaging in political struggle in East L.A., the conditions of a segregated and redlined Black South Central were also leading to young people being target and resisting. Damien Sojoyner in *First Strike: Educational*

²⁷⁸ Frank Donner, *Protectors of Privilege: Red Squads and Police Repression in Urban America* (Berkeley: University of California, 1990), 248.

²⁷⁹ Here I reference the canonical film on the history of the Chicano Movement, National Latino Communications Center, *Chicano!: A History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*, “Part 3: Taking Back the Schools”, 1996; and more recently *Walkout*, directed by Edward James Olmos (HBO, 2006).

²⁸⁰ Mario T. Garcia and Sal Castro *Blowout: Sal Castro and the Chicano Struggle for Educational Justice* (Raleigh: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Guadalupe San Miguel *Chicana/o Struggles for Education: Activism in the Community* (Houston: Texas A&M Press, 2003); Gilbert C. Gonzalez *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2013); Philippa Strum *Mendez v. Westminster: School Desegregation and Mexican American Rights* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2010).

Enclosures in Black Los Angeles critically intervenes in the School to Prison Pipeline (STPP) paradigm and articulates the role that public education centrally functions to neutralize Black dissent. In his study of L.A. one of his historical arguments focuses on the 1960s when L.A. schools implemented pedagogical courses which served as “a model to implement a new ideological enclosure that constructed Black communities and youth in particular as dangerous.”²⁸¹ Here Sojoyner analyzes the 1961 “Youth Problems and Needs” report conducted by the L.A. regional Welfare Planning Council and the implementation of the 1969 “Police in Government” course targeting the predominately Black high school David Starr Jordan in Watts. In a previous work that informed *First Strike*, he concludes that these studies and programs were the city’s official response to anti-Black violence in previously predominately white schools, the 1965 Watts Rebellion, and the Jefferson High School student strike of 1969.²⁸² The school and city officials implemented these programs in in contradistinction to the Black student grievances, their organizing against racial terror, and negligent teaching staff. School officials in collaboration with LAPD imposed an ideological punitive course to control Black student behavior and bifurcate acceptable and deviant student responses to the daily reality of racial apartheid in the city.

L.A. Black and Chicax youth police regime transformed after 1965 to an all-out counter insurgency framework towards gangs in particular. The contradictions of a growing financial sector and urban renewal plans expanded in the 1970s under L.A. first

²⁸¹Damien M. Sojoyner *First Strike: Educational Enclosures in Black Los Angeles* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 35-36.

²⁸² Damien M. Sojoyner “Black Radicals Make for Bad Citizens: Undoing the Myth of the School to Prison Pipeline,” *Berkeley Review of Education* Vol. 4, No.2, 252.

former LAPD officer and first African American Mayor Tom Bradley came in sharp contrast to the deepening crisis in Black and Chicano neighborhoods of the city's South Central and East side. The twenty years of policing Black and Chicano youth from 1945-1965 would have massive repercussions for the future of youth criminalization and the expansion of police power as stagflation of the 1970s and neoliberal deindustrialization policies began to sweep away the manufacturing sector from L.A. for a growth in service and hospitality.

Coda

Inventing Street Terrorist and the Horizon of Policing as Racial Genocide

On February 17th, 1997 in Lynwood, California, eighteen year old Antonio Golden was murdered by Los Angeles County Sheriff Officers who shot him twice in the back as he was riding his bicycle. Helen Green, Antonio's grandmother was quoted after discovering her grandson was murdered that, "...Innocent men, especially Black and Hispanic children, are being murdered daily by killers in badges. We must stop this *genocide*."²⁸³(emphasis added) Grandmother Green's use of the term genocide powerfully connects a political tradition in the African American community of analyzing the brutality, death, and impunity carried out by law enforcement agents against African Americans as genocidal. However, the term genocide only began in global political discourse after the ratification of the United Nations Convention on Genocide on December 9th, 1948. Almost immediately after its ratification, African Americans who were organizing against white supremacist physical, economical, and political violence formed the Civil Rights Congress to publish the petition *We Charge Genocide* in 1951 to charge the United State government with genocide against African Americans. In analyzing the two-hundred and forty pages of the petition which state the case, evidence, and solutions to end the genocide of African Americans, the terms *police*, *patrolman*, *patrolmen*, and *sheriff* collectively appear over three-hundred and fifty

²⁸³ Stolen Lives Project, *Stolen Lives: killed by law enforcement*, 2nd ed. (New York: Stolen Lives Project, 1999), 17.

times.²⁸⁴ By analyzing the definitions of genocide and authors who specifically look at policing within the structure of genocide, an argument can be made for an analysis of U.S. policing against African Americans and other racialized and colonized groups genocidal and perpetrated by the white-supremacist capitalist patriarchal settler colonial state.²⁸⁵ This analysis becomes more acute when members of the racial group, specifically those deemed “gang members” are the focus of analysis.

Definition of Genocide and Connections to Policing

To begin to connect the violence and destruction brought about by policing as genocidal, it is important to analyze the definitions of genocide. The definition and usage of genocide is a debated political space in which scholars, activists, and politicians have utilized it to call attention to mass killings during times of “peace”, during war to describe occupational destruction, and to review historical past and present tense events of destruction to human life in the physical, ontological, and within both spaces. The etymology of the term genocide begins with Raphael Lemkin and his seminal work *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, a reaction to the rise of fascism in Western Europe. Lemkin writes:

By “genocide” we meant the destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group...[g]enerally speaking genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves...[g]enocide is directed against the national group as an entity, and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not their individual capacity, but as members of the national groups.

²⁸⁴ Civil Rights Congress, *We Charge Genocide*, William L. Patterson Ed. (New York: 1951)

²⁸⁵ The term *white-supremacist capitalist patriarchal state* is adapted from bell hooks use of it to name the “interlocking nature of systems of domination” in the essay “Revolutionary Feminism” in *Killing Rage: Ending Racism*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1995), 107.

Lemkin's definition of the nature and structure of genocide opens up a space for various types of oppression, including policing, to be marked as genocidal. When speaking of a "coordinated plan of different actions...", the structure of police forces, their tactical training, policies that they enforce, and different policing units are all a coordinated effort to police communities. This coordination has most recently resulted in the current U.S. imprisonment of over 2.3 million people in which half are African Americans. Just in the last four years policing has resulted in over 1 million people being detained then forcefully removed from the U.S. because of their immigration status, the highest amount during any four year period in U.S. history. It would be nearly impossible for such numbers to exist without the policing tactics of undercover solicitation (drugs, weapons, cars, etc) racial/appearance profiling, Secure Communities, Broken Windows, and the sheer number of sworn officers deployed daily to impoverished communities throughout the U.S. These tactics and these results are "actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations..." of improvised communities. By incarcerating or forcefully removing family members whether fathers, mothers, or siblings from households, workplaces, and communities, the foundations of livelihood are impacted and degraded through policing and arrest.

Following the massive caging and removal of people carried out by policing, the violence and murder by police is the most visible and discernible form of genocide. Four years after the publication of Lemkin's work, the newly formed United Nations adopted

the “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.”²⁸⁶ In article II of the convention it describes five acts which are to be defined as genocide with “intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group...”²⁸⁷ The Civil Rights Congress utilized the language of the convention to submit a formalized petition to the UN that chronicling the State’s history of acts of genocide against African Americans:

Our indictment charges the Government of the United States with violation of virtually every provision of the Genocide Convention... We maintain that if the United States is guilty of ‘conspiracy to commit genocide,’ as we allege, it is also guilty of ‘killing member of the group’ and of violation of other provisions of the Convention... The petitioners... charge the members of a minority ethnic group, the Negro people of the United States, have been and are being killed (see Evidence, Part III) and that such killings are intended and aimed at the destruction of the group in whole or in part to which the murdered individuals belonged.²⁸⁸

The CRC is utilizing the jurisprudential framework of UNCG to describe the physical destruction of African Americans as genocidal. It is important to note that they do not charge citizen violence or individual violence, but specifically discuss the violence brought upon State as sanctioned genocide. This speaks to the structural aspects of genocide which connects it to both a history of government impunity and sanctioning of violence.

Although the CRC utilizes evidence to fit into the legal framework set by the UNGC, they frame their evidence in the context of a history of genocide against African Americans from chattel slavery to reconstruction to the then current genocidal reality of

²⁸⁶ Matthew Lippman, “A road map to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 4, no.2 (2002): 179.

²⁸⁷ United Nations, *Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948* (New York: UNGA 1948) 174.

²⁸⁸ Civil Rights Congress, *We Charge Genocide*, 43,45.

Jim Crow segregation. The petitioners view the genocide carried out by the police within a historical continuum of anti-black violence carried out by the State. Policing did not become genocidal from 1945-1951, but has inherently been predicated on the destruction, “in whole or in part” of the African Americans. The petitioners rightfully so focus on the history of targeting of African Americans by policing forces, however it is imperative to understand that genocide and policing is not the exception but the rule for building of the U.S. settler colonial State. The foundations of the U.S. hegemonic white supremacist capitalist patriarchal state is built upon the structure of settler colonialism which uses the logics of genocide and state apparatus of policing to continue its colonial conquest. The lens that the structure of settler colonialism offers allows for policing to be viewed as one form within a history of genocide.

Settler Colonialism as Genocide and Connections to Policing

The connections between the definitions of genocide and policing become more salient when viewed through the structure of settler colonialism which circumscribes the former. The conditions that have created the genocidal nature of policing are connected to the violent acquisition of land created by the structure of settler colonialism and the logic of elimination which is a driving force for genocidal violence. Patrick Wolfe describes settler colonialism and the logic of elimination as follows:

...settler-colonizers come to stay—invasion is a structure not an event....settler societies characteristically devise a number of often coexistent strategies to eliminate the threat posed by the survival in their midst of irregularly dispossessed social groups...the outcomes of the logic of elimination can include officially encourage miscegenation, the breaking down of native title into alienable individual freeholds, native citizenship, child abduction, religious conversions, and a whole range of cognate biocultural assimilations...[and] frontier homicide , are characteristics of settler colonialism...[t]hese eliminatory strategies all reflect

the centrality of land, which is not merely a component of settler society but its basic precondition.²⁸⁹

The elimination of ninety percent of indigenous people within the first century of the colonization of North America was done through weaponized, biological, and psychological genocidal warfare that the continent's indigenous peoples had never seen before. The period which Wolfe is focusing on to describe the structure of settler colonialism is after this mass extermination in which the European sovereigns formalized the foundations of their settler colonial society and began occupy land with permanence. The quest for land occupation and permanent settlement meant that white settlers would be bestowed all legal rights to the land and indigenous peoples and African Slaves (themselves diasporic indigenous peoples) would become the new threat to their sanctified right to individual property. These new white settlements and their proximity to indigenous peoples, especially those who were not chattel, created the beginnings of the policing relationship through their perceived threat and criminality against white settler society. White settlers would need to create policies to both eliminate and contain this threat.

The containment and elimination strategies as Wolf describes would combine assimilation strategies for deracialized indigenous homesteaders, criminalization, and murderous terror through frontier homicide. These tactics, all inherently violent, would be the precursor of policing that the settler colonial structure would use for its

²⁸⁹ Patrick Wolfe, "Structure and Event: Settler Colonialism, Time, and the Question of Genocide," in *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, edited by A. Dirk Moses (New York: Berghahn, 2008), 103.

sustainment. Wolfe writes that “[r]ather than something separate from or running counter to the colonial state, the murderous activities of the frontier rabble constitute its principal mean of expansion. These have occurred ‘behind the screen of the frontier...once the dust has settled, the irregular acts...have been regularized...’”²⁹⁰ The frontier “rabble” became essential (as much as the state’s impunity) for the expansion of white dominion, and specifically for economic domination through land possession. These “rabble”, who Wolfe points out as mainly landless whites, were the first to violently push out any would-be indigenous homesteaders. These landless white would legitimize their status as sovereigns and permanent settlers by doing the “heavy lifting” of the State. Though they began as a “spontaneous” mass, they would quickly become legitimate and essential to settler colonial expansion, giving them ownership over the land and for the many the first time a right to defend their new “homeland”.

The essential function of landless white settlers to clear out the land to set the foundation for the structure of settler colonialism began to shift once the frontier ended. Wolfe posits that “the crude technique of removal declined in favor of a range of strategies for assimilating Indian people now that they had been contained within Euroamerican society...[w]ith the demise of the frontier, elimination turned inwards”²⁹¹ Wolfe is referring here to the logic of elimination, that indigenous peoples who held onto their identity culturally or who were not phenotypically “white” would continue to be pushed off the land or assimilated. Once recognizable indigenous people were forcefully

²⁹⁰ Wolfe, “Structure and Event...” 108.

²⁹¹ Wolfe, “Structure and Event...” 117.

removed farther West, Africans slaves in the South would become the target for the logic of elimination, and policing would become an assimilation tactic. Policing would serve to assimilate African Americans and non-whites through force to submit to Euroamerican laws, customs, and modes of production in the newly formed settler colonial society.

Just as the “rabble” frontier homicide was done with informal violence and under State impunity, so was the first policing tactics done against African peoples in the South. Kristian Williams writes extensively about these early Slave Patrols and the logic of elimination towards African peoples in the South. Williams states that in the South, “...rather than develop formal means of control...ideology encouraged a reliance on informal system rooted in racism. This was not only true of the police function, but of all authority.”²⁹² The police terror was at first guided by the slave owners and became a preoccupation of all white males to harass and question African peoples who were alone or gathered with other Africans. To secure their authority and the territory of the South once the Indigenous peoples had been eliminated from the land, Africans became the most apparent threat, more so when they outnumbered the amount of Whites, which they did in many parts of the South. Policing became the assimilation method for the logic of elimination, striking terror, violence, and humiliation onto the African peoples of the South. Once policing moved to a formalized government facilitated structure, the logic of elimination continued to be a part of policing African peoples and other non-whites throughout all of the U.S.

²⁹² Kristian Williams, *Our enemies in Blue: police and Power in America*, (Cambridge: South End, 2007), 38.

The ease of the transition of the genocidal violence of logic of elimination to continue from frontier homicide to policing must be understood with settler colonialism's racializing logic of white supremacy. Wolfe writes that "The issue of race is a constant companion of both genocide and modernity as a whole...different racial regimes encode and reproduce the carried relationship of inequality into which Europeans coerced the populations concerned...we cannot simply say that elimination, genocide, or any other racially framed practiced is targeted at a given race, since race cannot be taken as given. It is made in the targeting."²⁹³ The preoccupation with white settler land domination racializes other groups who threaten this dominion by their access to land or their very existence on the land, even as slaves. As Wolfe discusses in his article Africans were racialized as slaves and Indigenous peoples were racialized as savage Indians, both were seen as unfit to be part of white settler society. The end goal of racism is to eliminate the inferior races, and the genocidal acts carried out by policing agents, be they "rabble" landless whites, slave patrols, or formalized government police, are a means to do so. This racialization would spread throughout the U.S. and permeate throughout all the states, increasing dramatically during Reconstruction and the final land colonization of the U.S. Southwest.

Since settler colonialism is a structure that continues after the consolidation of the frontier, the settler colonial racialized violence facilitated most prominently by policing, only becomes more prevalent, normalized, and modern as settler colonialism develops over time. Franz Fanon writes that "In colonial regions...the proximity and frequent,

²⁹³ Wolfe, "Structure and Event.." 111.

direct intervention by the police and the military ensure the colonized are kept under close scrutiny, and contained by rifle butts and napalm. We have seen how the government's agents use a language of pure violence. The agent does not alleviate oppression or mask domination. He displays and demonstrates them with the clear conscience of the law enforcer, and brings violence into the homes and minds of the colonized subject."²⁹⁴ The logic of elimination has policing and violence at the crux of its assimilation program. The police are carrying out daily violence through use of force or threat of force to assimilate colonized people to work for the colonized and not reject their colonized reality. When anti-colonial movements begin to manifest, although to the colonist their threat always exists, violence becomes intensified. This is also true for the colonized who try to gain wealth or property outside the legal realm, whose acts of survival are criminalized and punished by the police. This constant threat of violence and the actual daily occurrence of police murder and brutality of colonized/racialized subjects is genocide. The intention of settler colonialism to eliminate the threat of racialized subjects is ongoing and criminality becomes the nomenclature to sanction genocide.

Police Terror as Genocide

Violence and policing are an inseparable reality for racialized and criminalized groups in the U.S. Williams explains this point clearly:

Let's begin with the basics: violence is an inherent part of policing. The police represent the most direct means by which the state imposes its will on the citizenry. When the persuasion, indoctrination, moral pressure, and incentive measure all fail—there are the police. In the field of social control, police are specialists in violence. They are armed, trained, and authorized to use force. With varying degrees of subtlety, this colors their every action. Like the possibility of

²⁹⁴ Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, (New York: Grove, 2004), 4.

arrest, the threat of violence is implicit in every police encounter. Violence, as well as the law, is what they represent.²⁹⁵

Policing agents always have at their disposal weapons and torture tactics to be used for enforcing the law. Not only do they represent violence but for racialized groups, police have a history of violence from “rabble” frontier homicide and slave patrols to current policing of segregated urban centers. This constant threat and the actualization of this violence is genocide to racialized groups in the U.S. and for African Americans this targeting for elimination, “in whole or in part” by policing has prompted organized resistance.

As quoted from earlier, this genocidal targeting against African Americans was crystallized in the CRC’s petition to the UN, *We Charge Genocide*. In the beginning of the petition, the CRC state, “[w]e shall submit evidence, tragically voluminous of ‘acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part...the 15,000,000 Negro people of the United States...[w]e cite killings by police...our evidence concerns the thousands of Negroes who over the years have been beaten to death on chain gangs and in the back rooms of sheriff’s offices, in the cells of county jails, in precinct police stations and on city streets...’²⁹⁶ The overwhelmingly evidence of murder and brutality carried out by policing agents is presented in detailed rendition of **eighty three** recorded murders and **one hundred and twenty six** cases of police brutality, negligence, wrongful arrest and kidnapping from 1945-1951. This pattern of coordinated genocide speaks to both the impunity and sanctioning of these murders and beatings by the local and federal

²⁹⁵ Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue*, 9.

²⁹⁶ Civil Rights Congress, *We Charge Genocide*...4.

government. In the typology of genocidal acts submitted in the petition, policing is the introductory example, demonstrating that the CRC understood that policing was the most visible genocidal act being carried out by the State.

The State's will and culpability of sanctioning genocide against African Americans through policing agents is made clear in the petition. The CRC writes, "Once the classic method of lynching was the rope. Now it is the police mans' bullet. To many an American the police are the government, certainly its most visible representative. We submit that the evidence suggests that the killing of Negroes has become police policy in the United States and that police policy is the most practical expression of government policy."²⁹⁷ The CRC understood police murder as the most modern expression of lynching. Though white mob violence and non-police lynching were still a reality for Africans Americans in South, police lynching was done with the same government impunity and largely widespread throughout all parts of the U.S., especially in urban areas. The CRC qualifies policing, not just individual police murders but as genocide with intent to carry out the goal of settler colonialism.

Another author who has continued the work of the CRC in discerning police terror as genocide is Joào Costa Vargas. Specifically he juxtaposes anti-Black genocide in Rio de Janeiro with the United States. He looks at genocide as a continuum that has both government sanctioned policies as a well as a culture which maintains the genocidal violence as normalized aspect of social control. In looking at policing carried out at the federal level, he writes that "[t]he Federal Bureau of Investigation's Counter-Intelligence

²⁹⁷ Ibid..., 8-9.

Programs, which explicitly targeted Black and Indian organizers for elimination, and the government's [*especially local police*] complicity in the "crack epidemic", among other well-known facts, are only some of the most visible faces of a system that works by devaluing the lives of non-Whites and perceiving their autonomous and legitimate organizations as a threat."²⁹⁸ COINTELPRO is arguably one of the clearest examples of government sanctioned genocide that utilized policing to target political activist, specifically African Americans, Native Americans, and Chicano/a activists. The numbers of deaths and death sentences that were carried out in coordination with local police agents demonstrates that structural reaction to organizing against genocide.²⁹⁹ However the vast majority African Americans and other people of color murdered by police need not be organizing for radical social change, but need only to exist to represent a threat to the white supremacist capitalist patriarchal State. This threat by existence to settler colonial domination is a key precursor to genocide and the devaluing of life for African Americans, Indigenous, and other people of color.

Concluding Thoughts: Ending or Continuing Genocide

The definitional, theoretical, and practical aspects of policing in the United States warrant a question on the horizon of racial genocide. Police power is part of continuum which began with the initial foundation of settler colonial frontier violence and has continued to modern forms of policing in which African Americans and other people of

²⁹⁸ João Costa Vargas, *Never Meant to Survive: Genocide and Utopias in Black Diaspora Communities*, (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008) 13.

²⁹⁹ The murders of Fred Hampton, Bunch Carter, Bobby Hutton and the death/life sentences of Mumia Abu Jamal, Romaine "Chip" Fitzgerald, and Marshall "Eddie" Conway as just a small sample of examples of coordinated efforts by local police.

color are continual targeted “in whole or in part” for destruction by the guns, batons, and the handcuffs of the police. Even with numbers and data of premature death, like that presented by the CRC, police genocidal murder is far from being stopped in any significant way and actually may be on the rise. In fact, according to the Los Angeles Times website’s Homicide Report, since 2007 in LA County there have been 238 reported police involved murders in Los Angeles County. This number when compared to the total number of homicides demonstrates that nearly **1 out of every 5** reported homicides in LA County is committed by the police.³⁰⁰

Policing has shown itself to be dynamic and mold itself to social conditions to continue its genocidal targeting of people of color. Since *We Charge Genocide*, the police have evolved from a nearly all white and male sworn officer force to a multicultural, multi-gender, equal opportunity employer. In cities like Los Angeles, one can often see banners displayed at police stations specifically recruiting Pacific Islanders, African American, and Latinos. This has meant that genocidal murder and brutality is slowing growing to being committed by police officers of color, especially in urban centers. Policing has developed a gendering aspect as well, as the Los Angeles Police Department has developed the self-proclaimed country’s first transgender holding cell and specific protocol for booking transgender people.³⁰¹

The genocidal policies have also evolved over time and have taken on new names. The Slave Passes and Sun Down laws of the South which sanctioned and obligated police

³⁰⁰ *The Los Angeles Time “The Homicide Report”*, <http://projects.latimes.com/homicide/blog/page/1/>

³⁰¹ *Los Angeles Times*, “LAPD to House Transgender Arrestees in Separate Section”, April 12, 2012. <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/lanow/2012/04/lapd-jail-transgender.html>

to target all African Americans out in public have transformed into Broken Windows and Gang Injunctions. The latter being one of the most modern forms of genocidal destruction, putting restraining orders on whole communities which profile, restricting movement, and add decades to criminal cases against youth of color as a “gang” deterrent. In California, the genocidal targeting of youth of color, especially young men of color has transformed street organizations from “gangs” into “street terrorist” under the Street Terrorism Enforcement and Protection Act. Following in the escalation of the global and domestic “War on Terror”, the LAPD is the first known police department in California to begin collecting data on “non-criminal activity” and creating Suspicious Activities Reports (SARs) which are submitted to a federal fusion center which disaggregate the data and reports to over 100 federal, state, city, and private policing agencies.

As these markers of genocide beacon like road flares on a historical highway from settler colonialism and chattel slavery to the police slayings of youth riding bikes or using the BART, the question emerges as to when the next *We Charge Genocide* will be written? When will the genocidal policies that destroy the very foundation of communities be overturned? When will the structure of settler colonialism be dismantled? An even more perplexing question comes before the *when* and that is of *how* will this transformation look like? To answer these questions, this essay posits that policing in the U.S. must be viewed within a structure that began with the colonization of indigenous land and the slaving of Africans. This understanding will move any organizing effort past notions of reform and instead to a political praxis of abolition

which has the potential to bring about the beginnings of a healing and transformative process for reconciliation and an end to genocide.

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