

*IN ABSENTIA: THE LOST ONES OF AMERICA'S/MOTOWN'S REVOLUTION(S)*

By

Joyce-Zoë Farley

A DISSERTATION

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## ABSTRACT

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*In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* is a non-traditional documentary dissertation film contesting and adding to the history of Sunday, July 23, 1967—the 1967 Detroit Insurrection—from Black residents and eyewitnesses using their oral history testimonies. This unorthodox undertaking uses a collection of detailed video-recorded, critical ethnographic, thematic life history oral histories from thirty residents, with ten participants selected for the first part, who survived, participated, chronicled, and/or attempted to restore law and order during the chaos. Interviewees assess, challenge, correct, and add to the metanarrative of urban uprising and the Detroit rebellion, which is overshadowed by an abundance of misinterpretations of Black life in the city, media perversions of Black agency and performance, and critiques of rioting rhetoric.

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This is for the city of Detroit, the summer interning at WXYZ ABC 7 Detroit, and its wonderful residents who provided me with an education, a project, and a career for a lifetime.

To my incredible village of family, friends, fictive kin, loved ones, and the list goes on.

THANK YOU!

*In remembrance of*

The ancestors

Maggie Ward (my paternal grandmother)

Egbert M. Kirnon, Jr. (my maternal grandfather)

Lenora Greene Morris (my fictive kin grandmother and childhood babysitter in Brooklyn, NY)

Edward Brazelton Jr. (former owner of Brazelton's Florist and great friend in Detroit, MI)

Patricia Sanders (my paternal aunt)

Lawrence R. Kirnon, I (my maternal great uncle)

Their prayers, impact, stories, wisdom, and spirit continue to light my path and fuel my dreams.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### *Narrators*

Herb Boyd

Judge Ulysses Boykin

Dwike Dooley

Betty Edwards

Renee Hudson

Orlin Jones

Dr. Howard Lindsey

Karen Schrock

Morris Schrock

Betty-Ann Walton

### *Dissertation Committee*

Dr. Glenn Chambers, Associate Professor in History (Co-Chair)

Dr. Geri Alumit Zeldes, Professor in Journalism (Co-Chair)

Dr. Tama Hamilton-Wray, Associate Professor in the Residential College of Arts & Humanities

Mr. Jeff Wray, Professor of Film Studies in English

## PREFACE

The fundamental premise of a revolution is that the existing social structure has become incapable of solving the urgent problems of development of the nation.<sup>1</sup>

~Leon Trotsky (1879-1940)

*The History of the Russian Revolution*

The thing worse than rebellion is the thing that causes rebellion.<sup>2</sup>

~Frederick Douglass (1817-1895)

“Reconstruction”

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard Roy Frank, ed., *Quotationary*, (New York: Random House, 2001), 731.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 729.

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## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

The script is a hybrid of the broadcast journalism TV format and the oral history transcript.

### Script Key

FS—Full Screen (graphic, text, and/or picture)

MS—Medium shot                      MS/CU—a medium shot transitioning to close up

WS—Wide shot                        WS/MS—a wide shot transitioning to medium shot

CU—Close up

## **THE BEGINNING**

## **INTRODUCTION**

White America has heavily invested and luxuriated in, and many still live in and support, “alternative facts” and dreams made of smoke and mirrors, which significantly contributed to the hundreds of urban insurrections during the 1960s. It reached a tumultuous pinnacle in 1967 (Detroit and Newark) and then again in 1968 (after Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. assassination in Memphis, TN). Part of the dream has compounded and birthed new and existing inequalities pushing an already exhausted Black America to respond with feasible demands, indignation, and then fury, simultaneously communities were destroyed in the wait. Urban uprising of the 1960s and its incendiary causes, policies, and societal norms are just a few of the many issues and events, which have adversely impacted the quality of life of its residents, Black and white, and as such some American cities have yet to recover some fifty years later. It offers and is the model of how to progress towards civil rights, an equitable, responsive, and respective government and country.

Urban insurrection of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is a controversially inaccurate subject plagued with overwhelming misinformation, lies, and until recently, embarrassingly timeless cautionary tales. It’s painfully obvious the country failed to learn, honor, and correct despicable behaviors, standards, and systemic issues over 50 years in the making, post-Civil Rights Act of 1964, a monumental and pivotal piece of legislation for Blacks in this country. Indicatively, the recent global protests and unrests against police brutality, racism, and colonialism following the video-recorded murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota in May 2020 was the apex of repeated onslaught of racist police or white civilian involved deaths of Black civilians—Elijah McClain (August 2019 in Aurora, Colorado), Arnaud Arbery (February 2020 in Glynn County, Georgia), Breonna Taylor (March 2020 in Louisville, Kentucky), and many others. The

numerous protests are maneuvers from the 1960s playbook, but has considerably expanded and is now a global movement. In July 2020, The New York Times reported the Black Lives Matter campaign (BLM) is possibly the biggest movement in domestic history<sup>3</sup>. It bested the Women’s March in January 2017, which is believed to have seen roughly three to five million people participate in a day-long event in cities across the country—Boston, Atlanta, Denver, Los Angeles, Phoenix, St. Paul (Minnesota), and Key West (Florida).<sup>4</sup> The march’s main stage was in Washington, D.C., there, speakers addressed Donald Trump’s misogynistic and vulgar remarks about women and women’s rights over their bodies.

In a dramatic twist of irony, the causes of the 1960s uprisings have resurfaced this year: Police brutality, lack of social services, housing, crippled job and real estate markets, employment glass/concrete ceiling, discrimination, and racism tore apart and destroyed portions of New York, Los Angeles, Houston, Atlanta, Chicago, Portland (Oregon), Detroit, and many other cities, small and big. The domestic civil war which is being fought in person and online, thanks to email marketing and social media with hashtag activism and hashtag challenges, is one of the many forces behind the infusion of tyrannical power figures, violence, lost businesses, militarized police, and martial law edicts. These are several parallel and similar issues and actions between the 1960s and 2020 insurrections.

*“A hard head makes a sore behind”* —what’s more surprising is some of the ideas being proposed to meet BLM and other Black liberation groups demands, and at the top of the list is “Defund the Police”. The defunding of the police is a nationwide campaign targeted at the local

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<sup>3</sup> Larry Buchanan, Quoctrung Bui, and Jugal Patel, “Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History,” *The New York Times*, July 3, 2020, nytimes.com,

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/07/03/us/george-floyd-protests-crowd-size.html>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.,

Anemona Hartocolis and Yamiche Alcindor, “Women’s March Highlights as Huge Crowds Protest Trump: We’re not going away,” *NYTimes.com* January 21, 2017

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/21/us/womens-march.html>

level with the intent of giving Blacks control of their communities and demilitarizing law enforcement agencies.<sup>5</sup> The solution to that demand is a partial reduction of police funding, community policing, and a much more tolerant and patient police force. Community policing was suggested in the 1968 Kerner Commission Report studying Detroit, Newark (New Jersey), and the hundreds of urban rebellions in the 1960s. This is just one of the many suggestions in the book, which based on the current state of affairs, no one in a position of power read or took seriously, and makes *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* an incredibly timely and indispensable project. The purpose of my digital dissertation to undo the erasure of lived Black experiences, amend, and contest the historical record of Sunday, July 23, 1967, as well as, the gaze on Black America, specifically, Black Detroit, and the ensuing fallout. Moreover, this chronologically relevant and disruptively innovative multimedia and multilayered dissertation project disrupts the norms and mores of the academy by campaigning and displaying unorthodox research publishing/dissemination mediums, as well as, creating conversation and a lane for Black voices to be added to the historical record.

In accordance with the research and the collected oral histories, and as discussed in the literature review, I developed a four-point theory the *Quaternion of White Delusion*, which based on the research and narrator pre-interviews, asserts the causes of urban insurrection and its erroneous history, is sustained by white fear, gaze, entitlement, and branding. The unsubstantiated paranoia continues to infringe on Black life.

My disruptive and innovative work is public history and purposely accessible to all. Detroit's public history isn't completely public or open as demonstrated in the local and state archival gaps. I visited the Bentley Historical Archives at the University of Michigan in Ann

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<sup>5</sup> BLM & #defundthepolice, *blacklivesmatter.com*, May 30, 2020 <https://blacklivesmatter.com/defundthepolice/>

Arbor, Walter Reuther Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University, Library of Michigan, Detroit Police Department Museum, and Detroit Public Library for documents, maps, pictures, video, audio recordings, and whatever they had on file or could offer on my topic. The gaps and the solutions are discussed further in the pre-production section.

Subsequently, I visited the Library of Congress which did fill in some voids, but not all. Again, with that in mind, my current and forthcoming research works to remove ambiguity, uncertainty, and presumptions made about urban uprising and Detroit 1967. This methodological statement is written in reflection of the project processes, successes, failures, and lessons learned. This is an 11-year excursion into all things Detroit, Black history and culture, documentary filmmaking, journalism, digital humanities, and community-engagement and building. Ultimately, this is how *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* came to be.

#### Detroit 2009

While matriculating at Hampton University, I was afforded back-to-back internships with The E.W. Scripps Company as a corporate intern working in the creative services and sales departments. In the summer of 2009, the company assigned me to WXYZ ABC 7 Detroit in Southfield, Michigan. This would be my first time in Motown. My arrival and experience in the city was unforgettable, indelible, and transformative. It was a game changer that impacted the trajectory of my life. I went from envisioning being a storied legal professional and general counsel for a media company such as Viacom or NBC Universal to dreaming of being a revered *National Geographic* or *Essence* special assignment producer, activist, and creative. In so many words, Detroit awakened something in me, a love, a passion, that I didn't know existed and thus the scholar-entrepreneur-activist was born. *In Absentia* is the follow through on the promise made in 2009 to come back, tell Detroit's story, and be the change I wish to see in the world.

At the conclusion of my internship at WXYZ ABC 7 Detroit I completed my first mini-documentary *Make Me Wanna Holler: The Detroit 1967 Riots*. I interviewed several residents including legendary former WXYZ news anchor Bill Bonds (deceased) and WXYZ anchor and reporter Erik Smith (retired) about their experiences and memories of Sunday, July 23, 1967. There were no set questions per se: it was a subjective interview, for which I asked questions based on the pre-interview, interviewees experiences, thoughts, activities and the like. The 15-minute film used the station's archive footage, resident and station talent oral histories, pictures from various city resources, and Marvin Gaye's Motown classic "Make Me Wanna Holler (Inner City Blues)," hence the title. *Make Me Wanna Holler: The Detroit 1967 Riots* never aired, it was viewed internally, and it helped me secure future employment with The E.W. Scripps following my graduation from Hampton University in 2010. One of the most profound eureka moments of the mini doc would come in September 2013 when I was a graduate student at Columbia University in the masters of oral history program. I would learn that what I advertised as an intensive investigative journalism feature was indeed my informal introduction to oral history.

The filmmaking experience was a summer long learning pilgrimage, which included advancing my editing skills using Final Cut Pro software, creating a story line, using creative license, asking the right questions, and the list goes on. The notes (field notes) I took were and continue to be an invaluable resource as they not only reflect personal observations, but documented names, places, dates, and contact information for everyone I talked to. Most important, were and are the lasting friendships I developed and I'm forever grateful for them. Mr. Edward Brazelton Jr. (now deceased), second generation of Brazelton's Florist on Grand River Boulevard also known as Berry Gordy Jr. Boulevard (three houses down from the Motown Museum) was a fictive grandfather. He would be the subject of many class projects. I spent a

considerable amount of time at Brazelton's shop that summer, and subsequently in 2014 when I returned to the state. "Woman, what are you doing here? You came back." I zealously responded, "I said I would." Mr. Edward Brazelton Jr. passed away in 2017. He was the first death I experienced while completing my dissertation and I was devastated. My project is in honor of his life, our conversations, and his welcoming open door. I keep in touch with his sister Alice, who now runs the family business, and I'm very much a part of the family.

### *The Beginning*

*In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* is a labor of love, passion, and insatiable curiosity looking for and needing to understand, un-complicate, and unburden Detroit, America's stepchild. It is founded on my 2009 research question—What happened to Detroit? And, its succeeding inquiries: Where is the voice(s) of the resident? How and why did historians get the story wrong? Why did/do the people refuse to truthfully embrace this topic with the attention it rightfully deserves(d)? In retrospect, did the community get what it demanded/needed from the beginning? The critical ethnographic established film is composed of structured thematic life oral histories using a set of open-ended questions concentrating on the research questions and areas of focus—rhetoric debate, insurrection and the inflammatory event, Black life in Detroit, looting (for survival), National Guard treatment, Vietnam War, and post-rebellion life. See Appendix A for the list of interview questions. The questions incorporate what I read, listened to, observed, and experienced, as well as, the interviewee pre-screening. They were a guide for the interview and what I was looking to capture. I was incredibly cognizant and careful to honor regional Black dialect and terms, and included them when necessary. This is discussed further in the production section.



This gumbo of a film utilizes a number of documentary film genres. This will be discussed in further detail in the method section. At first glance, its apparent that the poetic and interview style documentary is employed through the use of a collection of riveting and compelling accounts from ten interviewees who were looters, residents, and/or eyewitnesses to the madness—four women and six men (in order of their appearance)— Dr. Howard Lindsey, Mr. Herb Boyd, Mrs. Karen Schrock, Mrs. Betty-Ann Walton, Mr. Orlin Jones, Judge Ulysses Boykin, Mr. Morris Schrock, Mrs. Betty Edwards, Mrs. Renee Hudson, and Mr. Dwiki Dooley. A poetic documentary film has little to no narration and is crafted on or around a poetic statement(s) or image(s). According to famed documentarian Ken Burns, “...poetic documentary eschews linear continuity in favor of mood, tone, or the juxtaposition of imagery.”<sup>6</sup> Likewise, filmmaker Alex Burton adds to the definition,

“...the poetic move[s] away from continuity editing and instead of organized images of the material world by means of association and patterns, both in terms of time and space...the films [are] fragmentary, impressionistic, lyrical. Their disruption of the coherence of time and space—a coherence favored by the fiction films of the day...”<sup>7</sup>

Similarly, an interview film is self-explanatory, it is developed on the content of conversation(s) between interviewer and interviewee on a themed or biographical interview. Both forms of are used and interwoven throughout the 31-minute collage of testimonies and memories, which are fused together based on theme and archive footage and accompanied by jazz music from jam sessions at Bert’s Warehouse Theatre in the city’s east side.

Finding and selecting interviewees was a combination of referrals, soliciting (email and social media), word-of-mouth, chance meeting, networking, and/or my prior relationships from

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<sup>6</sup> Ken Burns, “Film Documentary Guide: 6 Types of Documentaries,” *MasterClass.com*, Last Updated June 15, 2020, <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/film-documentary-guide#what-are-documentary-modes>

<sup>7</sup> Alex Burton, “6 Types of Documentary,” *AlexBurtonjournal.blogspot.com*, Last Updated August 20, 2019, <https://collaborativedocumentary.wordpress.com/6-types-of-documentary/>

my 2009 internship. This is further explained in the methodology section. The narrators are all of retirement age and are retired, working, and/or active in the community. With the exception of Mr. Boyd who resides in the metropolitan New York city area, everyone else resides in the greater Detroit area, which includes portions of Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. All were either direct descendants or participants in the first or second wave of the Great Migration coming from Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, and/or the southern interior (Tennessee and Missouri) and moved north to Detroit for blue-collar jobs with the Big 3 (Ford, GM, and Chrysler). Mr. Dwiki Dooley's parents met in Black Bottom, a Black enclave on the east side of Detroit. His father is a native of Birmingham, Alabama and his mother is of Covington, TN. Mrs. Betty Edwards, the daughter of cotton farm sharecroppers in Inverness, Mississippi, shares vivid memories of the farm and the family relocating to Black Bottom once they arrived in the city. These stories are like many others who transversed north to the "Promise Land" looking for liberation, jobs, and opportunities not available in the south. The migration story is integral to understanding the formation of urban mecca's, reform, and geography, as well as, race riots, violence, and uprisings in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Great Migration, contingent on the historian, is a movement in three parts: starting from the commencement of World War I subsiding shortly after the war's end, picking up again with World War II and the war machine expectedly concluding when troops returned home, and comes to a dramatic end in the midst of the celebrated 60s. This exodus of Blacks leaving all points south to northern (Detroit), western (Los Angeles), and eastern (New York City) cities set the stage for an explosion of Black culture and historical events in this country shifting the narrative, trajectory, opportunities, possibilities, and quality of life for generations of Blacks to come.

It would become perhaps the biggest underreported story of the twentieth century.

It was vast. It was leaderless. It crept along so many thousands of currents over so long a stretch a time as to be difficult for the press truly to capture while it was under way. Over the course of decades, some six million black southerners left the land of their forefathers and fanned out across the country for an uncertain existence in nearly every other corner of America...It grew out of the unmet promises made after the Civil War, and through the sheer weight of it, helped push the country toward the civil rights revolutions of the 1960s.<sup>8</sup>

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

*It indeed, was a long, hot summer*—The nation watched two wars in Detroit and Vietnam from the comfort of their homes, "...it was central to an overall pattern of social rebellion, anticolonial revolts, and global uprising of the oppressed in 1967-1968. In the last year of his life, Martin Luther King Jr broke his silence over the Vietnam War and emphatically declared 'the nation must undergo a radical revolution of values' to conquer 'the giant triples of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism'."<sup>9</sup> "Yes, a war had begun. What started out as a protest fueled with anger against racism (the city's racist system), became a war—Detroit Negroes against the 'System'."<sup>10</sup>

The story discussed and repeated ad nauseum as to the combustible event, is a raid on the city's west side at a blind pig (illegal bar) in the early morning hours of an unseasonably warm summer morning on Sunday, July 23, 1967, by the Detroit Police Department's 10<sup>th</sup> precinct. Officers found themselves unprepared for the number of patrons celebrating the homecoming of two Black Vietnam veterans, reports state there were about eighty men and women in the establishment. In a recent discovery, police were raiding several businesses late Saturday night for illegal alcohol operations before arriving at Economy Printing Company on 12<sup>th</sup> St (now

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<sup>8</sup> Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* (New York: Random House, 2010), 9.

<sup>9</sup> Scott Kurashige, "1967 Detroit riots, 'resistance' then and now", *ALJAZEERA.COM*, July 23, 2017, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/07/1967-detroit-riots-resistance-170723182837596.html>

<sup>10</sup> Heather Buchanan, Sharon Stanford, Teresa Kimble, eds. *Eyes On Fire: Witness to the Detroit Riot of 1967*, (Detroit: Aquarius Press, 2007), 41.

Rosa Parks Blvd) and Clairmont on the city's west side in the Virginia Park neighborhood. The raid and the fallout lead to a four-day insurrection of looting, violence (initiated mostly by the National Guard), fires, theft, and death.

In the following hours, rallying in the frustration, brouhaha, and ire of “rioters”, both Black and white looters ransacked local businesses, people were arrested (sometimes beaten), buildings were destroyed and/or set ablaze, people were killed, and sniper fire rang through the air. The sniper fire and the gunmen remain an unclear aspect of the uprising, as the mysterious gunplay is believed to be a combination of hostile and undertrained National Guardsmen combined with agitated and vexed city police officers. In futile attempts to regain law and order and stifle the violence, then-mayor Jerome Cavanaugh with the support of then-governor George Romney gradually enacted mandates to curb the madness: ordered a gas embargo, enforced a 9 p.m. curfew, and prohibition (liquor/alcohol wouldn't and couldn't be sold until further notice). During and after, and in concert with City Hall, the Detroit Police were aided by additional men, federal weaponry, and skills from the 82<sup>nd</sup> and 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne units (the Army), Michigan State Police, and National Guard adhering to duty orders—roughly 17,000 armed Black and white men roamed the city.<sup>11</sup> These Black men in the Army were war-torn veterans returning from combat in Vietnam. For many, the local battle retraumatized some war-torn soldiers returning from guerilla warfare in Vietnam with PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), who were then ordered to report to smother out the anarchy. Unsurprisingly, the National Guard's response was a deadly combination of fear and racism, as most of the men were young white, untrained, and inexperienced for domestic battle, lived outside of Motown

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<sup>11</sup> Bridge Magazine and the Detroit Journalism Cooperative, *The Intersection: What Detroit Has Gained, And Lost, 50 Years After The Uprising of 1967* (Traverse City, MI: Mission Point Press, 2017), xvii.

(specifically Detroit or Lansing suburbs), had obvious racism dwelling in their souls, and exercised Jim/James Crow values.

Below is an abbreviated timeline of events demonstrative of city management, lawlessness, and political fighting. Furthermore, the detailed timeline in *Detroit 1967: Origins, Impacts, Legacies* is the first of its kind. The book is an anthology and a new contender to the history and canon on the unrest. Its writers are residents and scholars whose familiarity with the subject is on par with some of the most knowledgeable residents or locally renowned historians interviewed in *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)*. The information is a fusion of data from various resources constructed by the Detroit Historical Society.

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Saturday, July 22, 1967 | @10:30 p.m.—Undercover vice officers Charles Henry and Joseph Brown attempted to gain access to the blind pig on 9125 Clairmount Avenue. They were turned away.   |
| Sunday, July 23, 1967   | @ 3:35 a.m.—Officer Henry joined a group of young ladies and slipped into the blind pig and ordered and a beer. After ten minutes, Henry did not show. The vice squad moved in.<br>@4-4:40 a.m.—A crowd gathered as police brought patrons out for transport to jail.<br>@4:40 a.m. Police finished placing arrestees into the wagons and left.<br>@5 a.m. Lieutenant Raymond Good of the 10 <sup>th</sup> precinct is on scene. He reports of the several hundred people in the streets and orders withdrawal of police.<br>@5:10 a.m. A call of robbery is sent into the 10 <sup>th</sup> precinct.<br>@5:20 a.m. Police Commissioner Ray Girardin called Mayor Jerome Cavanaugh on the emergency line at home.<br>@6 a.m. The first looting arrest was made. |

Monday, July 24, 1967

@7 a.m. DPD notified Michigan State Police, the National Guard, Wayne County sheriff and prosecutor, and the FBI.

@8:55 a.m. CBS radio affiliate in Detroit, WJS, aired the first national broadcast about the riots. It was the only report for several hours.

@10 a.m. Grace Episcopal church is a meeting point for city leaders, businessmen, and lawmakers to brainstorm plans to attempt to stop the riot by organizing peace patrols.

@2 p.m. Police request permission to use tear gas, but were denied due to high winds.

@4 p.m. The first case of arson on Grand River and Warren Avenues was reported.

@4:30 p.m. Fire stations reported that 95 percent of crews reported to duty within hours.

@7:45 p.m. Cavanaugh issues citywide curfew 9 p.m.-5:30 a.m.

@8:15 p.m. The first newspaper accounts of the riots hit the streets.

@9:10 p.m. Eight hundred of the nearly 1,500 troops were assigned to Detroit.

@10:25 p.m. Cavanaugh and Girardin ordered the closing of city gas stations.

@ 3 a.m. Cavanaugh and U.S. Attorney General Romney announced the request of five thousand federal troops.

@5 a.m. Romney informed by Ramsey Clark that a formal request of troops must be submitted.

@6:45 a.m. Cavanaugh activated city assistance for emergency food and shelter provisions.

@8:30 a.m. Romney telegrams President Johnson and Clark recommending immediate deployment of troops. Clark responded that the governor must "request" troops, not "recommend".

@11:02 a.m. President ordered federal troops and they stayed on Selfridge Air Force Base until further orders. Federal troops were to "support and assist" and not "supplant" local agencies.

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Tuesday, July 25, 1967   | @8:15 p.m. Judge Damon Keith declared the unrest was not a “race riot”.<br>@12 a.m. Hubert Locke stated that the “veteran police officers were convinced that they were engaged in the worst urban guerilla warfare witnessed in the United States in the 20 <sup>th</sup> century.”                            |
| Wednesday, July 26, 1967 | @10 a.m. Governor Romney permitted the sale of gasoline from noon until 5 p.m. with a limit of five gallons per. customer.<br>@2:15 a.m. A clerk from the Wayne County morgue called Detective Joseph Zisler of the Homicide Bureau telling of three dead bodies in the Manor House annex of the Algiers Motel. |
| Friday, July 28, 1967    | @2:50 p.m. The National Guard began its gradual withdrawal.   |
| Monday, July 31, 1967    | @8:21 a.m. Curfew hours were reduced from midnight to 5:30 a.m. Alcohol could be served from 7 a.m. to midnight.  |
| Tuesday, August 1, 1967  | @12 p.m. Curfew restrictions were lifted. A full pullout was scheduled for noon on Friday, August 4 National Guardsmen. <sup>12</sup>   |

During the chaos and confusion, the Algiers Motel incident went unknown and underreported until three young Black men laid cold and lifeless on the hotel floor in a racially motivated bloodbath. This incident stunned and enraged Black Detroit, as racial tensions boiled over when the story was made public. In addition to three murders, a handful of Black men and white women were brutally assaulted by three white DPD officers, their Billy clubs, guns, and the force of their racial animus and outrage at the sight of Black men and white women intermingling.

...law enforcement officers beat and terrorized other black and whites. It is difficult, however, to recreate precisely what happened because the officers involved tried to conceal their role in the night’s events; and the witnesses to what had occurred were frightened, their opportunity to observe the killings was

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<sup>12</sup> Joel Stone ed, *Detroit 1967: Origins, Impacts, Legacies*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2017) 119-136.

limited, at best, they gave conflicting and often contradictory accounts of events, and they found it difficult to identify their assailants.<sup>13</sup>

In the wee hours of Tuesday, July 26 at the incredulous Algiers Motel, officers from the various branches of law enforcement responded to a call of reported sniper fire (now acknowledged as dubious). The report led to the murder of three Black men (Carl Cooper, Fred Temple, and Aubrey Pollard), and the torture and brutish attack of two white women and nine other Black men for entertaining each other—a huge cultural no-no. Reportedly, “racist psychopaths”<sup>14</sup>, police officers Ronald August, Robert Paille, and David Senack, were charged for their egregious and reprehensible acts; along with Melvin Dismukes, a Black security officer. Dismukes’ charges were eventually dismissed. August, Paille, and Senack faced trial in Mason, MI (a Lansing suburb, an hour and a half away from Detroit) and were acquitted by an all-white jury, which further goaded, angered, and incensed a tired and testy Black community. To counter the unjust verdict, a tribunal led by Rev. Dan Aldridge, founder of the Shrine of the Black Madonna, Ken Crockel, attorney, and several civil rights leaders found the officers guilty. The hotel, demolished in 1979, is part of the city’s convenient and purposeful amnesia and historical erasure. In the midst of the site’s current wild grasslands, there’s no marker of indication of the motel and/or the horrific brutalization and murders of Cooper, Temple, and Pollard.

The murders were the focus of *The Algiers Motel Incident*, a widely read text on the topic by author and journalist John Hersey. His work although not chronological or fluid reads like a Toni Morrison and John Grisham collaboration ebbing and flowing in identifying the who, what, when, where, why, and how. The twists and turns leave more questions than answers provided.

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<sup>13</sup> Sidney Fine, *Violence in the Model City: The Cavanagh Administration, Race Relations, and the Detroit Riot of 1967*, (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2007), 271.

<sup>14</sup> Joe T. Darden and Richard W. Thomas, *Detroit: Race Riots, Racial Conflicts, and Efforts to Bridge the Racial Divide*, (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2013), 41.



Similarly, Oscar-winning director Kathryn Bigelow's *Detroit*, which although categorized as a drama, is a sensationalized and gross misrepresentation of tragedies and turning points in the uprising. It is structured on pivotal moments during the four days i.e. Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) (deceased) calling for peace on top of a vehicle, four-year old Tanya Blanding's death by the National Guard, and the looting. Moreover, at the onset of film promotion it was marketed as a canonical film (visual aid) on the Detroit rebellion, but after viewing it, at best it's was a vague depiction of historical events. Considering Bigelow's portfolio prior to *Detroit* of gore, drama, and war (*Zero Dark Thirty*, *The Hurt Locker*, and *K-11 The Widow Maker*), for which the Detroit rebellion fits the bill, the film fails to fairly represent all that happened. While Bigelow's *Detroit* is the first major theatrical movie on the uprising, it tackles too much of it without giving adequate credence and attention to one specific moment, those impacted and their experience(s), the history (laws, policies, and brutality) attached to said events, insurrection factors not visible or known to the general public—all of this is immensely significant to the uprising metanarrative. Lastly, there wasn't a steady narrator(s), if at all. In essence, this Hollywood adaptation of history is another in line of subjects, in which Tinseltown and their feigned interest seriously dropped the ball.

### *The Structure and Cause of Insurrection*

The New Detroit Committee, a group of highly respected Black and whites with the aim of rebuilding the city after the melee developed a list of causes consistent with other sources. "In order of significance (1) police brutality, (2) overcrowded living conditions, (3) poor housing, (4) lack of jobs, (5) poverty, (6) anger with businessmen...rioters felt, however, that overcrowded living conditions was the most serious grievance rather than police brutality."<sup>15</sup> In a similar

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<sup>15</sup> *Progress Report, April 1968 The New Detroit Committee* (Detroit: Metropolitan Fund, 1968), 16.

analysis, The Bridge Collective, a collective of journalists in *The Intersection: What Detroit Has Gained, And Lost, 50 Years The Uprising of 1967*, notes the principle issues raging in the minds and psyche of Blacks were: “police brutality, unemployment, segregated and substandard housing, and public schools; a sense of powerlessness; lack of opportunity; racism.”<sup>16</sup> *The Intersection* is a necessary update to the 1968 *Reporting the Riot* by the American Newspaper Publishers Association which is a vital analysis of newspaper stories on the subject throughout the country, obviously more consideration is given to Detroit publications.

Understandably, the force and recurrence of police brutality by Detroit Police warranted Black Motown’s rebellion, police terrorized the predominantly Black neighborhood, namely the “Big Four”, four white officers who went out of their way to brutalize residents. Their cruelty knew no bounds, it claimed the life of a Black woman and was the cause of a savage beating of a Black man prior to the unrest. Corruption, the peanut butter to jelly’s police brutality, was everywhere. “[Rampant within the ranks] led to shakedowns that particularly heightened the abuse of black women prostitutes. City government was all too lax and lazy in responding or acting on complaints brought to the police civilian review board spearheaded by the Detroit branch of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), which studied and (attempted to) remedied police misbehavior. “...police misconduct was rewarded and reinforced through the racism and corruption among prosecutors and judges.”<sup>17</sup> Alarming is the astoundingly low number of complaints, resulting in disciplinary action, there were only four brutality complaints resulting in some form disciplinary action in 1956. “Between January 1 and November 30, 1956, the NAACP received 244 complaints of police misconduct, [subtracting

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<sup>16</sup> Bridge Magazine and the Detroit Journalism Cooperative, *The Intersection: What Detroit Has Gained, And Lost, 50 Years After The Uprising of 1967* (Traverse City, MI: Mission Point Press, 2017), xviii.

<sup>17</sup> Scott Kurashige, “1967 Detroit riots, ‘resistance’ then and now”, *ALJAZEERA.COM*, July 23, 2017, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/07/1967-detroit-riots-resistance-170723182837596.html>

unsubstantiated/(able) claims], the NAACP referred fifty-one brutality cases to the Police Department.”<sup>18</sup>

Sidney Fine’s *Violence in the Model City*, a highly regarded text on the 1967 Detroit disturbance has prevailed as identifying the uprising as a class, socioeconomic confrontation between the haves and have-nots, in addition to it being a race war.

Black complaints centered about the segregated existence of the city’s nonwhite population, mistreatment by merchants, the shortage of recreational facilities, the quality of education and housing available to blacks, the way the war on poverty operated in Detroit, and, most important of all jobs, the behavior of the police. A series of incidents punctuated the racial calm in the city...<sup>19</sup>

The covert segregationist-James Crow policies executed in downtown public restaurants, city pools, and housing aided in creating the rebellious atmosphere. Likewise, inexorable discrimination, neighborhood construction, destruction, boundary lines, and illegal restrictive covenants was the hindsight lesson for Detroit’s mayor Jerome Cavanaugh and his cabinet as the crushing force that fueled Sunday, July 23, 1967.

The CRC’s deputy director thought that housing was “the most pervasive of all discrimination problems”; the DUL judged it to be “the foremost problem” of Detroit’s blacks; and the head of the CCEO called it “the greatest single problem in the greater Detroit area.” In a riot retrospective, Mayor Cavanaugh remarked that if there was one area in which his administration had not done enough, it was housing.<sup>20</sup>

Virginia Park, a new Black enclave for those taking a huge gamble on the promises of community investment and change became inundated by the paucity of lodging vacancies and accommodations reaching epic proportions in the 1960s. “Some 60,000 poor people were crammed in the neighborhood’s 460 acres, living in squalor and in divided and sub-divided

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<sup>18</sup> Sidney Fine, *Violence in the Model City: The Cavanaugh Administration, Race Relations, and the Detroit Riot of 1967* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2007), 39.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

apartments.”<sup>21</sup> Urban Renewal often called “Negro Removal” by Blacks in urban metropolises was a jarring and recognizable observation of living in blight and then herded like cattle to live elsewhere on top of each other like lab animals in project apartments. Under the guise of “Urban Redevelopment/Renewal” was piloted in Detroit shortly after World War II. The federally funded program promised beautification, economic boom, environmental prosperity, and much more. The illusive promise disastrously flopped, fell short, and robbed Blacks of their generational homes, regional history, spatial memory, and relationship to the land. During the first and second wave of the Great Migration, self-sustaining east side neighborhoods of Black Bottom and Paradise Valley was home to Black migrants arriving from the South. The two lively and prosperous neighborhoods was thought of as disposable and treated as such.

In 1946 Detroit, as part of the Detroit Plan, initiated the Gratiot Redevelopment Project on a 129-acre on the city’s lower east side that included a portion of Hastings Street. The city’s plan for the area prefigured the substance of Title I of the Housing Act of 1949, which provided federal funds for urban renewal. Under the federal statute, local authorities were to draw up plans for urban redevelopment, acquire and clear the site, and sell the land to developers at market prices. The federal government paid the city two-thirds of the difference between the costs it incurred in purchasing and clearing the site and the price paid by the developer for the bare land. The local agency was to provide for the relocation of the displaced families by making available “decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings’ at reasonable rents and reasonably accessible to place of employment.”<sup>22</sup>

The Gratiot Redevelopment Plan razed both Black Bottom and Paradise Valley for the Chrysler Freeway (Interstate/Business Spur of 375), forcing the relocation of families and businesses to the Virginia Park neighborhood on the west side. Historian Jeffrey Honer stresses in *Detroit 1967: Origins, Impacts, Legacies*, Pre-World War II the residential density crisis Pre

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<sup>21</sup> Kenneth T. Walsh, “50 Years After Race Riots, Issues Remain the Same”, *U.S. NEWS.COM*, July 12, 1967, <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/articles/2017-07-12/50-years-later-causes-of-1967-summer-riots-remain-largely-the-same>

<sup>22</sup> Sidney Fine, *Violence in the Model City: The Cavanagh Administration, Race Relations, and the Detroit Riot of 1967* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2007), 61.

World War II, seventy-five percent of Blacks lived in the Paradise Valley and Black Bottom neighbors, east of Woodward Avenue.<sup>23</sup> He asserts the razing as part of the Interstate Highway Act of the late 1950s. Frustrating and angering the displaced, the city’s “redevelopment” plan wasn’t solid or sound despite marketing indicating such— “After the city cleared the Gratiot site, for example, it could not find developers willing to build low-or moderate-cost housing there, and so the land remained vacant for several years, derisively referred to as ‘Ragweed Acres’ .<sup>24</sup>

Contributing to the egregious and racially motivated housing issue, the city hadn’t invested in building any new public housing since 1952. Fueling the fire, Fine suggests that of the nearly eighty-two hundred public housing units, sixty percent were home to Blacks, which was a drop in the bucket in comparison to the nearly “thousands living in cramped quarters, living with relatives, in rooming houses, under threat of eviction, and in the throes of urban renewal.”<sup>25</sup> Reflective of most cities and their negligent efforts to house their Black residents post-razing, “...Detroit’s relocation efforts had been uncoordinated and inadequate,”...”We are not doing the job we should be doing, said Cavanaugh’s Executive Secretary Robert Knox.”<sup>26</sup>

#### *Fifty years of insight and rhetoric debate*

The country’s understanding and the proper usage of rebellion rhetoric is incredibly limited and founded on the anachronistic conservative white imaginary, white fears, and politics. Pointedly, I tackled the creative work of the destabilizing and crippling of Black communities by whites in the four-point theory— “Quaternion of White Delusion”—it asserts the causes of urban insurrection and its spurious narrative, is sustained by white fear, gaze, entitlement, and

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<sup>23</sup> Joel Stone ed, *Detroit 1967: Origins, Impacts, Legacies*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2017) 82.

<sup>24</sup> Sidney Fine, *Violence in the Model City: The Cavanaugh Administration, Race Relations, and the Detroit Riot of 1967* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2007), 62.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

branding. The unfounded fear grand in its hysteria and execution, put Blacks and their survival in a chokehold and trampled on our freedom, progress, and equality. White fear, gaze, entitlement, and branding is demonstrated in the copious amounts of slanderous and sensationalistic media reports, video archives, and historiographies, as well as, the selective and convenient amnesia, and the need to “maintain law and order”. Racist and/or race-based rhetoric plays into historically disingenuous troupes of Black existence, identity, and performance conforming to the perceived misconceptions of bestiality, violent(ence), uncouth and ungrateful behaviors and attitudes, and etc. The language debate is the archetype of the Quaternion of White Delusion and the vocabulary and historical binaries and conundrums it created.

Conspiracy theories and word-of-mouth marketing abound sanitized the presser of any eyewitness or resident accounts, creating the mystery and misinformation more than 50 years in the making. Scholars, alleviating the strain and fissures in the narrative, have identified some of the theories and their development. Scholar Daryl Harris published an incredible canonical academic article in the *Journal of Black Studies*, which explored the data and noted several theories behind the misinformation, most relevant to my work is Riffraff, (Black) Criminality, and Migrant theories. They all assert that Black people regardless of their age, gender, social and/or economic standing, experiences, and/or institutional practices are to blame for their circumstances, the insurrection in their neighborhood, and the fallout thereafter.

Cavalier and ignorant men and women would assert that Detroit 1967 was a riot based on the actions and ensuing consequences, but they would be dead wrong, expressly by Blacks who experienced the police brutality, lack of social services, insufficient schools, and substandard/meager housing. The four days of lawlessness was far from it; it was a rebellion, civil disturbance, insurrection, revolution. Indeed, the violence was capricious, its hailing

achievement is it being televised for the country to see and creating a national conversation and consciousness on race. Why emphasize nomenclature? Up to and after Detroit 1967 and L.A. 1992, spontaneous rioting has been prescribed as Black behavior without further consideration or evaluation. Rhetoric certainly has done more harm than the violence itself, as Detroit's brand is laded with idealizations of unrestrained violence and anarchy. Blacks very rarely, if at all, say riot for it was a volatile expression of rage and incomprehensible frustration.

...the process of redefining the riot began shortly after it ended, with black militants who began calling the riot a rebellion of African Americans fighting against police brutality and discrimination in housing, jobs and education...few whites were willing or able to connect the historical and social causes to their tragic consequence. Most blacks have no trouble doing so.<sup>27</sup>

Black Arts Movement writer and participant and Sarah Lawrence Professor Komozi

Woodard argues for the culturally cognizant term "rebellion".

Well, I mean when we talk about the Yiddish rebellions and uprisings we use those terms. We don't talk about Yiddish riots. We talk about the Dublin or Easter rebellion, the uprising we use those terms. So—the—any kind of uprising that awakens the people to fight for self-governance and self-determination, it seems the appropriate term to use is not a riot, which is something drunks can do. But that it has meaning, right?!<sup>28</sup>

Writer Carvell Wallace, masterfully articulates the spiritual, metaphysical needed to revolt as an expression of sanity and Biblical truth.

A riot is not a tactical decision for political gain. It is a liturgy. It is a spiritual grasping for emotional justice, for assertion of self. It is an attempt to bring back into wholeness that which has been split. It is meant to reify the dual sense of life and death, hope and fury, that circumscribe the black experience. The flames of a riot are dramatic and angry. They are destructive and a violation of the most core aspect that bind our society together. And yet they are they are honest and true, dispassionate and inevitable...When Jeremiah in the Old Testament was told he must not speak the name of the Lord for fear of persecution, he remarked that 'his

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<sup>27</sup> Bridge Magazine and the Detroit Journalism Cooperative, *The Intersection: What Detroit Has Gained, And Lost, 50 Years After The Uprising of 1967* (Traverse City, MI: Mission Point Press, 2017), 11.

<sup>28</sup> *The Fraternity Black Brotherhood Reexamined*, directed by Joyce-Zoe Farley (May 2014: Masters Thesis, Columbia University)

word is in my heart like a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.<sup>29</sup>

North End native, Wanda Keys, offers a slightly differing opinion.

It wasn't a spontaneous event; it was something that was fueled over days. The way I would explain the beginning of the 1967 riot would be that it started off as a small campfire that somebody neglected to put out. Neglected, the campfire grew in a matter of a few days into a huge uncontrollable forest fire.<sup>30</sup>

Jack Schneider, an education professor at College of the Holy Cross in Massachusetts in a BuzzFeed story, accurately assessed the terminology debate and the significance of the methodic inherent racism.

...violence is framed the public as a riot (bad) or rebellion (admirable) has turned on the color of actors. If whites were involved, uprising tend to be framed as rebellion. Flip through the index of any social studies text, and you'll find some of them: Bacon's Rebellion, Shays's Rebellion, Dorr's Rebellion. The list goes on. When blacks are involved, however, an uprising isn't a rebellion; it's a riot. Harlem, Watts, Chicago. Or, more recently, Ferguson. The point here is not that a riot and a rebellion are one and the same. They aren't. A rebellion is inherently meaningful. It connotes resistance to authority or control. A riot, by contrast, disturbs an otherwise peaceful society—it is an expression of power and energy rather than of simmering resentment and honest anger. After a riot, everyone goes home and sobers up.<sup>31</sup>

### *A Change Is Gonna Come*

The Detroit revolution resulted in some widespread reform, locally specifically, as reported by the Bridge Magazine and the Detroit Journalism Cooperative:

1. Sparked the hiring of minorities among some Detroit businesses, especially by large companies.
2. Led to the creation of the civil rights organizations New Detroit Inc. and Focus: HOPE.
3. Accelerated white flight along with jobs to the suburbs.

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<sup>29</sup> Carvell Wallace, "If you're black in America, riots are a spiritual impulse not a political strategy", *Timeline.com*, June 5, 2017, [https://www.bunkhistory.org/resources/466?related=2025&relationship\\_name=RELATED](https://www.bunkhistory.org/resources/466?related=2025&relationship_name=RELATED)

<sup>30</sup> Heather Buchanan, Sharon Stanford, Teresa Kimble, eds. *Eyes On Fire: Witness to the Detroit Riot of 1967*, (Detroit: Aquarius Press, 2007), 38.

<sup>31</sup> Bridge Magazine and the Detroit Journalism Cooperative, *The Intersection: What Detroit Has Gained, And Lost, 50 Years After The Uprising of 1967* (Traverse City, MI: Mission Point Press, 2017), 11.



4. State government passed the Michigan Fair Housing Act, to combat residential segregation.
5. Started a trend of high-crime—especially homicide—and fires that continue today.
6. Ignited deep paranoia among white Detroiters and suburbanites as rumors spread for more than a year about another insurrection. (As an aside, the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, spurred civil disturbance for two days in the city, and nationwide in Black metropolises.)
7. Led to a “Riot Renaissance” (Ruinporn, Ruin photography, and etc.) architectural style of cement-block window, barbed wire, security guards and led city institutions and entertainment venues to provide “secure, well-lighted parking.”
8. Coleman Young became the first Black mayor of the city in 1973.
9. Ignorantly bestowed, gifted the Motor City an image of an active zone. An image that still cloaks Detroit.<sup>32</sup> (Dan Gilbert and several others are working to change that perception with an influx of new businesses and industry.)<sup>33</sup>

Immediately after the last of the chaos, then-President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered a study of the “long, hot summer” with then-Illinois Governor Otto Kerner at the helm. *The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* known as the Kerner Commission Report brazenly and honestly put the onus of blame on all levels of government and its subsidiaries, as well as, the media and law enforcement. The comprehensive, landmark, and vexingly choleric document was ahead of its time, widely disregarded, and is still incredibly relevant.

What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the Negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it.”<sup>34</sup> Along with honestly designating blame, “The commission found that in the 1967 riots, 83 people were killed and 1,800 injured, most of them African-American, and property valued at more than \$100 million was damaged, looted or destroyed.”<sup>35</sup>

Hailed as a crowning achievement, its blanket approach to race and racism is its strongest and biggest criticism juxtaposed against salient and lengthy findings and recommendations for

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., xix.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>34</sup> *The Kerner Report: Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), 2.

<sup>35</sup> Kenneth T. Walsh, “50 Years After Race Riots, Issues Remain the Same”, *U.S. News*, July 12, 1967, <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/articles/2017-07-12/50-years-later-causes-of-1967-summer-riots-remain-largely-the-same>

other realms of American life. The Reader's Digest version: racism is named and acknowledged, but there isn't intentional and effective change or suggested reform. Sadly, the lengthy and extensive recommendations were not honored or enacted.

Media shortfalls:

- Elements of the news media failed to portray accurately the scale and character of the violence that occurred last summer. The overall effect was, we believe, an exaggeration of both mood and event.
- Important segments of the media failed to report adequately on the causes and consequences of civil disorders and on the underlying problems of race relations. They have not communicated to the majority of their audience—which is white—a sense of the degradation, misery, and hopelessness of life in the ghetto.<sup>36</sup>

Recommendations:

- Recruit more Negroes into journalism and broadcasting and promote those who are qualified to positions of significant responsibility. Recruitment should begin in high school and continue through college; where necessary, aid for training should be provided.
- Accelerate efforts to ensure accurate and responsible reporting of riots and racial news, through adoption by all news gathering organizations of stringer internal staff guidelines.
- Expand coverage of the Negro community and race problems through permanent assignment of reporters familiar with urban and racial affairs, and through establishment of more and better links with the Negro community.<sup>37</sup>

Police shortfalls:

- The policeman in the ghetto is a symbol of increasingly bitter social debate over law enforcement.
- The policeman in the ghetto is symbol of not only of law, but of the entire system of law enforcement and criminal justice.
- The policeman in the ghetto is the most visible symbol, finally, of a society form which many ghetto Negroes are increasingly alienated.<sup>38</sup>

Recommendations:

- Review police operations in the ghetto to ensure proper conduct by police officers, and eliminate abrasive practices.

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<sup>36</sup> *The Kerner Report: Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), 20.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 299-300.

- Provide more adequate police protection to ghetto residents to eliminate their high sense of insecurity, and the belief in the existence of a dual standard of law enforcement.
- Develop and adopt policy guidelines to assist officers in making critical decisions in areas where police conduct can create tension.<sup>39</sup>

Contingent on who's asked, the opinions on the revolt's winners and losers is a mea culpa of contrite, despondent, and myopic interpretations. Writer Brenda Cornish offers an impartial sociopolitical critique.

As a result of our explosion, more dependence on the "system" emerged. We have limited shopping in our neighborhoods, reducing revenues in our city that could have been used for our enhancements. Many neighborhoods still have vacant lot where employing businesses one stood. But our most important demise is that our children do not see prosperity in their neighborhoods, which would have given them the vision to pursue in the same manner. So, who really won?<sup>40</sup>

Racism was and is alive and well—A number of young men and women were forcibly attacked with a difficult life lesson that has had many iterations for every generation. Writer Sylvia McClain shares her trauma narrative and the PTSD developed.

The Riot of 1967 in Detroit was a learning lesson for me. Racial attitudes still existed between blacks and whites. Mistrust by blacks of whites with guns was a harbored emotion...We no longer would be a new generation of blacks with hope for the future...From that point on, I never saw things with rose colored glasses anymore. I was an unwitting victim of the riot in Detroit in 1967 and would never be the same fourteen-year-old girl again.<sup>41</sup>

### *The Damages*

July 1967's violence curtly refocused and redirected the country, laws, and programs. It claimed the lives of forty-three men, women, and children—ten of them white and thirty-three Black (most at the hands of law enforcement)<sup>42</sup>. The youngest to die was four-year-old Tonya

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>40</sup> Heather Buchanan, Sharon Stanford, Teresa Kimble, eds. *Eyes On Fire: Witness to the Detroit Riot of 1967*, (Detroit: Aquarius Press, 2007), 41.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>42</sup> Bridge Magazine and the Detroit Journalism Cooperative, *The Intersection: What Detroit Has Gained, And Lost, 50 Years After The Uprising of 1967* (Traverse City, MI: Mission Point Press, 2017), xvii.

Blanding. She was killed when the National Guard mistook her looking out the window for sniper fire. No one was charged for her death. Among the community, there are disputes and a belief that there were many more were killed, contrary to the reported figure. Roughly, twelve hundred were injured, more than seventy-two hundred were arrested for various offenses and infractions, fires displaced about three hundred and fifty-plus families, looting and fires destroyed over twenty-five hundred businesses and buildings. Amid the jailed, the youngest was a four-year-old preschooler, and the oldest was an eighty-two-year old.<sup>43</sup>

In recent recalculations, the contested damage numbers was estimated between \$287 million and \$323 million, but the figures do not include or consider losses by businesses and individuals who had partial insurance or were uninsured. It also did not include business-interruption costs and financial losses to individuals and city government, lost wages and lost retail sales outside the riot.<sup>44</sup> “Initially, the property damages estimated in the Detroit Rebellion extended [upwards] of \$1 billion”,<sup>45</sup> which had been greatly reduced because of political pressure. Negro newspaper, *The Chicago Defender*, shared similar damage figures. More than 2,000 people were injured, 7,000 were people were arrested, 2,000 buildings burned, and millions of dollars were reported in damages, more than 1,500 businesses were looted, there were almost 1,300 reported fires, 3,000 people were displaced or homeless, and anywhere from 4,000 to 5,000 were without jobs.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Chris Wild, “Riots in Detroit: The city burned and 43 people lost their lives”, *MASHABLE.COM*, <https://mashable.com/2014/11/26/detroit-riots-1967/>

<sup>44</sup> Bridge Magazine and the Detroit Journalism Cooperative, *The Intersection: What Detroit Has Gained, And Lost, 50 Years After The Uprising of 1967* (Traverse City, MI: Mission Point Press, 2017), xvii.

<sup>45</sup> Abayomi Azikiwe, “The Detroit Rebellion of 1967 and Its Global Significance”, *GLOBALRESEARCH.CA*, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-detroit-rebellion-of-1967-and-its-global-significance/5576945>

<sup>46</sup> Lawrence Casey, “‘Real Losers’ of Detroit’s Rioting: Who Are They?”, *The Chicago Defender*, July 29, 1967.

## **METHODOLOGICAL STATEMENT**

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Pre-Production*

The first stage of filmmaking is research driven: questions, direction, storyboarding, contingency plan(s), and its execution is developed and finalized in this phase.

### **Research**

Prior to scheduling, conducting the interviews, and the production process, I had ideas, visions, and handwritten notes of what I wanted the final product, the documentary to look like. To support what I envisioned I watched documentaries, fictional recounts, and news shorts on Detroit 1967 and the city's present (the renaissance and gentrification)—*12th and Clairmont* (2017), *Detroit* (2017), *Detropia* (2012), and *Requiem for Detroit* (2010); Los Angeles 1992—*LA 1992* (2017), *Burn Motherfucker, Burn* (2017), and *Uprising: Hip Hop & The LA Riots* (2012); and other major events and history—*13th* (2012).

Also, I read the following books creating a personal canon on the rebellion, culture, and performance: Sidney Fine, *Violence in the Model City: The Cavanagh Administration, Race Relations and the Detroit Riot of 1967* (1997); B.J. Widick, *Detroit: City of Race and Class Violence* (1972); Hubert Locke, *The Detroit Riot of 1967* (1969); Joel Stone (ed) *Detroit 1967: Origins, Impacts, Legacies* (2017); John Hersey, *The Algiers Motel Incident* (1968); Joe Darden and Richard Thomas, *Detroit: Race Riots, Racial Conflicts, and Efforts to Bridge the Racial Divide* (2013); *The Kerner Report: Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Rights* (1968); Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (2005); Zora Neale Hurston, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* (2018); and Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* (2010).

In addition to watching films and reading books, I also listened to various genres of music of the time and beyond related to progress, race, and culture—rhythm and blues (R&B), jazz, spoken word, blues, and gospel, as well as, conscious hip-hop—Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, Gil Scott-Heron, Herbie Hancock, James Brown, Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes, The Chambers Brothers, B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Little Walter, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Walter Hawkins, Earth Wind and Fire (EWF), Fela Kuti, Nina Simone, Billie Holiday, Bob Marley & The Wailers, Roy Ayers, The Last Poets, The Clark Sisters, Grandmaster Flash & The Furious Five, 2Pac, Kirk Franklin, Fred Hammond, Public Enemy, Marvin Sapp, A Tribe Called Quest, Nas, Common, Jay-Z, The Robert Glasper Experiment, Jill Scott, Erykah Badu, Eric Roberson, Phonte (Big Brother & The Foreign Exchange), Wale, Kendrick Lamar, Lupe Fiasco, and Beyoncé. Much of the music is reflective of the issues of the era tackling de jure and de facto racism, sexism, and socioeconomic pitfalls is poetry in the key of culture. The literature, films, and music inspired and informed *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* development, the questions asked, conversations, visuals, and the initial project execution that was modified as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and ensuing preventative actions. Categorically, I listened to Holiday's "Strange Fruit", Gaye's "What's Going On?", and Jay-Z's "99 Problems" while reading Hurston's *Barracoon* and Smitherman's *Word From the Mother*, and while reviewing my footage and all of my data my creativity exploded. The music and texts energized and enhanced my understanding and ability to regionally and chronologically code-mesh and code-switch, a vital skillset, which also influenced my positionality as an adaptable and knowledgeable researcher, appeal, and ask of potential narrators. Truthfully, there's a spiritual and intellectually stimulating experience when reading and listening to like topics, it deeply resonates, motivates, and influences. As such, what I learned and read in books,

saw in films, and listened to was inserted, alluded to, or directly quoted when appropriate based on the question(s) asked to narrators, in pre-screening interviews, and/or conversation about my work. Essentially, all of my pre-production research informed and cultivated my addition to the visual, documentary canon on urban uprising and Detroit 1967.

### **Government Shutdown & Archival Gaps**

For roughly two weeks in December 2018 during the government shutdown, I enjoyed and spent a significant amount of time at the Library of Congress (LOC) in Washington, DC, thankfully the shutdown didn't impact its operations. I looked for maps and any other information on Detroit I could get my hands on, because much to my amazement the local and state libraries didn't have much. I did find with librarian assistance a number of maps and documents in the maps library that weren't in Michigan archives ex. Redlining maps, real estate advertisements boasting all-white neighborhood enclaves, and pre-World War II city maps. The archival gaps between what is available and stored at the state and local libraries of Michigan versus that of the Library of Congress is vexing and stupefying. The Library of Congress had maps and documents that I had never seen and supported the housing crisis issue listed as a cause of the upheaval. I refused to engage librarians with questions about the who, what, when, where, and how the archives became dysfunctional and unorganized. I took note and shook my head. In addition to my discover at LOC, I did learn how to use an industrial sized scanner. Hopefully, I will be able to use the geographical data into part 2.

### **Leaping over IRB hurdles**

To proceed with my dissertation, I needed to complete the IRB process, which was maddening, annoying, and unnecessarily time consuming, but thankfully and persistently I was able to get through it with the assistance of another IRB reviewer. The directives from the office and my assigned IRB reviewer were ambiguously direct, in terms of requirements and the



wording in said required documents. Once I received clarity, I created a consent form and legal release. The consent covered the purpose of the project, its parameters, and the narrator's rights and responsibilities. Similarly, the legal release covered image use and the right to use it in accordance to project needs and the future of this research. Thankfully, my interviewees didn't object or hesitate to sign the form and proceeded with the interviews. To read both documents, see Appendix C.

### **Ethics & Storytelling: Practicing what I preach**

Prior to and during the research, pre-production, and production stages, I've always stressed ethical and fair work. As a semi-retired journalist, I still apply the ethics code of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ), a respected and distinguished professional journalism organization, it's code of ethics: Seek Truth and Report it, Minimize Harm, Act Independently, and Be Accountable and Transparent.<sup>47</sup> It is the most comprehensive set of ethical and practical professional guidelines. The Oral History Association (OHA) has its own, but it isn't as extensive as SPJ. Paraphrased, OHA calls for informed consent before the interview, clearly communication the goals, risks, and the proviso of the project, give the interviewee the opportunity to review and approve the interview, and consider and advance best stewardship practices (preservation and access).<sup>48</sup> In that spirit, narrators will be given copies of the film, raw interviews, and their legal release. Likewise, the footage, interviews, and its transcription will be uploaded to the newly renovated project website by the end of the year. Again, adhering to my work ethos, this work will be public history and open to all.

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<sup>47</sup> Code of Ethics, Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ), Revised September 6, 2014, [spj.org](http://spj.org)

<sup>48</sup> Statement on Ethics, Oral History Association (OHA), <https://www.oralhistory.org/oha-statement-on-ethics/>

## **My position and acquiring interviewees**

There was no set goal in acquiring interviewees. The mindset was to get as many as I can with the understanding that no one story is exactly the same. These accounts needed to be heard and documented, along with the ever-changing, complex, and beautiful heterogeneity of Black life and culture. I solicited for subjects and did research via outreach and support with the following organizations/entities: Michigan State University Black Alumni Association, Hampton University Office of Alumni Affairs, Detroit Chapter of the Hampton University Alumni Association, Black Ivy Alumni League, Nu Omega chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated, Gamma Lambda chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated, Detroit Alumnae chapter of Delta Sigma Theta sorority Incorporated, Columbia University Alumni Association of Michigan, National Football League, Detroit Lions, Detroit Historical Society, Library of Congress, Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Library of Michigan, Detroit Police Department Museum, National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), National Council of Black Studies (NCBS), Michigan State African American and African Studies (AAAS) faculty and students, Detroit Public Library, Walter Reuther Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University, Michigan State University Detroit Center, Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, Detroit chapter of Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), WXYZ ABC 7, and the greater Detroit community.

My agency and intersubjectivity as a dedicated, ardent, and trustworthy young non-native Black woman and willing champion of the city helped me secure some busy and reputable people—Mr. Herb Boyd (journalist, author, and college professor at The City College of New York) and Mr. Carl Banks (retired two-time NY Giants Super Bowl champion and MSU alumnus), he will be in part 2 of *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's*

*Revolution(s)*. I can't emphasize enough the significance of networking, rapport building, and my agency in researching this topic, I firmly believe it allowed me to ask questions, go places, and talk with people other filmmakers would have avoided, disregarded and/or denied an interview. I didn't stray from a challenge when presented; I ran confidently in my charge to tell this story. Lastly, I was in talks to interview gospel legends The Clark Sisters, Emmy-award winning TV Judge Judge Greg Mathis, and Grammy-award winning R&B singer Ms. Anita Baker who were either young children or teenagers at the time of the insurrection, but the coronavirus and scheduling conflicts delayed those plans. The relationships I established in 2009 also helped me secure existing and new participants as word got around of what I was doing and wanted to do for the city.

Explicitly, and zealously, I aimed to capture the diversity and medleys of Black life in all of its majesty. I met, talked with, emailed, and/or was given contact information for roughly 65 people, which based on availability, willingness, and the conversation was reduced to nearly 30. Narrators were selected based on the pre-screening interview, which was usually done in person, as I met many of them at various functions in the greater Detroit and Lansing areas. Following the pre-screening, I immediately made the filming appointment, which usually was a week or two away, giving my narrators time to prepare and do what they needed. I was looking and needing to capture the history, the unknown and the unique, compelling thoughts and opinions, and what we call in the journalism business, "kicker quotes". These quotes cleverly, expertly, and emphatically sum up a topic, incident, and/or event.

I filmed in the participants homes, which was a bonus to me as I visited several stunning and historical neighborhoods in Detroit—Boston-Edison (west side), Sherwood Forest (east side), Conant Gardens (east side), Palmer Woods (east side), and Virginia Park (west side). And,

I traveled to the suburbs, which was a culture shock and overflowing with continued evidence of white and Black flight post-rebellion, redlining, and restrictive covenants. Driving down Eight Mile in Detroit is like night and day—Detroit is dark, gray, bleak, and blighted—once outside of the city on either eastern or western end—the sun is out, flowers are blooming, the curb appeal of property is detailed and ornate, the type of business and its services changes, and it seems like the American Dream is the way of life and an expected performance of civility. Most of the businesses in the city limits of the state highway are liquor stores, marijuana dispensaries, pawn shops, erotic entertainment establishments, used car dealerships, and fried chicken and/or coney restaurants; once you crossover on the either side, it all changes, there are big box stores (Target, Walmart, Meijer, Sam’s Club and etc.), entertainment venues, new car dealerships, and mini-malls, a noted and remarkable difference. This observation is a project for another time.

### Production

This stage of the filmmaking process is about shooting, getting the right shots and sound bytes, and beginning to assembly a storyline using what has been recorded.

### **Camera Composition & Shooting**

This is a film about Detroit, in Detroit, and uses what is of Detroit. Everything in the film intentionally uses the renaissance city’s scenery, sights, and sounds, from the Joe Louis fist statue, to the music, and the broll images. The title image and graphic is the Joe Louis fist monument on Woodward Avenue, which I photographed laying on the limestone slab under it. I used Adobe Photoshop to manipulate it, which took a couple of hours to complete. The live jazz bed music is from Bert’s Warehouse Theatre in Eastern Market. I was invited to listen to a jam session/open mic with local musicians. I brought my camera and recorded the music over several weeks. The broll are places and events I recorded around the city over my six-year matriculation at MSU. I wanted and succeeded at making this the most Detroit focused film possible.

When shooting this documentary, I honored some of the rules and best practices I learned in journalism school and on-the-job. The rule of thumb is never shoot a subject head on, try for a profile on either right or left side, the goal is to give definition and dimension of what it is that is being filmed. I did just that and with enough head room as well. I took a number of liberties with some narrators based on background, lighting, and personality. I wanted to show him/her in and at their best, which I was successful. While setting up I surveyed the space for best lighting, background objects, and sound, the camera depending on the narrator was above or at eye level. Again, I didn't create what wasn't there, I used the environment to compliment the person being shot. To capture sound, I used my lavalier or rode microphones, which one used, rested on acoustics and environment.

The interviews were normally two to three hours long. Again, this was conditional on the interviewee, his/her answers to my questions, and the stories they shared. At the conclusion of each interview, I restated what was in the release and that I would let them know when the film is ready to be viewed. All of my interviewees were supportive, encouraging, and excited about seeing the final product and themselves on the silver screen.

### **File keeping & Organization**

In conception, the original idea was a two-camera shot documentary, offering visual diversity, which didn't pan out as the second Canon and Nikon cameras borrowed from the Department of English Film Lab recorded in 15-20-minute increments creating a synching headache. The idea was quickly abandoned after this discover. I, then, relied solely on my Canon DSLR, which shoots in 30-minute increments, to record interviews and broll. This factory default and operation mechanism was a benefit; it gave the sources a break, and to do what they needed.

As filming began, interviews were then catalogued according to the last name, then indexed according to the succession of clips (i.e. Farley 1-1), which made logging a pleasant and meticulous task. The log/index contains biographical data, detailed questions, subject matter, quotes, moments, and important footage to be used. To notate the gravity of what was being said and done a key was created, yellow highlighting indicates the clip is to be used in the film, red font signifies it is noteworthy and should be considered for the film or the white paper (method statement). The roughly sixty-page log permitted easy and stress-free script writing. I used the two-column broadcast script for my master's thesis and it proved to be an easy read, and as the adage goes, "if ain't broke, don't fix it." I applied what works to this film.

In total, I recorded nearly 30 oral history interviews during my matriculation at MSU with the exception of Mr. Herb Boyd. His interview was recorded in 2013 while I completed my master's thesis on a similar subject at Columbia University. This amounted to hundreds of hours of recorded footage (interviews and broll). To say I was overwhelmed with data would be an understatement, which is why after reviewing my content and consulting with my committee, I selected ten candidates for the first part. It is my hope that after the first part is released, I will continue to work on the series. I chose the first ten speakers for part one based on what they said, how they said it, and it coordinating with the broll and archive footage I had. The rule of thumb in journalism and filmmaking, you can't write, tell, or show to what you don't have.

### **Oral History and Rhetorical performance**

While setting up the camera equipment, I had small talk with the narrators to ease any apprehension or nervous energy they had, which created a relationship of familiarity and kinship. I wanted to capture him or her being relaxed and telling their truth on their own terms: nothing was to be forced or scripted, and it wasn't. This is well-documented in the non-verbal body language, expressions, and Black vernacular used in Mr. Boyd, Mrs. Walton, Mrs. Edwards, and

Mr. Jones responses. Likewise, I, nor my storytellers, sanitized their spoken or expressive language to appeal to the audience. Most were masterful at code-meshing and code-switching with and in between the Language of Wider Communication (LWC)<sup>49</sup> and Black English out of comfort. According to Geneva Smitherman, Black language linguist pioneer, code-switching is the need to adjust one's speech pattern from Black to white English. Code-meshing (style shifting) is the ability to use Black English and LWC interchangeably in the same conversation, and often these multi-linguistic speakers are quite adept in switching without consciousness of the transition.<sup>50</sup> In *Articulate While Black: Barack Obama, Language, and Race in the U.S.*, Drs. Smitherman and Alim document and analyze former President Barack Obama's ability to do that in accordance of his audience. To further support a comfortable environment, as mentioned earlier I arranged to film at their homes which again aided in the language style.

### **Coronavirus: The unexpected hindrance**

My networking and rapport establishing efforts in finding and securing archival data was interrupted by the ongoing deadly global coronavirus pandemic, as I was and am attempting to partner with the NFL Detroit Lions and NBA Detroit Pistons franchises and WXYZ ABC 7 Detroit to use some of their video and photos along with interviewing players, staff, and owners. All wasn't lost, thankfully, I had some stock footage from an earlier project, used pictures and newspapers images from archives and microfilm, and found some open source video on Vimeo. Thankfully, the relationships and rapport are still there and I will continue working on getting that data for part two.

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<sup>49</sup> Geneva Smitherman, *Talkin' that Talk: Language, Culture, and education in African America* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>50</sup> H. Samy Alim and Geneva Smitherman, *Articulate While Black: Barack Obama, Language, and Race in the U.S.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

## Digital Media & Outreach

This disruptively innovative project is the inaugural film for my production company—BlackPrint Production House LLC. The company is both a visual oral history repository and a film business. Additionally, *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* also includes a socially aware curated Spotify playlist (see Appendix C for the link), social media accounts, and a website, which is in the process of being revamped. Sticking to my media roots, I revised and implemented Scripps' Multimedia Journalism/Journalist (MMJ) training and practice in the production process to create buzz and interest about *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)*. The model requires that journalists interview, shoot, write (for TV), post on the web, upload story to the station servers, and then post to social media. The priority and goal according to the model is to always post to the web first, because of its timeliness and ability to be updated and amended. I modified the model to suit the projects channels to include the playlist, social media accounts, and website. For promotional purposes, I posted a snippet of the recording on social media from my iPhone with a tease of who the narrator is, what he/she said, and the value they add to the history. I also created a hashtag chain to follow the posts and anything pertaining to them—#inabsentia #detroit #1967 #urbanhistory #blackhistory #insurrection #rebellion #uprising #riot #modelcityofracereactions #arsenalofdemocracy #longhotsummer #shiftingthenarrative #detroit #cityhistory #honoringthetruth. *Uprising 2020*, is a public Spotify playlist and is a smorgasbord of nearly 100 songs, spoken word performances, and instrumentals with music from the 1960s onward. The playlist was widely distributed and has a following. Essentially, I was and am a one-woman film and media maven transforming the academy, MSU grad school, College of Arts and Letters (CAL), and the African American and African Studies (AAAS) department with my innovative and non-traditional work and ideas.



The website [1967Detroit.matrix.msu.edu](http://1967Detroit.matrix.msu.edu) was developed out of my 2016 Cultural Heritage Informatics (CHI) fellowship where I learned to code using HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) and CSS (Cascading Style Sheets). The Omeka-based site, an oral history content management system, prioritizes metadata over traditional website functionalities, and is an assembly of selected archive photos from the Walter Reuther Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University and oral histories are from the Bentley Historical Archives at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor based on Sidney Fine's Detroit 1967 oral history project. Because of host site changes, the website hasn't been updated, but I'm in the progress of moving it to a WordPress CMS and a better host server. One of the many goals after completion of part one is to work on the website and social media pages pairing it with part one, create content from clips left on the editing room floor, and then begin work on part two.

### **Unexpected hard times**

Death is a part of life and it very much shook me to the core when I lost Mr. Brazelton as our relationship was that of granddaughter/grandfather. Like much of the world, I was surprised by the devastation of the coronavirus and the many lives lost to the pandemic. In March 2020, Marlow Stoudemire, an employee of the Detroit Historical Society and Brother of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, passed away from the coronavirus. Stoudemire was assisting me in securing interviewees, provided resources, and things to see and experience. Thankfully and prayerfully, I haven't experienced or learned of anymore death since Stoudemire's passing.

The coronavirus also impacted post-production workflows. Initially, I was going to edit the documentary using Adobe Premiere (video editing software) on one of the Mac desktops in the English Department Film Lab—they have faster processors and are capable of doing heavy duty editing rather than my vintage 2009 MacBook Pro laptop. After attempting to find and

secure a school laptop with the editing software on it, I decided to use my older laptop and just be patient while editing. Thankfully, I didn't experience any major malfunctions (Thank God!!!).

### *Post-Production*

The final stage of filmmaking is all about the editing and delivery of the final product. This stage can take several days to months to complete, as it includes color correction, sound mixing, revision, layout, technical issues and more. *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* was done over several months and exemplified the aforementioned.

### **Scripting & My Voice**

The script is an amalgamation of oral history transcription practices and broadcast journalism structure. It honors the oral history tradition of using dashes instead of ellipses marks when accounting for thinking, pauses, or change of thought and is a verbatim dictation. Additionally, the two-column script has director/photographer and producer information typical of the broadcast journalism style. Also listed is the folder name and timecode where the clip can be found. This format was chosen in the event this needs to be recut by another filmmaker or professional editor, it can be done with very little intervention from myself, hence the meticulous notation in the script. It was constantly updated to reflect changes according to the film.

In some oral history projects, the interviewer voice, perspective, and/or ideas are heard and apart of the record. Evaluating my interviews, the complexity of the subject matter, and the hours of footage, I decided against inputting my opinion or analysis as it adds nothing of value and the stories are strong enough to stand on their own. My voice is best applied here in the method statement. Explicitly, in my introduction to all I discuss my project with, I declared at the onset my positionality: "I've read, but for the most part I know nothing. You, the resident,

eyewitness, are the authority figure—this is your story to tell. I’m just video recording it. Please share what you know, remember, and experienced.”

### **The Storyline**

After transcribing my interviews in a detailed index according to narrator, time code, themes, and talking points, ideas emerged as to how to tell this story. I jotted down notes in my field notebook with the film order—Beginning of insurrection, looting, National Guard & Detroit Police Department violence, Vietnam War & post-rebellion, and rebellion rhetoric, in that order, respectively. After the committee reviewed my first draft, the film order was ratified to clarify the storyline and the aim of the film—rebellion rhetoric, beginning of insurrection, looting, National Guard & Detroit Police Department violence, Vietnam War & post-rebellion. Their recommendations made for a much more compelling film.

The flow of the poetic, interview documentary and storyline was a bit of challenge as I worked to make sure each sound byte easily abutted one another, hence the need for verbatim transcription along with timecodes. It made it painless to find a clip when a narrator referenced or said something that can be used for the topic or portion of the film. Demonstratively, all of the clips for rebellion rhetoric are clustered together and they nicely complement each other, the same with other topics discussed. When I needed to change the direction of the conversation or topic, I used archival footage with reporter voice over, a politician’s speech, full screen, or transition to black to indicate change. Also, the selection and placement of music also acknowledges that departure.

### **Artist Tone and Style**

The tone and style of *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America’s/Motown’s Revolution(s)* is a grandmother’s quilt being assembled using the narrators stories and quotes according to the aforementioned themes with the overall story being Sunday, July 23, 1967. Each clip, although

placed to support one another isn't always symmetrical, but the language and story says it all. I start and end the documentary with possibly one of the best kicker quotes I've heard during this project from Dr. Howard Lindsey and it resonates with the themes and the ending which is focused on post-rebellion and the city's current renaissance. "...You got the feeling that Detroit was being murdered! A slow—like a slow—drive-by shooting." It has a similar tone and spirit to Chrysler's 2011 Super Bowl commercial featuring Detroit rapper Eminem—"Imported from Detroit"<sup>51</sup>— the visuals and storyline markets the Chrysler 200 (the company's new vehicle) and the Chrysler luxury using the story of Detroit, city landmarks, and Eminem as its spokesperson selling grit and determination, are imports from Detroit.

### **Theory & Praxis**

This dissertation is understood as a Black studies model of multimodal interdisciplinarity utilizing and encompassing Arts & Humanities (Film and Digital Humanities), Journalism (Broadcast, Print, and PR), Social Sciences (Anthropology, Sociology, and Psychology), and Medicine (Mental Health). As such, a handful of theories from the aforementioned field is utilized. Explicitly, in accordance with the research and the collected oral histories, and as discussed throughout the paper, I developed a four-point theory the *Quarternion of White Delusion*, which based on the research narrator pre-interviews remains to be stronghold on the metanarrative of July 1967. It asserts the cause of urban insurrection and its erroneous history, is sustained by white fear, gaze, entitlement, and branding. The audaciously haphazard paranoia continues to infringe on Black life.

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<sup>51</sup> "Imported from Detroit," *YouTube*, uploaded by Spencer Jardine, 6 Feb. 2011 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qbr\\_nUVtEIw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qbr_nUVtEIw)

Critical Race Theory (CRT) contends that racism “is ordinary...”normal science” the usual way society does business, the common, everyday experience of most people of the country.”<sup>52</sup> As such, CRT and its advocates argue that there are several tenets in which racism exists in everyday life beyond the Ameri-Eurocentric constructs which shades the world in rose colored glasses. Interest convergence, materialism determinism, and racial realism; it is within these tenets exists sub-categories which further explain the existence of racism, a social construct— “...products of social thought and relations. Not objective, inherent or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather, races are categories the society invents manipulates, or retires when convenient.”<sup>53</sup> What happened in Detroit and its aftermath is demonstrative of race and the implications attached to and the systems capitalizing on it. The detrimental effects of de facto and de jure racism and segregation were complicit in the sparks of rage and irritation in Motown. The oral histories from project narrators are very clear in their delivery and comments: Karma came for America, Detroit, lawmakers, and white businessmen.

Complimenting CRT, Black Existentialism is concentrated on correcting issues of agency, history, the present, and future of Black people in the country and throughout the diaspora. “It includes how Black peoples have dealt with concerns of freedom, anguish, responsibility, embodied agency, sociality, and liberation...Black existentialism is concerned with the difficulties and suffering associated with Black existence and Black peoples’ struggles to overcome those difficulties and assert their humanity.”<sup>54</sup> Emphatically, race and racism obscure(d) Black identity and its formation, and very little space is given to articulate and

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<sup>52</sup> Richard Delgado and Jean Stefania, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 7.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>54</sup> Serie McDougal, “The Future of Research Methods in Africana Studies Graduate Curriculum” *Journal of African American Studies* 15 no. 3 (2011): 59.

deconstruct the intersectionality of their being and consciousness. Black existentialism offers further theories in:

1. Racism and oppression
2. The power of life-affirming aspect of Black music
3. Rigorous and systematic ways of studying Black people'
4. The interdependent relationships between identity and liberation
5. The impact of crises of knowledge on the formation of people in each epoch.<sup>55</sup>

*In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* is not only concerned with Black existence in Detroit, but how to utilize use oral history to change the narrative and effects of racism and oppression, the study of Black life as it relates to Detroit and the insurrection, and the relationship between action, identity, and educating the viewer on Black agency formation. Likewise, the implications of Black existentialism tenets when partnered with Critical Race Theory exemplify interest convergence, materialism determinism, and racial realism.

This work implements a few anthropological analytical practices which are critical to the gaze, optics, opinion of Detroit, and urban insurrection, for which the work counters or supports the historiography. In anthropology, cultural studies is concerned with the production and consumption of 'culture'."<sup>56</sup> This is critical to one's interpretation and understanding of images and its inferences, acknowledging the value and placement of visual culture, photos, newspaper and magazine spreads, and advertisements pertaining to rebellion. The Quaternion of White Delusion is of utmost importance here when evaluating visual culture as it hinges on the inherently biased ideals of the West. Likewise, "...cultural studies is concerned not only with who is doing the looking (or gazing or controlling the circulation of images, or whatever), but

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>56</sup> Marcus Banks, *Using Visual Data in Qualitative Research: The Sage Qualitative Research Kit*, (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2007), 39.

whom society empowers to look and be looked at, and with how the act of looking produces knowledge that in turn constitutes society.”<sup>57</sup>

## Oral History & The Culture

... a field of study and a method of gathering, preserving and interpreting the voices of memories of people, communities, and participants in past events. Oral history is both the oldest type of historical inquiry, predating the written word, and one of the most modern, initiated with tape recorders in the 1940s and now using the 21<sup>st</sup> century digital technologies.<sup>58</sup>

Oral history understands that the interview is a negotiated performance and exchange between the interviewee and interviewer, not one of Hollywood or Broadway, but one that necessitates trust, accessibility, comfortability, and reliability, in which the historical record is amended or added to. “Oral history is not only a tool or method for recovering history; it is also a theory of history which maintains that the common folk and the dispossessed have a history and that this history must be written.”<sup>59</sup> As such, oral history is subjective, for which the conversations on objectivity and its praxis are obtuse, at best. *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America’s/Motown’s Revolution(s)* borrows and models the methodology, ethics, positionality, and intersubjectivity observed in the work of Zora Neale Hurston and Alex Haley, two highly revered oral history practitioners and storytellers.

Keeping with the oral history blueprint provided by legendary writer and scholar Zora Neale Hurston in *Barracoon*, the story of Kossola’s (Cudjoe Lewis) death defying and harrowing journey on the last slave ship crossing the Atlantic headed west to the States. Hurston relentlessly honors the Black community, her moral compass, integrity, project goal(s), and she preserves

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>58</sup> “Oral History: Defined,” Oral History Association, access date September 17, 2013.

<sup>59</sup> Mary Larson, “Research Design and Strategies” Thomas Charlton et al. eds., *History of Oral History: Foundations and Methodology* (Lanham, Maryland: AltaMira Press, 2007), 104.

Kossola's authenticity and didn't cave into publisher demands to sanitize or whitewash his trauma, pain, and words. Throughout the text, she doesn't correct his Africanized-Black Southern English dialect and transcribes his story from the recorded oral histories verbatim. This rebellious and commendable act gives authenticity to Black English/Ebonics, history of racism and the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, and/or Kossola's education (or the lack thereof). Without formal legal release/consent form, Hurston doesn't disappoint Kossola or fail to meet her research goal(s), and in her methodology genuinely represents Black culture and storytelling.

In like company, Alex Haley's book *Roots* and the following television series with Cicely Tyson and then-newcomer LeVar Burton in 1977 is the idolized portrayal of Black storytelling for mass entertainment. It enveloped Black history, genealogy, and cultural retentions of the Black Holocaust via oral history and archival research. Although some of Haley's work has been debunked, akin to his delivery, method(s), and message of finding home on the continent have echoed and are exercised by Black griots. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, written in first person is another qualitative Haley masterpiece. The text is part oral history, part observer-participant narrativization, and a cohesive telling of a life lived by such an iconic figure.

Oral history and its nuances is a mainstay and the foundation of Black culture both domestically and abroad. It is probably one of the strongest cultural retentions to withstand the forces of four hundred-plus years of enslavement, global dispersal, capitalism, and racism. Ainslie remarks that "memory, recollection, commemoration are essential to the healing process not because they acknowledge lived realities. Curative processes work through acts of testimony."<sup>60</sup> Understanding and employing the oral history practice and tradition, my current and future works will advance this critical ethnographic method.

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<sup>60</sup> Ricardo Ainslie, "Intervention strategies for addressing collective trauma: Healing communities ravaged by racial strife." *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society* 18, no. 2 (2013): 141.



Freud's Topographical Model...the very process of putting experience into words is therapeutic because language facilitates catharsis and helps organize, objectify, and bind affects that are otherwise overwhelming. The expression of thoughts and feelings about meaningful, defining events that have shaped his experience is part of what helps and individual regain his life following emotional devastation.<sup>61</sup>

### **Documentary Film and *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)***

Professionally, documentary film is one of the most profound, evocative, and demonstrative mediums of information dissemination, especially in this multi-screen, multi-modal and internet-driven age. Formally, documentary as defined by Marcus Banks in *Using Visual Data in Qualitative Research*—"documentary' is a generic term for non-fiction film, as well as being associated with a specific form of non-fiction film."<sup>62</sup> "Documentary film—or corpus of documentary photographs—is not merely a neutral document or records of things that took place before the camera, but a representation of those things, persons and events indent to explain society and its process to its citizens."<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, ethnography(ic) films "shows" rather than 'tell', i.e. Baby Einstein films. Documentary filmmaking is a reflexive and observer-participant exercise for both filmmaker and interviewee.

*In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)*, a visceral, intricate mosaic of personal stories exemplifies and employs several documentary film types. As mentioned earlier, the poetic and interview documentary film style is most discernible. Correspondingly, expository, observational, and performative forms are employed as well. An expository film is a [definitive, authoritative position on the subject(s) in question, often persuasive, images aren't of the utmost concern], "historical documentaries in this model deliver

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>62</sup> Marcus Banks, *Using Visual Data in Qualitative Research: The Sage Qualitative Research Kit*, (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2007), 75.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 12.

an unproblematic and ‘objective’ account and interpretation of past events.”<sup>64</sup> Observation films showcase life with very little to no interruption. This type of documentary “aims for immediacy, intimacy, and revelation of individual human character in ordinary life situations.”<sup>65</sup> Lastly, performative films are emphatic and passionate— “stressing experience and emotional stress to the world”, are “personal, unconventional, perhaps poetic and/or experimental, and designed for audience experience.”<sup>66</sup>

### **Cinema Verite**

During the height of the early renaissances in the 1920s, filmmaker Dziga Vertov developed “Kino-Pravda” known as “film-truth”. Its praxis is demonstrated in the newsreel series, the structure of the movement used editing to establish the underlying truth through real life portraiture. Vertov’s most notable work is *Man With a Movie Camera*, the black-and-white silent film, is comparable to the visually stimulating *Baby Einstein* educational videos. Direct cinema greatly influenced the artistic pursuits of deceased filmmaker Albert Maysles and his philanthropy.

The Hollywood film is an escape of one sort or another. But our films make it damn near impossible to escape. We’re interested in what you can’t escape from and presenting it. Some people get a little edgy when they see something that is so personal. They don’t know where to turn to look for the kind of buffer that most movies gives them. In fiction you can say ‘it’s only a movie’ and forget it. You can’t do that with reality.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Alex Burton, “6 Types of Documentary” <https://collaborativedocumentary.wordpress.com/6-types-of-documentary/>

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>67</sup> “Direct Cinema and Cinema Verite—Guide to the Genres” <https://documentary.net/magazine/direct-cinema-and-cinema-verite-guide-to-the-genres/>

Decades later, *Chronicle of a Summer* (Chronique D'un Ete) a Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin's landmark motion picture, altered the agency and placement of the camera. Morin poetically captures the beauty of visuals and film,

There are two ways to conceive of the cinema of the deal: The first is to pretend that you can present reality to be seen; the second is to pose the problem of reality. In the same way, there were to conceive Cinema verité. The first was to pretend that you brought truth. The second was to pose the problem of truth.<sup>68</sup>

*In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)*, gives the voiceless authority over this complex, multifaceted, and prodigious tale, most importantly, it is "truth cinema". The narratives and experiences of the ten narrators isn't up debate or question. Equivalently, and in good company with filmmaker Damon Davis ethos on documentaries, one of the many goals of this film is to "...uplift the people within the movement—rather than narrating the events themselves [or regurgitating the same falsehoods]. In telling these stories, we're expressing the complexity and beauty of the black experience."<sup>69</sup>

## **Results/Findings**

In no particular order, the message and story I want the audience to receive, unpack, and further pontificate on is the danger and harm of the singular narrative, significance of oral history in Black culture, the need to tell our stories, contesting the historical record and its writer(s), especially when it doesn't match or resemble what eyewitnesses are saying, as well as, reevaluating the story of urban insurrection and how it has shaped Black America, our communities, civil rights, and its implications on current BLM protests.

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>69</sup> Karen Frances Eng, "A new documentary tells the story of the Ferguson rebellion from the point of view of the protestors who lived it", *TED.COM*, <https://fellowsblog.ted.com/a-new-documentary-tells-the-ferguson-rebellion-from-the-point-of-view-of-the-protestors-who-lived-fa26446092e>

Concluding six years of hard work, roughly 30 interviews, hundreds of hours of footage, driving, reading, seeing, doing, shooting, losing dear friends, building new lifelong friendships, and picking up where I left off in 2009 is the half-an-hour film—*In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)*. I discovered several findings based on the testimonies.

1. The consensus on the city's future according to the narrators based on the actions of city council, real estate tycoons, and the elite; the current renaissance of the city comes nearly 50 years later and it doesn't include Black residents, which is a majority of the population. It is intended for the suburbs white residents.

**Dr. Howard Lindsey**— "...That of course—that—taking Detroit back from the majority Black population. Detroit began to lose whites—most of them didn't move out of state because—uhh—a feeling that at one time—that everybody had left Detroit and moved down to Texas. Because—people—a number of Blacks or a number of whites moved to Texas—they were actually getting Detroit newspapers. But, as it happened, of course, most the of the people that left Detroit—the whites that left of Detroit went to the suburbs..."

**Mrs. Betty-Ann Walton**— "You want the truth. [I want the truth.] Ain't nothing changed. Different location—different generation. Ain't nothing changed."

**Mrs. Karen Schrock**— "...I think Detroit can comeback, but unfortunately I think it's going to comeback for different people. Umm—my husband and I go to Detroit all the time. And, when we started to see the bike lanes, we knew that they city was not planning for Black people. Black people are not out riding bikes. So, bike lanes were like one of the original indicators. Then when you see what's being built and the cost of it. The city, downtown, in particular is going to comeback, but it's going to comeback for different people."

2. Racism and its byproducts didn't end with the uprisings, it evolved, and is alive and well.

**Mr. Orlin Jones**— "...The white people that I knew—uhh—they weren't—they weren't as cordial as they use to be. You know. They weren't as cordial as they used to be, but, hell, I survived it."

**Mrs. Betty Edwards**— "...Just know that racism is still there. It's just—uhh—a little more discrete now. I don't know maybe it's more outwardly now with Donald Trump in office. But—uhh—it's not the same as it used to be when I was growing up."

**Dr. Howard Lindsey**— “...And, it’s almost like—you know—it’s like they are rejecting Detroit. They are rejecting Black folks. And, that to me said—you know—I don’t think racial integration is ever going to happen. Because as Blacks move in, it seemed like whites move out.”

**Judge Ulysses Boykin**— “...And, the National Guard was almost exclusively white. And, they were not trained for this kind of civil disturbance or anything like that. And, they killed more people than the police did and it was a difference between how the National Guard responded to things from the way regular army troops. They sent up troops from Fort Bragg, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, they were on the east side of Detroit, and Michigan National Guard was on the west side. I think the army, maybe, killed one or two people.” 08;45;10;04 “...The National Guard would just drive up to the building and point their guns and just start shooting indiscriminately into the building. There’s an apartment building located on W. Davison and 14<sup>th</sup>. Still if you get up close to it, you can see the bullet marks in the masonry in front of the building. 08;45;49;22 “...They would also have these patrols, and like, they would be going on parallel streets. Somebody would see a flash or hear something, and they would just start shooting. And the group patrol on the next street, ‘oh they’re sniping?’ They would just start shooting and they are actually responding to each others gunfire. There’s no sniping. There were a few snipers, but not like the National Guard.” “...So they were really ill-equipped and ill-trained to deal with what was going on unlike the army troops, the real army, at the time.”

3. The trauma of Sunday, July 23, 1967 may have been immediately traumatic for some, but for most, those haunting memories would come years later.

**Mr. Morris Schrock**— “Was it traumatic? I don’t think at that moment, it was just that reality, but as time passed and you can look back. Yeah, it was trauma, but it didn’t catch up with you right away. You saw it later in the schools. The schools had changed. The communities had changed. Uhh—That’s when you noticed it, at least for me. As a kid coming back thinking about East Lansing, MSU, back to my neighborhood, a year later after the riots. Two years later, the neighborhoods are going down. People would leave, abandon buildings, umm, that’s when the neighborhood—and you know—I don’t want to talk about drugs, but that is when you get the influx of drugs too.

**Mrs. Renee Hudson**— “...You kind of knew your place. You knew what you had to do—to uhh—to stay out of trouble—you know. Come home early. [So Detroit in so many ways and the way you’re describing it is a sundown city? At least at that time? And, probably is stil now.] Well, especially during the riot, it definitely was a sundown town.”

4. Rebellion rhetoric is still very much a loaded, inflammatory, and dubious discussion topic.

**Judge Ulysses Boykin**— “...1943 it was more of a physical clash between Blacks and whites, than the one in 1967, it was more against property—rather than attacking white people or white people attacking Black people that was not the way ’67 happened.”

**Mr. Herb Boyd**— “...And you have to call it a rebellion, riot, a civil disturbance, an upheaval. It’s not like 1943 now. Cause that was mostly—you know—a—a—real tight racial tension that was going on in the city.”

**Mrs. Betty-Ann Walton**— “..It wan’t a riot?! Well—well-what was it then? I mean in California they call it a riot, right?! When—that—whatever his name was. When they was looting and carrying on down there in California. To me, I’m growing up, talking to older people that was there and got a little better—thoughts of what was going on. You talk to anybody older than me, first thing when they come out of their mouth is the ’67 riot. The ’67 riot.”

5. Those who participated in the looting, much of it was done out of survival;  
they brought back food and clothing.

**Mr. Dwiki Dooley**— “...We got a couple of TVs. We got sports coats. We got all kinds of meat. Cause we would throw rocks and bricks through the windows and climb through the near supermarket windows and grab all kinds of groceries. The funny thing is we were grabbing all kinds of stuff with glass and stuff in it and then we sorted it out we got home. And, uh, meanwhile we was doing all that, it was just uncontrollable because the police couldn’t control it. All we heard was sirens—“Get out there. Get out of there.” But, we were just—there were a bunch of guys there and a bunch of guys over there. Yeah so, it was just too much.”

**Mr. Herb Boyd**— “...I remember I was driving around with my sons at the time of all this and seeing what people were doing. They were hitting all of the department stores. Somebody had already torched it or a threw a brick through it, and they are trying to get what goods they could. Sometimes your running up the street with a mannequin—you know—you know—or a pair of mismatched shoes just grabbing anything—almost like a symbolic rape—you know. Let’s just rip off something to show you that I was out there. Man, what did you get? So—you know—I got a television. Well, you did a little better than I did, only got a radio. So, the people are grabbing whatever goods they could.”

6. The interviewees recalled their stories like July 1967 was yesterday. There we  
no significant or noticeable memory lapses.

**Mr. Orlin Jones**— “It started over there at the--E—Economy Club—Economic Club. And uhh—some of the stories was that somebody had just come back the war [Vietnam War] and they were having a celebration for the guy. And the police with their nosey self, went on down there and started it the damn thing from what I gather. These guys are having a peaceful party! And uhh—I—I would imagine that there were some white folks still living around there somewhere, and maybe guys were keeping too much noise. And, the police came in there and broke the damn thing up and then all hell broke loose. If they had gone on about their damn business, it probably wouldn’t have happened.”

**Mrs. Karen Schrock**— “It is like word of mouth! I just remember my mother saying to all of us —‘Do not leave the porch.’ That was the thing—we could not leave the porch. For us that was prison, because we were always running up and down the street, so we just sat there. And, then we started seeing people walking about and down the street...So, on the corner of Fullerton and Dexter there was a TV store—Emerson TV store and people were literally walking down the street with TVs.

7. The “Quaternion of White Delusion” asserts based on the causes of urban insurrection and its erroneous history, is sustained by white fear, gaze, entitlement, and branding. Interviewees, their stories, and quotes would confirm the accuracy of my thinking.

**Dr. Howard Lindsey**— “...You got the feeling that Detroit was being—murdered! A slow—like a slow—drive-by shooting.”

Akin to tradition of Black culture and norms, the warm embrace from the Detroit community would exemplify and uphold the formation and bond of fictive kin relationships in Black communities, a cultural retention of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, and a custom several centuries old. I was called and considered a second daughter, granddaughter, goddaughter, and the list goes on. I now have family in and around Detroit. Not only did they extend warm hugs and words, they referred me to others and suggest ideas, places, and the like. This is a project for a lifetime that is sustained by Detroit’s Black residents.

### **Lessons Learned**

Organization is critical to this project and is a must throughout pre-production, production, and post-production processes. Much to my dismay and compulsive organizing, this segment of *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America’s/Motown’s Revolution(s)* was ripe with lessons, caveats, and panicked emails and pleas for IT help (recovering lost data and YouTube film upload troubleshooting). The first lesson came in the need to purchase more data storage. Initially, I purchased a 1 TB (terabyte) external hard drive, which was too small, followed by the additional purchasing of two more hard drives to serve as to the main and backup source,

respectively. The project lives on a 5 TB Lacie hard drive. Much to my dismay and over organizing, I lost track of data and thought I destroyed interviews, but they were on the backup drive. The lesson there is to upload everything to the cloud, which I now have 3TB of Dropbox storage. Secondly, I spent several days doing considerable data dumps from the memory cards to the hard drive, which seemed like an eternity, as there were several hundred gigabytes of data on each card. For the next project, I will be sure to apply for grants and hire a production assistant. Being a one-woman powerhouse is great, but help is better.

Most importantly, I had the time of my life working on my first major documentary *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)*. Honestly, I surprised myself. *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* is the first of its kind for the African American and African Studies Department, the College of Arts & Letters, and Michigan State University. This landmark research project and its multi-mediums is transforming the academy showcasing the depth, reach, understanding of recent history and openly challenging and adding to the historical record.

## **CONCLUSION**

The soft, but audible sounds of Motown's most socially conscious and responsible music plays on repeat in the "Paris of the Midwest," the "Arsenal of Democracy," and the "Model City of Race Relations" amongst the ruin and blight. The Motor City is on the brink of another insurrection. People are tired of being tired and waiting for change that has come via gentrification, the sub-prime mortgage fiasco, and slick maneuvers to forcibly move lifelong residents and their relatives from their homes. In turn, it is destroying the attempts and some successes of creating generational wealth needed in Black America.

Most treasonous, Black America has been tried and executed in the court of public opinion without evidence, witnesses, or expert testimony—incredibly damning—stereotyping a



group of people based on ignorance, an ignorance they say is typical of the Black community. Ooh the irony is rich! Black communities have(ad) been saddled with an unrealistic debt following the 300 rebellions that rocked the nation in the 1960s, but it was Detroit that caused the country's panic attack. This community and its people are vulnerable and persecuted relentlessly for issues beyond and out of their control i.e. police brutality, community disinvestment, false impressions of the ghetto, and the state of public education in their neighborhoods—all systems and institutions of oppression built on racism and ignorance. The landmark federal legislation has been passed (Brown v. Board of Education, 1964 Civil Rights Act, and 1965 Voting Rights Act) but it would take years to be enacted and it is being gradually rescinded with Trump's presidency. Moreover, it would be Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination and the revolts that followed pushing the government to act expeditiously on its laws and social reform.

There has been very little “trickle down” from downtown revitalization (urban redevelopment/urban renewal) and neighborhood gentrification to the long-term poor, the urban working class, and minorities. An influx of coffee shop, bistros, art galleries, and upscale boutiques have made parts of many cities increasingly appealing for the privileged, but they have not made, in any significant way, altered the everyday misery and impoverishment that characterize many urban neighborhoods.<sup>70</sup>

Apparent by the state of society, race relations, and Detroit's current affairs, Black Existentialism, Critical Race, and the Quarternion of White Delusion theories have never been more timely and apt. All three contend that race and racism is the nucleus of the continued subjugation, disenfranchisement, and erasure of Blacks, and as such it adversely impacts all facets of life. The ill effects are rooted in the gaze, fear, and imagination of white America, especially when discussing Black issues.

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<sup>70</sup> Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2005), xliii

The adage has been “hindsight is always 20/20,” conflictly, no one has learned from the city’s tumultuous racial past, indicative by the Motor City’s and the nation’s current racial current climate. Prior to this neo-Quicken Gilded age Detroit entered, the city was the country’s black sheep stealing headlines with major stories—“Big 3 Bailout announced by President Bush”<sup>71</sup>, “Detroit Bankruptcy ‘threw everything into chaos’ for retirees”<sup>72</sup>, “Detroit teacher call for ‘full strike’ amid protests”.<sup>73</sup> The future of Motown is a bag of puns, song lyrics, and metaphors— “Whoa, mercy, mercy me. Oh, things ain’t what they used to be, no, no.”—Marvin Gaye<sup>74</sup>

*In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America’s/Motown’s Revolution(s)* part one is one of many to come. This segment captured what other texts and films didn’t and that is the perspective of Black Detroit from residents, eyewitnesses, looters, women, men, and children in Black Bottom, Paradise Valley, Conant Gardens, and the Virginia Park neighborhoods. The ten interviewees, four women and six men offered insight, counter narratives, challenged the historical record, and said what we all needed to hear—the Black community didn’t start the rebellion, the city, its powerbrokers, ineffective management, and adherence to blatantly discriminatory practices and rules did. It was a coincidence they finished it.

The anarchy’s toll on the city and Black communities was and is high, the unrestrained violence claimed the lives of forty-three men, women, and children—ten whites and thirty-three

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<sup>71</sup> Deb Riechmann, “Big 3 Bailout announced by President Bush”, *CRAINSDETROIT.COM*, last modified December 19, 2008

<https://www.crainsdetroit.com/article/20081219/FREE/812199995/big-3-bailout-announced-by-president-bush>

<sup>72</sup> Christine Ferretii, “Detroit Bankruptcy ‘threw everything into chaos’ for retirees”, *DETROITNEWS.COM*, last modified July 18, 2018 <https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2018/07/18/detroit-bankruptcy-retirees-reaction/783828002/>

<sup>73</sup> Robert Allen, “Detroit teacher call for ‘full strike’ amid protests”, *FREEP.COM*, last modified January 20, 2016 <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2016/01/20/detroit-teachers-rally-catch-presidents-eye/79054270/>

<sup>74</sup> *Mercy, Mercy Me* performed by Marvin Gaye <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/marvingaye/mercymercymetheecology.html>

Blacks (most at the hands of law enforcement)<sup>75</sup>. Roughly, eighty-two hundred were injured and/or arrested. Raging fires displaced hundreds of families, along with the more than twenty-five hundred business and/or buildings destroyed or lost. The contested damage numbers range from \$287 million and \$323 million, in recent recalculations.<sup>76</sup> The rebuilding of the city continues fifty-three years later.

Altering the words of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a Motown spoken word artist and activist, and his first reading of his highly acclaimed “I Have A Dream” speech in Detroit— “the arch of justice is being by moved by force. From the nation’s hilltops and mountains, *In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America’s/Motown’s Revolution(s)* is ringing the freedom bell changing the academy and telling Detroit’s truth, our truth—the good, the bad, and the ugly.

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<sup>75</sup> Bridge Magazine and the Detroit Journalism Cooperative, *The Intersection: What Detroit Has Gained, And Lost, 50 Years After The Uprising of 1967* (Traverse City, MI: Mission Point Press, 2017), xvii.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*,

## **SCRIPT**

## AUDIO

### VIDEO

**MS** Dr. Howard Lindsey (Lindsey 2-4)  
Graphic (:04)

**FS Archive Photo (:05)**  
**FS Archive Photo (:06)**

**FADE TO BLACK (:05)**

**FS VIDEO TITLE**

**FS IN ABSENTIA DEFINITION (:10)**

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

**ARCHIVE SOT**  
*Beginning of Rebellion/What started it*  
(:19)

**MS/CU** Herb Boyd (Boyd 2-2)  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Herb Boyd*  
*Writer & Activist-West side*

**MS** Betty-Ann Walton (Walton 2-1)  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Betty-Ann Walton*  
*Retired Nurse's Aide-West side*  
Rodney King footage (:04)  
1992 LA Riots (:09)

“...You got the feeling that Detroit was being—murdered! A slow—like a slow—drive-by shooting.”  
(15;43;09;12)

*BERT'S JAZZ SESSION*  
*BERT'S JAZZ SESSION*

**FADE TO BLACK (:05)**

*BERT'S JAZZ SESSION*

*IN ABSENTIA*  
*Are the first-person accounts of Black men and women whose names and experiences aren't apart of the historical record, but they are necessary to understanding urban insurrection from the perspective of Black America and Black America in 1960s Detroit.*

*These are their stories.*

*BERT'S JAZZ SESSION*

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

“Four days of rioting, looting, and arson rocked the city of Detroit in the worse outbreak of urban racial violence this year. Entire blocks of homes become infernos. At least 36 are killed. More than two thousand injured and damage topped the half-billion mark.”

“...And you have to call it a rebellion, riot, a civil disturbance, an upheaval. It's not like 1943 now. Cause that was mostly—you know—a—a—real tight racial tension that was going on in the city.”

“..It wan't a riot?! Well—well-what was it then? I mean in California they call it a riot, right?! When—that—whatever his name was. When they was looting and carrying on down there in California. To me, I'm growing up, talking to older people that was there and got a little better—thoughts of what was going on. You talk to anybody older than me, first thing when they come out of their mouth is the '67 riot. The '67 riot.”  
(14;53;38;00)

**CU Karen Schrock (KSchrock 1-8)**  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Karen Schrock*  
*Retired Nonprofit CEO-West side*

“...I usually use riot, and that’s because at the time. You know. You have to go back 50 years that is what it was called. You know—from a political and sociological perspective, yes, I would say it’s a rebellion. But when you talk about people—umm—stealing liquor and shoes and all of that. I don’t know that the rebellion term applied. I think of rebellion more in terms of—you know—slaves who were on a plantation. Who would take over the plantation—umm—that’s a rebellion to me... We always to refer to it as riot, at least my generation...but at that time, yeah that is what is was. The ’67 riot.” (05;48;29;15)

**MS Orlin Jones (Jones 1-5)**  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Orlin Jones*  
*Retired Big 3 Employee-East side*

“...Some call it a civil disturbance, insurrection, some call it a race riot. And, the guys say it wasn’t no race riot, cause white folks would steal too. That was what was so funny about it...”  
(03;28;13;11)

**MS Judge Ulysses Boykin (Boykin 2-3)**  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Judge Ulysses Boykin*  
*Michigan Third Judicial Circuit Court Judge*

“...1943 it was more of a physical clash between Blacks and whites, than the one in 1967, it was more against property—rather than attacking white people or white people attacking Black people that was not the way ’67 happened.”

**MS Morris Schrock (MSchrock 1-5)**  
Take archive footage (:15)  
California 1965  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Morris Schrock*  
*Retired State of Michigan Employee-East side*

“But I think Black people were just getting fed up...in California and Oakland. It was just that time in history, enough was enough. And, uhh, maybe that wasn’t the best way to rebel, but some time you just can’t pick the best way. You get stuck in the moment, and you’re so fed up with the situation. Umm, so yeah, I would use the word rebellion, but we call it a riot.” (11;03;30;03 & 11;03;37;23)

**WS Betty Edwards (Edwards 1-2)**  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Betty Edwards*  
*Retired Detroit Public Schools Professional-East side*

“...You kind of knew your place. You knew what you had to do—to uhh—to stay out of trouble—you know. Come home early. [So Detroit in so many ways and the way you’re describing it is a sundown city? At least at that time? And, probably is stil now.] Well, especially during the riot, it definitely was a sundown town.”  
19;05;51;01

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

**FS Rebellion Map (:10)**  
**FS Archive Photo (:10)**

Rebellion Map (In Color) (:10)  
12<sup>th</sup> Street (:10)

**FS Demographics (:07)**

Demographics (:07)  
(Per 1960 US Census)  
Detroit Total Population – 1, 670,144  
White – 1,182, 970  
Black – 482,223

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

**MS/CU Herb Boyd (Boyd 2-3 & 2-2)**

Take archive footage (:05)

“It was kind of, of, a powder keg. All it needed was just one little match to ignite it. And one little incident to—*boop*—trigger it.” (06;45;39;30) “...There was never—you know—there was no organized aspect of it. People use to suggest that there was—you know—people were waiting for this to happen, and as soon as it happened they jumped in took advantage of it. It is little to no reportage on that. It may have been some instances where some people, in as much as they went and tore off and raided and try to get into a pawn shop or try to break into a store or something and get them some goods.”

**WS Orlin Jones (Jones 1-7)**

Take current rebellion site (:04)

Take archive footage (:16)

“It started over there at the--E—Economy Club—Economic Club. And uhh—some of the stories was that somebody had just come back the war [Vietnam War] and they were having a celebration for the guy. And the police with their nosey self, went on down there and started it the damn thing from what I gather. These guys are having a peaceful party! And uhh—I—I would imagine that there were some white folks still living around there somewhere, and maybe guys were keeping too much noise. And, the police came in there and broke the damn thing up and then all hell broke loose. If they had gone on about their damn business, it probably wouldn’t have happened.” (03;33;28;08)

**CU Renee Hudson (Hudson 1-2)**  
Lower-third (:04)

*Renee Hudson*  
*East side*

“...Woke up excited that morning, because I had, we were gonna have a birthday party in our backyard. We had a really big backyard. My parents had decorated it with balloons, and cakes, and umm—I had probably about 20 children were coming to the party. So very excited! All of sudden, it was a boom, and everything went down from there. Umm—didn’t really know what was happening at the time. Of course, young. We had to go in the house. Our street—on our street—which was

14<sup>th</sup>—I lived a couple houses off of LaSalle Blvd. off of 14<sup>th</sup>. Umm—they had National Guards just shooting, they cut our streets off so no one could go anywhere. My party was actually a disaster, because of course, no one knew what was going on. We just heard explosions and gunfire and all sorts of uncommon noises.” (02;17;45;20)

**CU** Karen Schrock (KSchrock 1-4)

“It is like word of mouth! I just remember my mother saying to all of—‘Do not leave the porch.’ That was the thing—we could not leave the porch. For us that was prison, because we were always running up and down the street, so we just sat there. And, then we started seeing people walking about and down the street...So, on the corner of Fullerton and Dexter there was a TV store—Emerson TV store and people were literally walking down the street with TVs. (05;18;20;06)

**WS** Betty Edwards (Edwards 1-2)  
Take archive footage (:05)

“... They would come out with—like—you know—driving down the street kind of like with bullhorns you know. Everybody stay in the house.”

**MS/CU** Dr. Howard Lindsey  
(Lindsey 2-6)  
Lower-third (:04)

“I remember I was watching Bonanza with my whole family—and that little crawl space under—the uh—they would have little news items. Uh—it came on, it said, cause the TV station was in Grand Rapids—W-O-O-D TV. A little crawl message came on—‘Will members of the Grand Rapids National Guard please report to their staging station.’ Ten minutes later, will the members of the National Guard, please report to their station. About 10 more minutes, the local station cut into the Bonanza, the news anchor came on TV, and said, “Will the members of the Grand Rapids National Guard please report to the guard station, rioting has broken out in Detroit. We will need all National Guardsmen to report to the station, because they were going into Detroit...And, that was Sunday evening.” (14;44;42;11)

Take FS Bonanza (:05)

Take archive footage (:24)  
*Dr. Howard Lindsey*  
*Retired Associate Professor at*  
*DePaul University-Southfield*

Take archive footage (:10)

**MS** Judge Ulysses Boykin (Boykin 2-6)  
GRAPHIC (:04)

(08;53;37;07) “...All of a sudden you could look north from my grandmother’s apartment and see these fires start around 12<sup>th</sup> street. And you’d see one, then another one, then another one, and then smoke started coming up. Then a little while later you would see fires on Linwood.” (08;54;48;15) “...And the next commercial street west of that was Dexter. And, fires started on Dexter, and finally all the way to Grand River. And so, we were watching the news coverage and things were

Take archive footage (:18)



getting worse and we could see helicopters coming flying in. The governor—the governor was George Romney, who was father of Mitt Romney. And uhh, he called out the National Guard. He started flying helicopters and stuff in. I told my mother things is getting bad. I said we need to go home.” And so, we got in the car driving along the Lodge freeway going north, and you could see people gathering on the pedestrian overpasses. And, they were just like hanging on the fences that were around on the overpasses, and you could see people were angry. It wasn’t like a carnival like atmosphere and so people were just really mad and upset. (08;55;51;07) “...And then, it really broke out more that night, and that is when they slapped the curfew on it.”

***FADE TO BLACK (:03)***

*ARCHIVE SOT*  
*Gov. Romney actions*  
(:18)

**MS/CU Herb Boyd (Boyd 2-3)**

Take archive footage (:31)

**CU Dwiki Dooley (Dooley 1-2)**  
**GRAPHIC (:04)**

Take archive footage (06)

*Dwiki Dooley*  
*Retired Big 3 Employee & Vietnam*  
*War Veteran-East side*  
Take archive footage (:07)

***FADE TO BLACK (:03)***

“Governor Romney calls a state of an emergency. Request federal troops and five thousand paratroopers to reinforce the national guard, state and city police. The city’s industry and business are severely affected and a tight curfew as ordered in the motor city.”

“...I remember I was driving around with my sons at the time of all this and seeing what people were doing. They were hitting all of the department stores. Somebody had already torched it or a threw a brick through it, and they are trying to get what goods they could. Sometimes your running up the street with a mannequin—you know—you know—or a pair of mismatched shoes just grabbing anything—almost like a symbolic rape—you know. Let’s just rip off something to show you that I was out there. Man, what did you get? So—you know—I got a television. Well, you did a little better than I did, only got a radio. So, the people are grabbing whatever goods they could.”

“...We got a couple of TVs. We got sports coats. We got all kinds of meat. Cause we would throw rocks and bricks through the windows and climb through the near supermarket windows and grab all kinds of groceries. The funny thing is we were grabbing all kinds of stuff with glass and stuff in it and then we sorted it out we got home. And, uh, meanwhile we was doing all that, it was just uncontrollable because the police couldn’t control it. All we heard was sirens—“Get out there. Get out of

there.” But, we were just—there were a bunch of guys there and a bunch of guys over there. Yeah so, it was just too much.” (17;20;18;16)

**WS** Orlin Jones (Jones 1-5)  
GRAPHIC (:04)  
*Orlin Jones*  
*Retired Big 3 Employee-East side*

“...Edward Thomas, who is now deceased, lived on Cameron St., and we both got off of work about 9 a.m. that morning. And, we should have been because the—that—that—burglary alarm wouldn’t line up with the big main door that would open the plant. And, so we stayed around there, and we wondered why ADT company never came. We didn’t know there was an insurrection going on. So, I took him home. And, so when we got on the north end, we saw all these people running down the street with clothes and bags. A guy had a little, a portable refrigerator—what the hell is going on? We were working that day and didn’t know what was going on...we got down in front of Edward’s house and there was a guy that lived next door to him, well he had a little apartment house refrigerator and he was walking it down the street. And, he said, “Ed, you and Jonesy come give me a hand and help me take this refrigerator upstairs. So, we helped him take a stolen refrigerator up the stairs to his second floor flat. We didn’t know what the hell was going on.” (03;25;55;12)

Take archive footage (:07)

Take archive footage (:06)

**MS** Betty-Ann Walton (Walton 1-2)

“Clothes, food...[Where they clothes that fit?] Yeah, yeah. Because like I told you anything on 12<sup>th</sup> Street you wanted, you could find. But, my momma she pitched a fit! It ain’t coming up in here. Because...[So, what exactly did they do with it?] Because, she was afraid—see during back at that—during that time, baby. If she was caught looting or had looted stuff in your house, you could go to jail. So, my momma said no. So, whatever they did with it, I don’t know.” (14;49;03;04)

**WS** Betty Edwards (Edwards 1-3)

Take archive photo (:10)

“...They told them that they would be coming to your house looking for that stuff. Some people they walking down the streets with couches and stuff. You know—that is when we used to have furniture companies in the neighborhood. I mean—they got couches and chairs—you know—packet of stuff up in their house. Crazy! [Did they ever come and retrieve the property?] Well, they did retrieve some property. Yes, they did. The police were around. I mean—you know. They see you got a sofa and chair and all this stuff. Two or three people carrying stuff down the street. They know where it’s going.”

MS/CU Dr. Howard Lindsey  
(Lindsey 1-8)

Take archive footage (:05)

Take archive footage (:03)

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

*ARCHIVE SOT*  
*Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson National*  
*Speech*  
(:36)

MS/CU Herb Boyd (Boyd 2-4)

Take archive footage (:04)

Take archive footage (:07)

Take archive footage (:07)

Take archive footage (:06)

Take archive footage (:06)

(14;43;25;23) "...And, the other memory I have, was about every block somebody would come trying to sell me something merchandise, which was obviously stolen. Watches, rings—uh—small clothing items. I think—I don't know if it was liquor, involved but. (14;43;55;23) "...I would walk past—uh—a person. "Hey Bra, I got some nice watches here. I got some nice rings here. They had on a jacket and would open it up. Or they would have a little suitcase and they just open it. 'Nah man, that's all right. That's all right!'"(14;44;17;04) "...the joke was you could get a real bargain."

***FADE TO BLACK (:03)***

"...Your president calls upon all of our people in all of our cities to join in a determined program to maintain law and order. To condemn and to combat lawlessness in all of its forms and firmly to show by word and by deed that riots, looting, and public disorder will just not be tolerated."

"We already got insensitive cops; we don't need the insensitive national guard. It just compounds the possibility of us being taken out. So we've always had that situation of being somewhat—uhh—hampered—uhh—being put—herded in, constrained, being put into concentration camps more or less—living in these neighborhoods like Black Bottom and Paradise Valley, and that was the limit. So when you are constricted like that, then here come these folks adding further constriction—say you can't go outside at a certain time and then you recognize the danger of that. A lot of us say, hey maybe this is the time to stay inside and, and understand the situation and get with your family particular the children. You know trying to keep them close to you, because their tendency, they tend to get like cabin fever in a hurry, they went to get outside and play. But, you can't be going out after sunset. After sundown, it was no way you're going to be moving around the community, because first of all, even going to the stores. You try to do everything in the daylight hours. So, when you hunker down in the evening you are inside and you are careful to not make anything—do anything that would upset, unnerve these individuals who are prowling your community. And, believe me they were patrolling

Take archive footage (:05)  
Take archive footage (:07)

the communities. You can look out when you could peep out the window and see tanks going up 12<sup>th</sup> street. You know—because I lived right off Fulton and 12<sup>th</sup> street, so I saw the whole movement sometime of jeeps and armored vehicles along with police cars—you know—moving—just on patrol—they are not going anywhere in particular. But since that was a hot zone it was like a concentration of—um—what you call paramilitary and military operations in that community. It was amazing to kind of walk around in the daytime hours and see them with you know—all their army gear and what have you in front of banks, in front of stores. They were trying to protect some of the property there. I know the YMCA on Grand River and Grand Boulevard was almost like, I guess it was kind of like a station. A place where they had setup—umm—communications center. It was right near Northwestern High School.”

**MS** Judge Ulysses Boykin (Boykin 2-5)

“...the behavior of the Michigan National Guard was atrocious. They were not trained for that kind of duty. And, they were overwhelming white because they came out state, which still, Michigan is pretty much white, out state, when you get outside of Detroit.” 08;45;10;04  
“...And, the National Guard was almost exclusively white. And, they were not trained for this kind of civil disturbance or anything like that. And, they killed more people than the police did and it was a difference between how the National Guard responded to things from the way regular army troops. They sent up troops from Fort Bragg, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, they were on the eastside of Detroit, and Michigan National Guard was on the westside. I think the army, maybe, killed one or two people. (08;44;37;03)

**CU** Renee Hudson (Hudson 1-2)

Take photo (:03)  
Take photo (:03)  
Take photo (:03)  
Take photo (:03)

“...There was as house that was on the corner of LaSalle Blvd and Virginia Park—Virginia Park—being one block away that was shot up by—uhh—uhh—the rumor was that there were snipers—that uhh—some kind of way got into that house. They were hiding in that house and the National Guard shot up, they shot the house up. And, to this day there’s still bullet holes in that house...Everything was real chaotic, they couldn’t go to school, everything was shut down, plus my school was on 12<sup>th</sup> Street—St. Agnes. So, everything was shut down and from what I can remember, I know it was at least a good week. It was—uhh—smoke—smoke all in the air.

You could smell buildings. You can smell burning, that burn smell when something burns down. That was all in the area. I remember looking up at the sky, and the sky was just so clouded, because of all this smoke... We were instructed to pretty much just stay in the house.  
(02;21;21;09)

**WS** Betty Edwards (Edwards 1-2 & 1-3)

Take archive footage

“...my brother—uhh—he was 12 years older—he is 12 years older than I am. And, he was home from the military and then I had a cousin was also home. Well, as it turned out they made an announcement that—that if there are military people here, you need to report to I think the police station. So, then they had to go to the police station to—umm—kind of—tried to help calm things down, because I don’t there were enough police officers here in the city to cover all of what was going on—you know—and that made my mother more frightened. That she has got her child here who is home from Germany, and he’s here and this is the first time he has ever really had to try and fight or something like that. (15;52;50;06) But they were both home, happened to be home. And so—you know—they made the announcement. And so, my mother was like you know you don’t really have to go. Uhh—but—you know—they knew who was home—uhh—because they came to the house. Yeah! They came to the house, the army people came to the house and said they had to report. [Oh, wow!] He was riding down the street like on a tank. They had tanks and everything. It was crazy. It was crazy.”  
18;56;42;22

Take photo (:05)

**MS** Judge Ulysses Boykin (Boykin 2-5)

“...And, the National Guard was almost exclusively white. And, they were not trained for this kind of civil disturbance or anything like that. And, they killed more people than the police did and it was a difference between how the National Guard responded to things from the way regular army troops. They sent up troops from Fort Bragg, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, they were on the east side of Detroit, and Michigan National Guard was on the west side. I think the army, maybe, killed one or two people.” 08;45;10;04 “...The National Guard would just drive up to the building and point their guns and just start shooting indiscriminately into the building. There’s an apartment building located on W. Davison and 14<sup>th</sup>. Still if you get up close to it, you can see the bullet marks in the masonry in front of the building.

Take archive footage (:05)

Take photo (:05)

08;45;49;22 "...They would also have these patrols, and like, they would be going on parallel streets. Somebody would see a flash or hear something, and they would just start shooting. And the group patrol on the next street, 'oh they're sniping?' They would just start shooting and they are actually responding to each others gunfire. There's be no sniping. There were a few snipers, but not like the National Guard." 08;47;10;07 "...So they were really ill-equipped and ill-trained to deal with what was going on unlike the army troops, the real army, at the time." 08;47;34;04

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

**MS Morris Schrock (MSchrock 1-5)**

Take archive footage (:06)

**CU Dwiki Dooley (Dooley 1-5)**

Take archive footage-Vietnam (:10)

Take archive footage-Vietnam (:02)

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

"...It's not just the riots, it's—it's the social fabric things were changing, the riots, Vietnam—umm—Black Power movement all of those things that were going on at that time. It just wasn't the one thing. The riots or the rebellion definitely had an impact on what was happening in—in my world at that time." 11;07;21;12

"...you gonna do this—uhh—this uhh—rebellion or—you know—this riot thing. We're gonna draft all the young men out the projects." 17;37;58;13 "...a lot of Black people, young Black people got drafted in '68." 17;37;28;12 "...It's like uhh—uhh—the song in the movies—Greetings you've been drafted in U.S Army. That was January '68. January 28, 1968 to be specifically. And, I was like—huh?! It seemed like majority of the Black men from the projects and all over not just the projects, but all over the city was uhh—was uhh—drafted or was in the military. Or they joined because they were afraid they were going to get drafted. Where—ahh--whereas they thought they would get a better deal if they, if they joined." 17;35;19;17

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

**FS Demographics (:07)**

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

Demographics (:07)  
(Per 1970 US Census)  
Detroit Total Population – 1,511,482  
White – 838,877  
Black – 660,428

**FS PHOTO (:10)**

**FS PHOTO (:10)**

**MS/CU Herb Boyd (Boyd 2-4)**  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Herb Boyd*  
*Writer & Activist-West side*

“... You know, how do we begin to put together organizations, formations out there along the self-determination line? It has nothing at all to do with these larger municipalities—you know?! Or any of these kind of formations in city, but this is—Black owned, Black controlled, Black led. That is what we are all about. And, so it began to take shape in the—uhh—political arena, in the cultural, the cultural thing was always pretty solid in the city. And it has—it cannot be separated—you know—from the general political push that was going on for a good generation. When you start looking at Dudley Randall who began to put together Broadside Press, all of this is inspired by, after the ’67 rebellion where you began to say from an institutional standpoint, we can have our own organizations, our own companies, our own little businesses, all of things would pop up. Pop, pop, pop!”

**CU Renee Hudson (Hudson 1-3)**  
Lower-third (:04)

Take photo (:06)  
Take lower-third (:03)

*Renee Hudson*  
*East side*

“...It was said that they were going to rebuild all of the areas that had been burned down, but that never happened. And, 12<sup>th</sup> Street ended up being a big vacant piece of land for probably until after I graduated from high school, and after I graduated from high school that is when they started building low income housing over there. But for that time everything that was over there gone. It was just blank. It was just a vacant street.”  
(02;25;32;09)

**MS/CU Dr. Howard Lindsey**  
(Lindsey 2-2)  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Dr. Howard Lindsey*  
*Retired Associate Professor at*  
*DePaul University-Southfield*

“...after about two or three years I’ve been here, you started hearing every week or every month another business that’s either moving out of the city or closing down or going bankrupt. And, for about the next ten years it seemed like every week or every month it was something else...” (15;25;44;22)

**CU KSchrock (KSchrock 1-8)**  
Lower-third (:04)

Take photo (:10)  
*Karen Schrock*  
*Retired Nonprofit CEO-West side*

“...It probably confirmed a lot of my feelings about racism in [a] country, not a just in terms of what happened then, but the lack of an appropriate response to it. That was an obvious outcry—umm—obvious expression of deep-seated concern and the only response that we received was an out of proportion response from the criminal justice system.”  
(05;50;27;17)

**CU Renee Hudson (Hudson 1-5)**

“It definitely changed the world as I saw it. Because at 10 years old, I didn’t see ugly in the world. I—I didn’t see

fires, guns, the people looting and stealing, so it definitely changed that perception. Because now that was something that made me more aware of how the world really was, it took that innocence away. I guess! Absolutely jaded by that. And, yes, that was the wake-up call that the world is not what I thought it was. The world wasn't as happy, go-lucky."  
02;46;48;00

**MS/CU Dr. Howard Lindsey**  
(Lindsey 2-2)

"...That of course—that—taking Detroit back from the majority Black population. Detroit began to lose whites—most of them didn't move out of state because—uhh—a feeling that at one time—that everybody had left Detroit and moved down to Texas. Because—people—a number of Blacks or a number of whites moved to Texas—they were actually getting Detroit newspapers. But, as it happened, of course, most the of the people that left Detroit—the whites that left of Detroit went to the suburbs..."15;28;18;30

**WS Betty Edwards (Edwards 1-4)**  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Betty Edwards*  
*Retired Detroit Public Schools*  
*Professional-East side*

"...Just know that racism is still there. It's just—uhh—a little more discrete now. I don't know maybe it's more outwardly now with Donald Trump in office. But—uhh—it's not the same as it used to be when I was growing up."

**MS/CU Dr. Howard Lindsey**  
(Lindsey 2-2)

"...And, it's almost like—you know—it's like they are rejecting Detroit. They are rejecting Black folks. And, that to me said—you know—I don't think racial integration is ever going to happen. Because as Blacks move in, it seemed like whites move out." 15;31;24;05

**MS Morris Schrock (MSchrock 1-5)**  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Morris Schrock*  
*Retired State of Michigan Employee-*  
*East side*

"...So after the riots your girlfriend that may have lived around the corner and your other friend, some of the Blacks moved to northwest Detroit. There was a migration after the riots to go to northwest Detroit. We are talking Mumford High School—umm—Central. But the question is, why did the homes become available? It's because the whites that lived there, they left too. They came to Oakland County...The Avenue of Fashion of Seven Mile and Livernois that was definitely a white community, but after the riots you have Blacks that are moving to northwest Detroit. I remember—I remember that vividly." 11;02;00;14

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**

**FADE TO BLACK (:03)**



**FS REBELLION IMPACT  
(:15)**

*43 people were killed in the Detroit uprising  
More than 2,000 were injured  
Roughly 7,000 were arrested  
2,000 buildings destroyed  
Damage totals vary between \$287 and \$500 million  
dollars*

**MS/CU Herb Boyd (Boyd 2-4)**

“... You put the city back together, in such a way that we can be proud of it, that we would have some ownership in it, that we will be empowered by it, and that the prospects of having some profit too. How do we, what do we get out of it? In terms of building this, whether it is housing...”

**MS Orlin Jones (1-5)**  
Lower-third (:04)  
*Orlin Jones*  
*Retired Big 3 Employee-East side*

“...The white people that I knew—uhh--they weren’t—they weren’t as cordial as they use to be. You know. They weren’t as cordial as they used to be, but, hell, I survived it.” 03;49;06;21

**MS Morris Schrock (MSchrock 1-5)**  
Lower-third (:04)

“Was it traumatic? I don’t think at that moment, it was just that reality, but as time passed and you can look back. Yeah, it was trauma, but it didn’t catch up with you right away. You saw it later in the schools. The schools had changed. The communities had changed. Uhh—That’s when you noticed it, at least for me. As a kid coming back thinking about East Lansing, MSU, back to my neighborhood, a year later after the riots. Two years later, the neighborhoods are going down. People would leave, abandon buildings, umm, that’s when the neighborhood—and you know—I don’t want to talk about drugs, but that is when you get the influx of drugs too. 11;05;31;22

**MS Betty-Ann Walton (Walton 1-4)**  
Lower-third (:04)  
Take archive footage (:02)  
Take footage (:03)  
*Betty-Ann Walton*  
*Retired Nurse’s Aide-West side*

“You want the truth. [I want the truth.] Ain’t nothing changed. Different location, different generation. Ain’t nothing changed.” 15;06;40;18

**CU Karen Schrock (KSchrock 1-4)**  
Current footage of Detroit (:02)  
Current footage of Detroit (:06)  
Current footage of Detroit (:04)

“...I think Detroit can comeback, but unfortunately I think its going to comeback for different people. Umm—my husband and I go to Detroit all the time. And, when we started to see the bike lanes, we knew that they city was not planning for Black people. Black people are not

Detroit Jazz Festival (:03)  
Rebellion historical marker (:06)  
Rebellion historical marker (:06)  
Eight Mile Wall (:04)  
Lower third  
Detroit's Berlin Wall  
Eight Mile  
Downtown housing construction  
(:03)  
City Hall (:03)  
Riverfront Canada side (:04)

out riding bikes. So, bike lanes were like one of the original indicators. Then when you see what's being built and the cost of it. The city, Downtown, in particular is going to comeback, but it's going to comeback for different people." 06;04;10;05

**FS Demographics (:07)**

Demographics (:07)  
(Per 2019 US Census Estimates)  
Detroit Total Population – 670,031  
White – 97,825  
Black – 526,645

**TRANSITION TO BLACK (:03)**

**TRANSITION TO BLACK (:03)**

**MS** Dr. Howard Lindsey (Lindsey  
2-4)  
Graphic (:04)

“...You got the feeling that Detroit was being—murdered! A slow—like a slow—drive-by shooting.”  
(15;43;09;12)

**MS** Heidelberg Project (:04)  
**MS** Heidelberg Project (:04)

Heidelberg Project—*Detroit vs. Everybody*  
Heidelberg Project—*Say nice things about Detroit*

**CREDITS (:15)**

**CREDITS (:15)**

**FS** Credits

In order of appearance  
Mr. Herb Boyd  
Mrs. Karen Schrock  
Mrs. Betty-Ann Walton  
Mr. Orlin Jones  
Judge Ulysses Boykin

**FS** Credits

Mr. Morris Schrock  
Mrs. Betty Edwards  
Mrs. Renee Hudson  
Dr. Howard Lindsey  
Mr. Dwiki Dooley

**FS** Credits

Dissertation Committee  
Dr. Glenn Chambers, Co-Chair  
Dr. Geri Alunit Zeldes, Co-Chair

Dr. Tama Hamilton-Wray  
Prof. Jeff Wray

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The Greater Detroit Community  
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Mrs. Paulette Granberry-Russell, J.D.  
Dr. Judith Stoddart  
Dr. Bill Hart-Davidson  
Bert's Warehouse Market

**FS Credits**

Filmed, written, produced, directed, and edited by  
Ms. Joyce-Zoë Farley

**FS VIDEO TITLE**

**FS VIDEO TITLE**

**TRT—31:44**

**TRT—31:44**

## **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX A**

## Interview Questions

Please say and your spell your name.

### *Background*

When and where were you born?

How long have you lived in the city?

Where is your family originally from?

When did your family migrate north? And, from where?

What brought your family to Detroit?

Where is your mother and father from?

Do you have siblings? If so, how many? Do they reside in the city and/or metro area?

What high school did you attend? College?

Are you married? How many children do you have?

### *Pre-1967*

Please share your memories of the city before the insurrection.

Where did you and your family live in the city prior to 1967?

If applicable, tell me about your experience with June 1943 on Belle Isle and/or any disturbance prior to 1967.

### *Detroit Insurrection*

Where were you employed at the time during the rebellion?

How old were you in 1967?

Describe your memories of the beginning, middle, and the end of the mayhem and violence in Detroit?

Tell me your story about the rebellion, participating, the violence, and etc.

Sharing on your experiences, how about family and friends?

Understanding police brutality was one of the cause of the uprising, could you share your experiences with it.

The Algiers Motel Incident was a racially motivated blood bath during the rebellion, tell me what you know.

There were so many memorable moments—the military, looting, arrests, fires, damage, reporting (media and word-of-mouth), speak on any or all things.

### *Post-Detroit 1967*

What term would you use to describe the event of Detroit 1967? Riot, Rebellion, Uprising? And, why?

Trauma is huge taboo topic in Black culture, more so urban violence, can you relate? Tell me your stories of police brutality, rebellion ruins, and the like.

Did you or your family relocate?

If you could guesstimate, how much of the blight in the city is uprising remnants, white and black flight, and deindustrialization?

How did the events shift your personal story? Possibilities? Dreams? Family? Coming of Age?

Any final thoughts and/or stories you want to share before concluding this interview?

## **APPENDIX B**



Joyce-Zoë Farley, African American and African (AAAS) Doctoral Candidate  
Dr. Glenn Chambers & Dr. Geri Zeldes (Dissertation Co-Chairs)  
Michigan State University  
201.983.3787 (c)  
[Jzf32888@gmail.com](mailto:Jzf32888@gmail.com)

## **LEGAL RELEASE**

*In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* is an interdisciplinary research project on urban rebellion of the 20th century with the catalyst being Detroit 1967. This non-traditional dissertation is a documentary film utilizing a collection of oral histories from residents who survived, participated, chronicled, and/or attempted to restore law and order during the 1967 Detroit insurrection. Its goal is to assess, challenge, correct, and add to the metanarrative of the urban rebellion, specifically Detroit uprising. In which, perceptions and hysteria overshadow the reality of the event, media representations of Black agency and performance, and perceptions of urban cities, explicitly Detroit. Moreover, it critiques and defines rhetoric and naming as associated with "rioting".

### **PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE CONSENTING**

This document outlines and confirms my understanding and agreement with Joyce-Zoe Farley & BlackPrint Production House, LLC in regard to said dissertation and my participation thereof in the documentary project:

The terms of the agreement are as follows:

1. The interviews will be video recorded, indexed, and edited for the documentary.
2. I grant, assign, and transfer all rights to Joyce-Zoe Farley and/or BlackPrint Production House, LLC to use the material for all purposes relating to the project, future research, film and/or digital projects.
3. I understand that Joyce-Zoe Farley and/or BlackPrint Production House, LLC may use my image, voice and other personal characteristics in photographs, video, audio, digital, or other media associated with the project. I agree that Joyce-Zoe Farley and/or BlackPrint Production House, LLC may use, reproduce, exhibit, distribute, broadcast and/or digitize my name, likeness, image, voice, recordings and transcripts and any other contribution by me for the project, in whole or part.
4. I understand that this release is binding on me, my heirs, executors, and assigns.

Additionally:

- **Each interview is strictly voluntary.**
- **At any time you may refuse or skip to answer any question(s).**
- **You may withdraw at any time without penalty or prejudice.**
- **There is no cost to participate nor will you be financially compensated for your contribution.**

At the conclusion of the project each interviewee will receive the following: a copy of his/her raw interviews, the documentary, and signed consent form.

This document contains our entire and complete understanding.

Please feel free to contact me with your questions.

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Interviewee

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Date

---

Address

---

Email Address

Joyce-Zoë Farley, African American and African (AAAS) Doctoral Candidate  
Dr. Glenn Chambers & Dr. Geri Zeldes (Dissertation Co-Chairs)  
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*In Absentia: The Lost Ones of America's/Motown's Revolution(s)* is dedicated to preserving this critical juncture in history, the sanctity of oral history, and integrating digital and visual publishing mediums to safeguarding these eyewitness accounts. In addition to the dissertation, the interview(s) will also be a part of a larger film project post-doctorate focusing on the same subject matter. Essentially, after fifty years now is the time to reclaim your moment in history, your voice, your city, and the roughly four days that defined a decade and a century.

- **Each interview is strictly voluntary.**
- **At any time you may refuse or skip to answer any question(s).**
- **You may withdraw at any time without penalty or prejudice.**
- **There is no cost to participate nor will you be financially compensated for your contribution.**

At the conclusion of the project each interviewee will receive the following: a copy of his/her raw interviews, the documentary, and a copy of the consent form.

This document contains our entire and complete understanding.

Thank you!

**APPENDIX C**

## LINKS

Trailer: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_psUcPxmSxI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_psUcPxmSxI)

Film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nx9ZOMvMC8Q>

Spotify:

Uprising 2020 (Unofficial Soundtrack)

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/54X4C1hubw9HzckZXoyboX?si=NgKIvdGWSZOquOuCmlC2PA>

Social Media

Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/In-Absentia-The-Lost-Ones-of-AmericasMotowns-Revolutions-102957757809300/?modal=admin\\_todo\\_tour](https://www.facebook.com/In-Absentia-The-Lost-Ones-of-AmericasMotowns-Revolutions-102957757809300/?modal=admin_todo_tour)

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/in\\_absentia\\_documentary/](https://www.instagram.com/in_absentia_documentary/)

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