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Stoking a White Backlash: Race, Violence, and Yellow Journalism in Omaha, 1919

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Abstract

The “Red Summer of 1919” marked the nadir of interracial violence that characterized urban America during the post-World War I era. Of the more than twenty-five cities that experienced so-called “race riots” that year, Omaha, Nebraska on 28 September 1919 witnessed a vigilante mob of white youth and adults numbering in the thousands destroy the county courthouse, attempt to lynch Omaha’s mayor, and brutally execute an African American man named William Brown. The violence in Omaha and places as disparate as Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Longview, Texas occurred in communities coping with dramatic internal migrations, urban spatial tension, job competition, wartime xenophobia, and popularized fears of interracial sex.

This paper suggests that those factors, although significant, were not the primary impetuses for the white uprising in Omaha. This paper argues that throughout 1919 Omaha’s newspapers meticulously sensationalized alleged sexual assaults by African American men in and outside of Omaha. Yet also intertwined were Omaha’s machine politics and a recently-ousted political boss vying to discredit a newly elected progressive mayor through the pages of the *Omaha Daily Bee*. Utilizing newspaper articles, diaries, and interview transcripts, this paper examines how Omaha newspapers sensationalized mob violence and alleged sexual assaults committed by African Americans in order to weaken Omaha’s mayor. This paper finds that the newspapers had a profound impact on exacerbating white perceptions about Omaha’s African American community.



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The “Red Summer of 1919” marked the nadir of an American era of racial violence lasting from the late-eighteenth century through the post-World War I years. The occurrence of lynchings reached its peak and of the more than twenty-five cities that experienced so-called “race riots” that year, Omaha, Nebraska, on 28 September 1919 experienced its own urban disorder. Omaha witnessed thousands of white youth and adult vigilantes destroy the Douglas County courthouse, attempt to lynch Omaha’s mayor, and brutally execute an African American man named William Brown for an alleged rape.

Throughout 1919, Omaha newspapers sensationalized reports of alleged African American violence. Local papers utilized an inflammatory racial discourse that crafted a fictitious threat of an African American predator—the “black beast.”¹ The racial violence that broke out across the country received front page coverage alongside alarming local accounts of attacks and sexual assaults supposedly committed by African American men in Omaha. Creating the “black beast” trope in Omaha’s news coverage did not just cater to popular trends, but it served a useful purpose to a select few.

William Brown’s murder in Omaha shows how media can influence public discourse and popular perceptions about certain demographics. The increased scapegoating of African Americans’ in the Omaha press occurred in conjunction with the downfall of a political boss, Tom Dennison, who vied to discredit Edward Smith, Omaha’s newly-elected progressive mayor who broke up Omaha’s vice world. The *Omaha Daily Bee*, one of Dennison’s remaining vestiges of influence, undermined the mayor’s administration by over hyping reports of crime and sexual assaults by African Americans and popularizing the notion that the reformist mayor had repeatedly failed to provide law and order. In the midst of postwar domestic turmoil in 1919, the *Omaha Daily Bee* knew how to play into white Omahans’ spatial concerns over dramatic internal migration, job competition, war-related xenophobia, and abhorrence of interracial sex. Sensationalized reports of mob violence combined with alleged sexual assaults committed by African Americans had a profound impact on exacerbating whites’ perceptions about Omaha’s African American community and shaping white Omahans’ rationale to take justice into their own hands.

By the 1890s, lynching victims had become predominately African American and lynching itself became a tool for whites to maintain their dominance within their social hierarchy. Lynching was used against the generation of post-Civil War African Americans who dared to challenge the emerging legal and social Jim Crow system that dictated one's ability to access the ballot, to reject the unjust sharecropping system, and to challenge social customs. Local governments ultimately became tacit or even vocal supporters of lynch justice and the Jim Crow system.

White mob violence against African Americans reached its most brutal period between 1890 and 1919. More than 1,748 African American men, women and youth were lynched during this era averaging one lynching per every six days.² Of all the lynchings that occurred, it is important to note that this estimate includes only those who were capable of being documented. Throughout this era, accurate accounts of lynchings remained limited at best and overwhelmingly distorted or unreported at their worst.

Throughout the South prior to World War I, lynchings were highly ritualized affairs with 'carnavalesque' atmospheres. When suspects were apprehended, local and regional newspapers advertised lynching as highly-orchestrated events often in cooperation with police. Railroads also provided special fares for groups to travel into towns to witness the lynching. Thousands would gather in an atmosphere that would rival the traveling religious revivals of the day. Executions often involved more than merely hanging the victim, but rather resulted in burning alive, shooting, mutilating and castrating the individual as a way to totally destroy, denigrate, and emasculate the victim. The bodily remains would then be gathered as souvenirs and photos turned into postcards which spread throughout the region. Lynchings served to destroy both the individual and the spirit of the broader community. But racialized lynch mob justice was not an aberration of the South. African Americans migrating out of the South met violent resistance elsewhere. Particularly during the World War I era, white-on-black pogroms tore through African American neighborhoods in Northern and Plains cities.

The World War I era created a demand for labor in America's industrial regions beyond the South in northern and Great Plains cities. Immigration was drastically curtailed during the war and decreased precipitously from the 1,218,480 immigrants arriving in the United States in 1914 to 366,748 in 1916. By 1917 it was 110,618. Furthermore, the more than 4,791,172 Americans enlisted in the armed forces contributed even further to job vacancies in northern cities.³ Throughout World War I the mass conscription of white laborers and the rapid decrease of incoming European immigrants caused a substantial labor shortage that necessitated worker replacements.

Northern factories and industries actively recruited southern African American laborers, often enticing them to move north by offering to pay their train fare. News of jobs available in northern cities circulated via word of mouth and through African American newspapers such as the Chicago *Defender* and Omaha's *Monitor*. Omaha itself had a labor shortage with upwards of 20,000 Omahans enlisted during World War I.⁴ Protesting their discontent with their feet, African Americans sought to escape from the bondage of sharecropping and Jim Crow in favor of the urban north. Before World War I, the number of African Americans born in the South and living in the North was 415,533. Yet throughout the war, an additional 450,000 African Americans migrated north during what came to be called the Great Migration.⁵

Omaha's African American population changed dramatically during the 1910s. Like Chicago, albeit smaller in size, Omaha was also a significant destination for African Americans moving north. Omaha's industry had been built on the railroad, eventually making Omaha a major center in the nation's meatpacking industry. The railroads and packing plants offered a wide range of unskilled job opportunities and economic prospects, providing a major impetus for southern migrants to come to Omaha during the war. While migrant black families and individuals settled throughout the state in homesteads or small towns during earlier years, the overwhelming majority of Nebraska's black population was concentrated in Omaha.

From 1910 to 1920, Omaha's black population more than doubled to 10,315 out of a total population of 191,601.⁶ While the black population was comparatively small, they became a vital asset to employers in certain industries. In an attempt to reconcile labor shortages, Omaha's packing plants paid hundreds of southern migrants' railroad fares to work at the plants in Nebraska. The railroads also operated in conjunction with the packing plants, offering discounted rates to groups of twenty-five or more.⁷

African Americans seized upon work opportunities offered by recruiters and left the South. Individuals such as Arthur Goodlett from Brewton, Alabama heard of work at Omaha's Cudahy packing plant through ads in the African American newspapers, the *Florida Sentinel* and the *Omaha Monitor*, in 1917. Goodlett boarded a free train to Omaha and began working for Cudahy within days. In addition to moving up Cudahy's ranks, Goodlett helped recruit others from Brewton including more than 300 people within 1917 alone and upwards of 1,000 between 1919 and 1921.⁸ Omaha's black community became increasingly prevalent during the war as African Americans flowed into town to capitalize on jobs left vacant by soldiers and striking union laborers.

From 1910 to 1920 the black community in North Omaha's Second Ward grew from 110 to 4,179, settling among Irish, Scandinavian, German and Irish communities, shifting the center of the black community away from South Omaha.⁹ With this population growth came the cultivation of a community infrastructure. More than one hundred black-owned businesses operated and a small but noticeable number of black professionals including dentists, physicians and attorneys had offices in the area. Additionally, more than forty different denominations of churches developed throughout the community and at least twenty fraternal organizations and clubs existed.¹⁰

Yet as the community developed its roots, the reality was that although the opportunities in Omaha were better than those in the South, the community's infrastructure was comparatively worse than the rest of the city. Segregation was common, the housing quality and education system was mediocre, and salaries were generally poor.

Additionally, the second ward neighborhood became increasingly black as whites fled due to fears of decreasing property values.¹¹

When many African Americans arrived in northern cities like Chicago and Omaha, they often found that with their simple presence came white resentment and segregation reminiscent of the South. In addition to radical undercurrents, there was also a building spatial tension among zones of transition between African American and white ethnic neighborhoods. As black communities grew throughout northern cities, often in areas that had been inhabited once by whites, there was a desire by white communities to repel a presumed encroachment upon their communities. Fear often bred economic resentment as demobilization dumped millions of soldiers into the labor market. Job availability became scarce for returning veterans, many of whom resented African Americans who occupied formerly white-held jobs. Labor unrest was common during the summer of 1919 and strikes occurred frequently in northern cities including Omaha. The labor unions in the North, despite being an entity to protect the rights of workers, were often unwilling to accept African Americans. As a result, when unions struck, African Americans were often more than willing to take the jobs that whites refused to work, breeding further resentment. Tensions reached a boiling point at the end of the war in numerous cities throughout the United States.

In addition to labor unrest, racial violence was a recurring theme throughout the summer. Lynchings killed seventy-eight black people in 1919, an increase from forty-eight in 1918, ten of which were war veterans.¹² The events themselves became “carnavalesque” spectacles. In many instances in the South, violent mobs of hundreds if not thousands gathered with advanced notice of lynchings often advertised in their local newspaper. Near Ellisville, Mississippi in late June, the lynching and burning of a suspected black rapist, John Hartfield, was advertised by the *New Orleans States* with a headline that read “3,000 WILL BURN NEGRO” while thousands of people arrived to witness the spectacle.¹³ Mobs assembled and attacked African Americans throughout that summer without fear of government reprisal, terrorizing and dehumanizing their victims in the pro-

cess. The Jim Crow system was so thoroughly entrenched, shaping the white perception of African Americans as less than human, that whites participating in mobs feared little recourse for their actions and gladly posed for lynching pictures.

Violence had become a norm for whites dealing with African American communities. The violence that had been considered a southern phenomenon ultimately became pervasive in the North. During a six-month period from April to early October 1919, more than twenty-five towns and cities experienced racially-motivated murders and riots including Longview, Washington, and Chicago. By the end of September, Omaha suffered its own racially-motivated murder.

Omaha had a history of violence. Between 1882 and 1951, fifty-two whites and five African Americans had been lynched. In 1891, a mob broke into an Omaha jail and hung a black man named George Smith from a lamppost after a false rumor spread that he allegedly raped a white woman who was reported to have died after her attack. Smith was lynched despite the fact that a positive identification of the attacker was not made.¹⁴ Years later, three African Americans were lynched while others were driven out of town in 1900.¹⁵ In 1909, thousands of Omahans ran Greek immigrants out of town in response to a Greek worker killing an Irish police officer. Although Omaha had a violent tendency, there were hopes that the city would clean up with the election of a new reformist mayor, Edward Smith, who aimed to rid the city of vice and political machines. Smith's intentions, however, conflicted with Tom Dennison, a political boss who held considerable influence over Omaha.

Dennison came to Omaha from Colorado in 1890 and founded a vice syndicate entrenched in drinking, gambling and prostitution, and ran any rivals out of business. By 1900 Dennison's influence expanded throughout the town, eventually permeating Mayor James C. Dahlman's administration, the city police departments, and the *Omaha-World Herald's* rival, Edward Rosewater's sensationalist *Omaha Daily Bee*. Dennison's influence was unmistakable. But his influence weakened during World War I. In 1916 voters enacted a state prohibition law forcing saloons underground. Omaha's brothels

later were made off-limits for soldiers stationed at nearby forts. Both of these occurrences curbed Dennison's income.¹⁶

The 1918 election of reformist mayor Edward Smith inhibited some of Dennison's corruptive influence in city government. Moreover, the police under Smith's tenure conducted vice raids attempting to shutdown Dennison's livelihood. Despite his weakened influence, Dennison retained sway over the *Omaha Daily Bee*, utilizing it as a vehicle to attack the Smith administration. Throughout 1919, Rosewater's *Bee* launched continual barrages criticizing the police force and Smith's administration as corrupt, inept, and vice-ridden.

One of the *Omaha Bee's* reports during March 1919 would be prescient for the rest of the year. A report in March stated that a white woman had been sexually assaulted by an African American man and was the fifth sexual assault of its kind. The article alluded to a possible lynching should the perpetrator be apprehended, yet a report the following day explained that not only were the two suspects who were brought in not found to match the woman's descriptions, but the woman explained that she had not been assaulted at all.¹⁷ Reports of alleged rapes amid riot coverage would become a staple of the *Bee* in 1919.

Throughout the summer the *Bee* gave front page coverage to alleged crimes committed by black men against white women, specifically emphasizing the alleged attacker's race. Later that year on June 4 the *Bee* reported that a young girl was robbed, throttled, and assaulted by an unknown black man in Council Bluffs.¹⁸ On June 20 the *Bee* reported another incident in which a woman was attacked by an unidentified man. The story reported that the woman's husband and a crowd of nearly 100 people searched for the man suspected as either a "Negro or a Mexican."¹⁹ The use of race in these and later *Bee* reports holds significance.

Films like D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*, which millions of Americans had seen since 1915, spread a racist misconception of black predators seeking out and sexually assaulting white women. The film played on a long-held fear by whites of race mixing, propagated by racist science that attempted to categorize African Americans as "subhuman" and many states including Nebraska passed anti-misce-

generation laws to prevent racial mixing. With these beliefs pervasive throughout white communities, the *Bee's* reports undoubtedly influenced public opinion in Omaha that summer.

In addition to local stories of black crimes, the *Bee* printed national stories of mob violence. Toward the end of June, the *Bee* published a story summarizing the “orderly” lynching and burning of John Hartfield in Ellisville, Mississippi after a crowd had assembled with advanced notice of his execution.²⁰ When violence broke out in Longview, Texas, The *Bee's* July 12 headline read “WHITES LYNCH FIVE NEGROES AT LONG VIEW TEXAS,” describing the necessity of ordering 200 members of the Texas national guard to restore order.²¹ Ten days later the *Bee* gave a banner headline to rioting and resistance in Washington, D.C. The story reported white mobs cornering and killing black individuals and those who resisted the mob. The *Bee* justified the white mobs' actions as “retaliation for recent attacks by African Americans on white women.”²²

The *Bee* further reported the summer's largest riot in Chicago at the end of July, caused by the drowning of a black adolescent that touched off a week of rioting. The *Bee* reported white mobs cruising through black neighborhoods, indiscriminately shooting at African Americans and attacking local institutions such as the Provident Hospital.²³ Throughout its coverage, the *Bee* accentuated the increasing black and white casualties. When August arrived, the *Bee* shifted its focus back to covering violence particular to Omaha.

Reports of alleged sexual assaults against white women by black men continued to dominate the *Bee's* headlines that summer, creating the perception that violence was a relentless problem in Omaha and that only community action would deliver justice. In mid-August, a white mob almost apprehended a man named Johnnie Moore, suspected of assaulting four white girls between the ages of nine and fourteen. Upon word of Moore's capture, a mob wielding corn knives and firearms attempted to detain the prisoner themselves before detectives whisked Moore away to the Central police station.²⁴ The *Bee* reported on August 17 another story of an unidentified “one-armed negro” who restrained and assaulted a twelve-year-old girl named Anna Glassman, and allegedly attempted to assault another woman,

Emilia Rushing, later that afternoon.²⁵ By the end of the month, the *Bee* reported yet another incident where a black man named Robert King, a recent migrant from Arkansas, was alleged to have assaulted a white woman and was nearly lynched by a mob before police officers arrived.²⁶ With growing violence, the *Bee* then began to place blame squarely on Mayor Smith and the Omaha police force's handling of African Americans in Omaha.

The *Bee* wrote in early August that black laborers were being shipped into Nebraska for their use as strikebreakers. The *Bee* insinuated that incoming African American workers would be prone to committing acts of violence. The *Bee* reported that "as many as five-hundred African Americans" arrived from cities that had experienced rioting, namely Chicago and East St. Louis, for the purpose of gaining employment as strikebreakers at South Omaha's packing houses and rail yards.²⁷

The *Bee* continued to tap white fears of black violence. Citing a rampant "carnival of crime" in Omaha, the *Bee's* editorials condemned Mayor Smith and the police, whom the *Bee* termed incompetent, for failing to protect Omaha's citizens from robberies, assaults and murder.²⁸ The height of the *Bee's* criticism came at the beginning of September when a botched police raid at a downtown hotel resulted in the shooting of a black bellboy, Eugene Scott. In its editorial, "Time to Call a Halt," the *Bee* derided the shooting as reckless and indiscriminate, noting it as the "crowning achievement" of a "disgraceful and incompetent" Omaha police department.²⁹

It is important to note the gender and racial dynamics of reported crimes. From June 7 to September 27, Omaha papers reported twenty-one alleged attacks by black men upon white women. The *Bee* incessantly reported that African Americans were either suspected or arrested for alleged crimes. Yet when evidence proved to be lacking or nonexistent, or it was showed that the suspect was not even in Omaha at the time of the crime resulting in the release of the accused, the *Bee* paid little attention, failing to report or clarify the turn of events. Due to perpetual reports of black men being arrested and no reports of convictions, Omaha's citizens became critical of Mayor Smith and the Omaha police department's capacity for

enforcing the law. By the late summer, one Omaha newspaper, *The Mediator*, advocated the formation of “vigilance committees” to administer justice if the police “could not end the crime wave.”³⁰

But not all newspapers in Omaha were quick to condemn the police or subscribe to sensationalism. The weekly African American paper, *The Monitor*, alleged that the *Bee*'s sensationalized reports of alleged black crimes and covered race riots and lynchings in other cities in excess. Moreover, the *Monitor* blamed growing racial tension in Omaha on agitated white veterans and the competition between African Americans and whites for jobs.³¹ Yet whatever criticisms were levied at other papers, the *Monitor*'s weekly publication and much smaller subscription base meant it was heard by far fewer people compared to the *Bee*. With escalating reports of violence, tensions were bound to boil over in Omaha as they did in numerous other cities throughout the summer. The breaking point came in late September.

On September 25, Agnes Loebeck, a nineteen-year-old girl, reported that she and her boyfriend Milton Hoffman were robbed by a black man while walking home from a late-night film. Loebeck said that she was “walking along the street near [her] home when a negro jumped out of the weeds at us. He pulled a pistol and stuck it in Millard's back and told him to throw up his hands.” Hoffman and Loebeck relinquished what money and valuables they had as their attacker walked them to a clearing. Loebeck continued, saying that “the negro man dragged me into the weeds by my hair and assaulted me. I tried to scream, but he covered my mouth with his left hand while he held the pistol on Millard,” who was reported as a “cripple” and unable to assist Loebeck.³²

On September 26, the *Bee* ran a headline reading “Negro Assaults Young Girl While Male Escort Stands by Powerless to Aid Her,” accompanied with a subhead referring to the aggressor as a “black beast.”³³ Police and detectives immediately combed the vicinity searching for the aggressor. Once word spread, however, armed posses of railroad workers who knew Loebeck began started their own search for the suspected assailant. After a summer of unremitting reports of African Americans committing crimes against white women without justice being served, local whites took action themselves.

The police were tipped off by an unnamed neighbor reporting that a “suspicious negro” lived at the home of a white woman, Virginia Jones. That “suspicious” man was William Brown, a forty one year old man from Cairo, Illinois, who was afflicted with crippling arthritis. Upon investigating the home, the police discovered William Brown asleep and arrested him, taking him to the home of Agnes Loebeck. The *Bee* reported that Hoffman and Loebeck both identified Brown as “the guilty man.” While the couple identified Brown, a mob of 250 men and women surrounded the Loebeck home demanding Brown to be released to it. The mob had lost all faith in the police and justice system. Members of the mob cried out, “Don’t take that man to jail! Let us have him. The courts won’t punish him. We will!”³⁴

The mob stymied the police’s initial attempt to extract Brown to the police station, but after a struggle to escape, the Omaha police narrowly whisked the individual away despite slashed tires, beaten police and attempts to place a noose around William Brown’s neck. Brown was then taken to the police station for booking and later transferred to the jail at the Douglas County Courthouse.³⁵ The next morning, having not succeeded in apprehending their suspect the previous night, Loebeck’s neighbors made new threats of lynching William Brown.³⁶ On September 27, the *Omaha World-Herald* editorialized warned of mob violence “if police protection continues unavailing” because “the people of Omaha ... will not stand to have women and girls left helpless before their assailants. ... Our women must be protected at all costs.”³⁷

By September 28, William Brown became the target of a white mob’s rage, inflamed by that summer’s racial and labor tensions, and tempered by sensational reporting. Racism, fear and skepticism of the police’s abilities eventually melded together and manifested as vigilantism. On September 28, a mob surrounded the Douglas County Courthouse and demanded that William Brown be released to them. As one member from the crowd that eventually murdered William Brown exclaimed, “We are going to teach these negroes [*sic*] a lesson. The white people of this town are tired of putting up with them. If the courts don’t do justice, fire, guns and a rope will be

a sufficient lesson.”³⁸ By the end of the day, Omaha’s courthouse laid in ruins as an estimated mob of 5,000 to 10,000 people had gathered to watch the burning courthouse, the attempted lynching of Mayor Smith and the gruesome murder of William Brown.

Although numerous arrests were made after the mob action, no convictions were ever handed down. As it had occurred in the South, most of those who participated in lynchings were never prosecuted. Perpetrators hid behind their anonymity while the possibility of violent reprisals loomed large for those who were perceived to have transgressed social boundaries.

African Americans had migrated in hope of finding better social and economic opportunities and to take advantage of the World War I era labor shortage. Although African Americans had found better opportunities for social, economic and educational advancement in the urban north, they discovered that racism, discrimination and violence were just as prevalent in the North and public sentiment could just as easily be turned against them. Mob violence broke out throughout northern and southern cities during the war and peaked during the summer of 1919. Despite the threat of pogroms against African American neighborhoods, many African Americans across the country, particularly those who had returned from military service abroad, and either fought back or prepared to fight back against invading white mobs.

In Omaha, the Dennison-influenced *Omaha Daily Bee* had played on racist, economic and xenophobic fears throughout the summer. The *Bee* utilized a gendered argument in defense of white womanhood while constructing a “black beast” trope. The *Bee* capitalized on Americans’ worries over job competition and increased African American migration by sensationalizing racial violence across the country and raising alarm about incoming migrants from violence-affected cities. The *Bee*’s role in shaping public discourse by linking fears based on race and crime to an impotent city government and police force throughout 1919 places some responsibility for the mob action to be placed on the *Bee* and the Tom Dennison machine that helped created the environment that spurred the September 28 murder of William Brown.

Notes

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- 4 Lawrence H. Larsen and Barbara J. Cottrel, *The Gate City: A History of Omaha* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 157-158.
- 5 Emmett J. Scott, *Negro Migration During the War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1920), 12.
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- 10 Lawrence H. Larsen and Barbara J Cottrell, *The Gate City: A History of Omaha* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 167-168.
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- 12 Tuttle, 22.
- 13 Ibid, 23.
- 14 Lee E. Williams II, *Post-War Riots in America 1919 and 1946: How the Pressures of War Exacerbated American Urban Tensions to the Breaking Point* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), 63-64.
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- 18 "Young Girl Robbed, Throttled, Assaulted, by Negro in Bluffs," *Omaha Daily Bee*, June 4, 1919.
- 19 "Woman Is Attacked On Her Way Home By Unidentified man," *Omaha Daily Bee*, June 20, 1919.
- 20 "Hang Negro on Tree Underneath Which He Assaulted White Girl," *Omaha Daily Bee*, June 27, 1919.
- 21 "Whites Lynch Five Negroes at Long View, Texas," *Omaha Daily Bee*, July 27, 1919.
- 22 "African Americans and Whites Killed in Race Rioting in Washington," *Omaha Daily Bee*, July 22, 1919.
- 23 "Chicago Race War Toll is 27," *Omaha Daily Bee*, July 29, 1919.
- 24 "Negro Taken for Attempted Assault Rescued from Mob," *Omaha Daily Bee*, August 12, 1919.
- 25 "Attacks Child After Trying to Assault Woman," *Omaha Daily Bee*, August 17, 1919.
- 26 "Negro Soldiers Appear Against Member of Race," *Omaha Daily Bee*, August 29, 1919.
- 27 Michael L. Lawson, "Omaha, a City in Ferment: Summer of 1919," *Nebraska History* 58 (1977): 410.
- 28 "Omaha's Incompetent Police," *Omaha Daily Bee*, August 29, 1919.
- 29 "Time to Call a Halt," *Omaha Daily Bee*, September 2, 1919.
- 30 Laurie, 138.
- 31 Lawson, 413.
- 32 "Escort Held at Bay as Girl Assaulted," *Omaha World-Herald*, September 26, 1919.
- 33 "Negro Assaults Young Girl While Male Escort Stands by Powerless to Aid Her," *Omaha Daily Bee*, September 26, 1919.
- 34 "Girl Identified Assailant: Officers Keep Mob off Negro," *Omaha Daily Bee*, September 27, 1919.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 "Officers Not Alarmed by Threats of Mob Violence: Negro is Rescued from Mob," *Omaha Daily Bee*, September 27, 1919.
- 37 Steven L. Willborn, "The Omaha Riot of 1919," *The Nebraska Lawyer* (December 1999/January 2000), 51. <http://www.nebar.com/pdfs/nelawyer/1999/129911.pdf>.
- 38 "Death by Rope, is Verdict of Mob," *Omaha World-Herald*, September 28, 1919.