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Re-Making The Mark

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RE-MAKING THE MARK

by

Zora J Murff

A THESIS

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RE-MAKING THE MARK

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Advisor: Walker Pickering

Is there a difference between a Black body lynched in 1919 and the forced removal of a community through the construction of a freeway? Or a blighted landscape shaped through generations of segregationist legislation versus a Black life taken by police in 2018? With *Re-Making The Mark*, I produce a mixture imagery and history to prompt inquiry into not only how racial violence has been recorded through images, but how they can also become a subversive code to interrupt collective belief. I capitalize on photography's capacity to reveal temporal layers, and my work reinterprets American narratives about power, race, and violence across time. I accomplish this by invoking the notion of the photographic archive and through dealing with the convergence of the physical and social landscape. Creating a collection of images, objects, and image-objects meant to be scrutinized together in both their historical and contemporary contexts, and provide a better understanding of systemic white supremacy and the resulting violence therein.

Walter Scott's killing by a police officer was not the first such video that I have watched. His name comes to mind because of a recent *New York Times* headline: *Michael Slager, Officer in Walter Scott Shooting, Gets 20-Year Sentence*. Scott's story hampered the seemingly repetitive process that happens after these tragedies: the releasing of public footage, public outrage, and an ultimate acquittal.¹ However, I can't ignore the series of other names—those who never received the justice they deserved: Philando Castile, Terence Crutcher, Alton Sterling, Laquan McDonald.² *I could go on.*

Mention of these names requires a reference to the corresponding images. Sometimes a grainy and shaky cell phone rendering, other times a driver's license photograph, a mugshot, or a reproduced family snapshot. The name, the image, and the circumstance all meld to the point of inseparability. I recognize the power these images possess. They can be injurious and debilitating, and they have shifted how I navigate my Black body through this world. As I deal both in researching and making images, this profound effect directly born from the visual was curious to me. Digging past the image surface brought me to an inescapable component of American history pockmarked with the theft of Black life by white hands, and the photographic documentation of that violence. Historically, those images have been used as a way to impede collective beliefs

about the racial hierarchy between Blacks and whites, and today, the image again is being used in the same way. The recorded footage—an image that provided proof—interrupted the expected narrative in the Walter Scott case, but does it signify a shift in societal sight? If so, what role does the aestheticizing of violence play, and can the art-image push us further in lessening complicity in the devaluation of Black life?

The oppression of Black individuals—one of America's cornerstones—has continued to evolve, expanding the ways in which racial violence has been perpetrated.³ While it is vital to continue to recognize the immediate dangers posed to Blacks, a critical examination of the nuanced types of violence that have taken place over extended periods of time should also be considered in such discourse. We should now perceive violence dichotomously between *fast* and *slow*. Forms of fast violence—like shootings—are readily understood because they are reinforced by our narrow perception of what it means to be at risk. Forms of slow violence are less comprehensible because their effects only become visible after long periods of time, rendering them invisible.⁴ Working in the historically Black neighborhood of North Omaha, Nebraska, I evaluate the fallout of government-endorsed prejudicial housing policies—commonly known as

redlining—that have affected this place and propose them as a form of slow violence.

Is there a difference between a Black body lynched in 1919 and the forced removal of a community through the construction of a freeway? Or a blighted landscape shaped through generations of segregationist legislation versus a Black life taken by police in 2018? With my creative work, I produce a mixture of imagery and history to prompt inquiry into not only how racial violence has been recorded through images, but how they can also become a subversive code to interrupt collective belief. In *Re-Making The Mark*, I capitalize on photography's capacity to reveal temporal layers, and my work reinterprets American narratives about power, race, and violence across time. I accomplish this by invoking the notion of the photographic archive and through dealing with the convergence of the physical and social landscape.

Re-Making The Mark is an overarching title of a series comprised of two separate parts: *A Lineage (An Erasure)* and *At No Point In Between*. The former mines the history of North Omaha, and employs a mixture of found photography and sculpture. *At No Point In Between* consists of my own contemporary photographs of the North Omaha landscape and those who inhabit it. In each movement, I make use of the archive. *With A Lineage (An*

Erasure), the archival object is present, whereas, I take on the role of archivist in *At No Point In Between*. The photographs become the object to be archived. With each movement I tap into the archive's functions to generate a subset of knowledge, make a claim on history, and serve an ideological or political intent.⁵ I emphasize the act of looking at images, taking advantage of Allan Sekula's "shadow archive", or the imaginary ranking and organizing of information implied by the selective and classificatory nature of photography.⁶ Creating a collection of images, objects, and image-objects meant to be scrutinized together in both their historical and contemporary contexts, I metaphorically connect fast and slow violence. In this sequence of works, witnessing is intertwined with the labor of critical analysis, and I provide a better understanding of systemic white supremacy and the resulting violence therein.

Artists who deal with narratives of violence committed against Black individuals often turn to the Black body. It is imperative that the contexts that have allowed the perpetuation of such violence be present in our readings of art in which violence is a direct or circuitous referent. Images of racial violence establish the trajectory of this exploration, specifically images of spectacle lynchings that were a common practice in the early twentieth century.⁷ In 1919, William Brown—a Black man—was lynched by a white mob in Omaha,

Nebraska for the alleged rape of a white woman (fig. 1).⁸ One year later, in Duluth, Minnesota, Elias Clayton, Elmer Jackson, and Isaac McGhie, met the same fate because of similar rumors (fig. 2).⁹

The reaction to images of extreme violence is dichotomous: one either recognizes the horrific act and decides to disengage with the content, or places their entire emphasis on the victim. In either of these readings, those who committed the act often go largely unnoticed. While there is power in focusing on the suffering itself, subversion's purchase lies in reading the transgressors.¹⁰

Surveyors (1919 and 1920) and *The Shaping of the West (Lest We Forget)* (fig. 3)

enlarges, breaks, and extends the image plane. In *Surveyors (1919 and 1920)*, I appropriate the archived images of the Omaha and Duluth lynchings. Cropping then butting their edges together, the mobs depicted in each separate photograph become one seamless row of faces gazing out toward the viewer. By splicing the images together and removing those victimized, I direct the viewer's sight toward the aggressors. This act creates an opening through which the viewer can suss out each individual's inhumanity underscored by their lack of shame.¹¹

Some smile, some gesticulate, others look on apathetically. As a collective, they exude a sense of hubris for the fact that they were able to commit murder and

implicate themselves through photographic recording without fear of legal reprisal.

Although I have eliminated the bodies of the victims from the frames in *Surveyors*, I inject a surrogate into the physical space of the exhibition. *The Shaping of the West (Lest We Forget)*, a particle board-covered plinth and pile of reclaimed bricks, serves as a proxy for the omitted corporeal forms. The power dynamic is clear from the scale of the lynchers who can look back, while the bodies of those lynched cannot. However, that power is undercut upon close examination of the sculpture. The words, "LEST WE FORGET", which are found on William Brown's grave marker, are etched into the face of each brick. Individually, a single brick is a mere whisper, but those multiple whispers compound into a crescendo and serve as a reverberatory reminder of the horrors of racial violence. Between the two works, the viewer is invited to step into the photographic moment. The scale of the works creates a difficult situation to escape, and the burden of parsing out their relationship is placed on the viewer. The visual analysis of the pair becomes clear, I point directly at the experience of witnessing an act of violence. My choice in using construction materials commonly found in the redlined landscape creates the initial link between

violence exerted against the body and violence implemented against the landscape.

The overt racial violence of spectacle lynching eventually became culturally taboo, and it was again surreptitiously introduced into government policy.¹² The passing of the National Housing Act of 1934 brought with it the practice of redlining—refusing mortgages and business loans to people of color in segregated areas because those areas were deemed a poor financial risk. This practice effectively perpetuated the socioeconomic divide by race through the denial of access to wealth. When the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) passed the National Housing Act, they sent assessors to metropolitan areas across the United States to appraise the value of land. Lenders would then use tools provided by the FHA—redlining maps and underwriting manuals—in order to determine who would receive credit. These rules cited concepts like, “social and racial occupancy” and “inharmonious racial groups” as sources of financial instability. *Windows* (fig. 4) draws from specific language found in the FHA’s *Underwriting Manual* (1936) where race was used as a guideline in shaping the landscape.

Numerous condemned homes dot the neighborhood landscape in North Omaha—a distinct characteristic caused by redlining. In an effort to reduce

illegal occupation of these homes, the city boards up their windows. I co-opt this act by using plywood panels as a form of the codified language of redlining that exists in the landscape. Text from the *Underwriting Manual* (1936) is etched onto the surface of each panel, and then each is stained with ink to conceal the text. From a distance, they present as monoliths, and their darkness and weight is meant to create a sense of absence and draw the viewer in. Once near, the text is divulged:

Usually the protection against adverse influences afforded by these means include prevention of the infiltration of business and industrial uses, lower-class occupancy, and inharmonious racial groups. A location close to a public park or area of similar nature is usually well protected from infiltration of business and lower social occupancy coming from that direction.¹³

Like *Surveyors* and *The Shaping of the West*, the careful labor of perception must be done by the viewer to reveal meaning, and materiality references violence enacted upon the landscape. In these works, I use obscurity to make known how redlining laws were so effective in their arcaneness, suggesting the power of slow violence. The invisible policies of redlining are used to strip individuals of their agency and leave behind a lasting impression on the landscape.

Redlining was a technique created by the white majority to devalue Black land and make Black communities stagnate. The practice, mired in the historical assessment and devaluing of Black lives, led to a further consolidation of power

and wealth among the white majority.¹⁴ In *A Lineage (An Erasure)* (fig. 5), the title piece of this movement, I use vernacular portraiture and documents to dispel common stereotypes about Black life in redlined communities—this propaganda being one of the many ways in which negative narratives are used to perpetuate oppression—while further highlighting the perils of white supremacy embedded in power structures.¹⁵

A set of black books lined up on shelves contain an incomplete series of found photographs ranging from turn-of-the-century silver gelatin prints to color Polaroids. As the viewer pages through each timeline, they become privy to Black life unfolding with dignity and grace: a woman cradles a baby, small children stand in front of a Christmas tree, a young man staunchly displays his high school diploma, then a block of blank pages. Displayed directly next to these albums is a framed polyptych, the first three frames containing black-and-white vernacular photographs: a small white child with his fists raised at the camera, a group of white men meeting in a room with the door ajar, a group of old white men sitting at a table. The final two frames house a pamphlet from the Omaha City Planning Department and an article clipping from *The New York Times*. In both of these, the text is the most dominant feature, the pamphlet

reading, “WHAT DO I NEED TO WRECK A STRUCTURE?” and the article’s headline, “3 Officers Are Charged in Aftermath of Shooting”.

The tension in these works lies in both their opposing displays and the reading and coalescing of the photographic and textual. In doing so, I adopt and reverse the societal dynamics at play in stereotyping. Throughout history, the perceived negativity of Blackness has been readily on display while whiteness—and therefore white supremacy—has been normalized or marked as desirable. The format of the books promotes a sense of intimacy, and the viewer must acknowledge the fragility of and take care with these exposed lives while they look. The framed pieces ungrudgingly outline the growing of white supremacy; its establishment, aging, maturation, and ultimate enactment. There is a conceptual break in both works—the end of the image sequence in the albums and the switch from photograph to object in the polyptych. By ending the line of images in the books, the viewer must contend with a life that has been ceased abruptly, and all of the potential that is left unattained in the wake of that loss. The documents speak to the act of violence itself. The structure—be it the Black body, the Black family, or the Black home—is “wrecked” to benefit “white progress”.

The works in *A Lineage (An Erasure)* all use nuance to explain how redlining began and the aspirations of those who enacted it. The photographs that comprise *At No Point In Between*—images of structures, scenes, and individuals—seemingly operate in an illustrative capacity, but I continue to use nuance through content, form, scale, and contextualization. The title, *At No Point In Between*, summons the idea of location and relates directly to the archive's function of "mapping a cultural terrain." The archive from the outset has limits—the archivist's intentions to promote a subset of knowledge can never be divorced from it.¹⁶ The title also speaks to the obliterating nature of stereotyping; the creation of perceptions from which the broad spectrum of humanity is discarded. Stereotypes of Blackness were used to influence the social landscape, much like redlining was used to shape the physical landscape.¹⁷ With my photography, I act as an archivist of a contemporary moment, operating inside of the boundaries redlining created. By documenting the physical landscape and its residents, I am to break those boundaries, creating a counter-archive by providing a commentary on the social landscape.

Redlining was outlawed with the passing of the Fair Housing Act of 1968. However, the passing of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 was one last way in which the federal government ensured slow violence would persist in redlined

communities. This measure allowed the government to claim land by eminent domain in blighted areas, and destroy family homes to erect freeways. U.S. Route 75—commonly known as the North Freeway—was built through North Omaha between the 1960s and 1980s.¹⁸ *Barrier (Lake Street Entrance)* (fig. 6), which depicts a wide view of a road adjacent to the North Freeway. A fence, running parallel between each, spans the width of the frame. My use of foreground, middle-ground, and background sets the viewer up for a disciplined reading of slow violence. From a plot of land, the viewer looks toward a bright green interstate sign peeking above an elevated ditch. The sign announces the entrance into North Omaha from the freeway, and becomes an invitation into the sequence of photographs. From this point, the viewer can discern that they are standing inside of the boundaries redlining created, and the culmination of these formal aspects mark the roadway, fence, and freeway as symbolic barriers.

My emblematic representation of the freeway as a barrier continues with *A settling of minerals, history, and hurt (1-3)* (fig. 7), a set of three images dispersed throughout the series. The first is an oppressive concrete support column of the freeway, the second is a broken concrete retaining wall, and the third a pile of concrete rubble. My allusion to the erosion of this form is to deconstruct it, and thereby provide a visual deconstruction of redlining. These images also signify

my lyrical departure in interpreting the redlining landscape. In my poetic reflections, concrete overgrowth, and murals all take on new meaning. A painted Black hand clutching a fistful of dollar bills captures someone's dreams of wealth. A boarded-up storefront and traffic light become a cautionary tale. A busted punching bag in *A mark (choice of champions)* (fig. 8), hangs from a chain-link fence. Its sagging body—once an object of violence—declares it's defunctness, mirroring the landscape in which it resides. Some of these views are broad, others focus on details, all of them create a relationship between intimacy and distance in their viewing. This push-and-pull engagement calls the viewer to pay close attention to the clarity of details, and therefore content, providing a deep sense of the visual language of slow violence.

In my photographs of the landscape, I intentionally omit the human figure from the frame to bolster my reference to the landscape as a corporeal form. By singling out objects and architecture in the landscape, I train the viewer's focus. Equating the landscape to a body, the viewer has the power to gaze upon it, and the passive landscape cannot gaze back. My tactics with portraiture are similar, and my inclusion of them is to redirect the power dynamic of the viewer's gaze upon the Black body. In *Terri (talking about the freeway)* (fig. 9), the subject gently hugs herself. *Smoke (talking about his past)* (fig. 10) sits on a barrier, his hands

folded comfortably in his lap. *Young Man (talking about his future)* (fig. 11) casually pins a basketball to his hip. In all of these monumental depictions, the sitters' gazes are exacting, and they are all self-contained, confident, and tender. The scale of the portraits dwarfs that of the landscape images, and the slight upward tilt of the camera compounds the feeling that these sentinels silently watch the viewer. When dealing with narratives of Black pain through portraiture, it is easy to fall into the tropes of only speaking of the pain itself—by representing the subject in dire circumstances to stir sympathy in the viewer. In my approach, these individuals' softness cannot be confused with weakness or victimization, and their bodies are not sensationalized. How Terri holds onto herself is not to guard her body from those who look, but rather, she exudes comfort in displaying her resistance through mere existence. The culmination of these simple acts work as a counterbalance, reconfiguring dominant cultural gaze upon the Black body politic.

Images of violence are difficult to contend with, not only because they are shocking, but also because they can create feelings of helplessness in those who view them. I am not promoting the viewing of violence, but rather their importance as objects of proof and the deeper societal implications they hold. With *Re-Making The Mark*, I provide a treatise on evaluating and interpreting

visual objects and language. Through my use of the archive, a dimensional reading of the image of violence becomes possible. By taking license through art, I leave my archive, and thereby the image open to interpretation.

A Lineage (An Erasure) uses history and a clear mining and reinterpretation of the archive to associate the body and the landscape, solidifying perceptions between fast and slow violence. In *At No Point In Between*, I take more liberties by creating associative relationships between the images I create, therefore making my role as an archivist more evident. With all of these works, I have chosen their particular aesthetics to set them apart from one another. The visual difference between the two movements creates an implied bisection in the gallery between past and present. This metaphoric boundary has a dichotomous function. The direction the viewer moves through the space either amplifies a progression of knowledge from history into the contemporary moment, or presents the conclusions of slow violence and closes the gap between cause and effect more immediately. In either sense, the invisible line emphasizes how justice cannot be achieved without first acknowledging and rectifying historic injustices.

Just as I work to find hope in the image's function by visualizing slow violence, I find hope in the Walter Scott case. The video of Michael Slager's planting evidence swayed the outcome of the trial and became the counter-

narrative. In this, there was a reversal of roles that would not have been possible in the absence of the image; Mr. Scott could not be made into a monster because of the proof of Slager's monstrous actions. While in the process of writing this thesis, there was another name, another headline, and more images: *Sacramento Man Fatally Shot by Police in His Backyard*.¹⁹ Stephon Clark did not engage the police, they engaged him. Mr. Clark did not have a gun in his hand, he held his cell phone. Mr. Clark was shot multiple times in the back, contradicting the official statement.²⁰ I do not expect that because of images, these killings will cease overnight. However, the resulting images will become ingrained in the public conscious and allow the opportunity for the deeper reading of such occurrences. Perhaps change can result.

In his book, *Black People Are Cropped*, artist William Pope L. writes about race, about Blackness:

...a mark divides the world into this and that. To say that blackness is anything at all is to mark it off from the world as this thing rather than that...to be raced by another is a choice that can ossify choice. To race oneself is a choice that can liquefy choice. To be black today is a choice that has to be made and re-made like a cake or a bed or a promise or a contract or a promise or a solar system.

It is through these images that we can see the mark that has already been made. If we look and continue to ignore it, the false image of Blackness will remain the fixed image. It is not our burden to attempt to erase this mark, but rather extend

it and bring it back upon itself. A way to reinterpret it, and make it a different mark entirely.

Illustrations



Figure 1. Author Unknown, *The Burning of Will Brown's Body*, September 28, 1919, Silver gelatin print, courtesy the Nebraska State Historical Society.



Figure 2. Author Unknown, *Clayton, McGhie, & Jackson, Duluth, Minnesota*. *Three lynched African American men (two hanging from a post or tree, one lying on the ground) surrounded by a crowd of witnesses*, June 15, 1920, courtesy Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Visual Materials from the NAACP Records.



Figure 3. Zora J Murff, *Surveyors* (1919 and 1920) and *The Shaping of the West (Lest We Forget)*, 2017, Archival pigment prints, reclaimed bricks, OSB plywood.

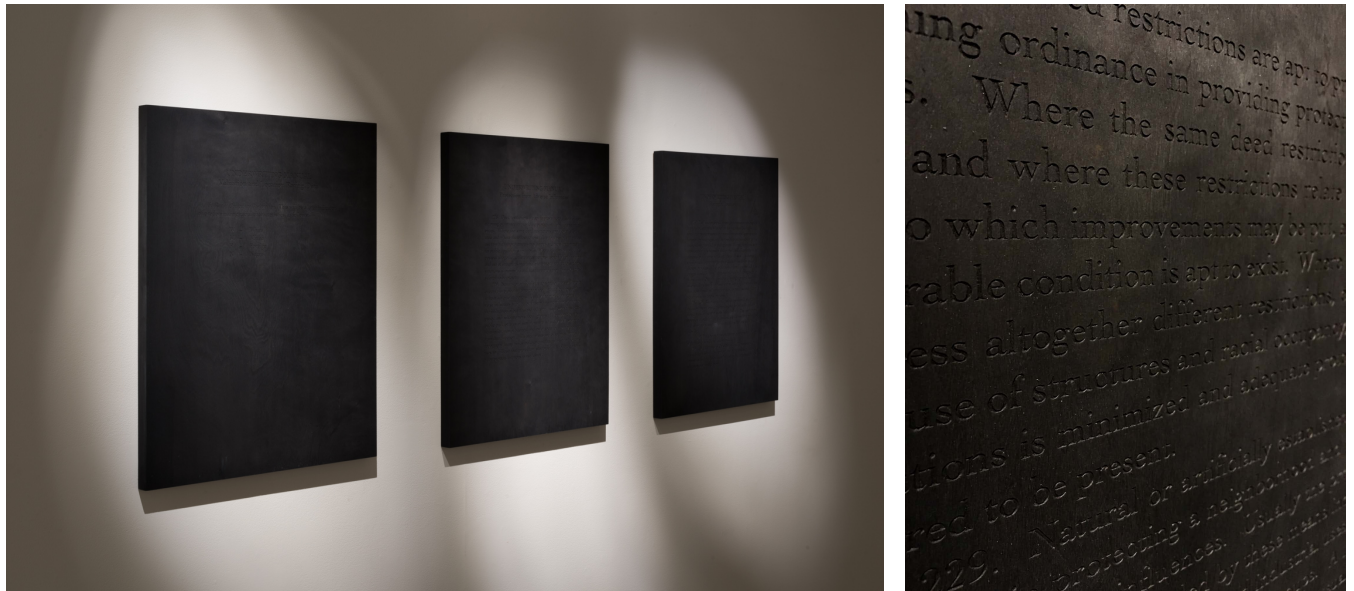


Figure 4. Zora J Murff, *Windows*, 2017, India ink on plywood panels.



Figure 5. Zora J Murff, *A Lineage (An Erasure)*, 2018, Found photographs in casebound books, found photographs and documents.



Figure 6. Zora J Murff, *Barrier (Lake Street Entrance)*, 2017, Archival pigment print.



Figure 7. Zora J Murff, *A settling of minerals, history, and hurt* (1-3), 2015-2018, Archival pigment prints.



Figure 8. Zora J Murff, *A mark (choice of champions)*, 2017, Archival pigment print.



Figure 9. Zora J Murff, *Terri (talking about the freeway)*, 2018, Archival pigment print.



Figure 10. Zora J Murff, *Smoke (talking about his past)*, 2018, Archival pigment print.



Figure 11. Zora J Murff, *Young Man (talking about his future)*, 2018, Archival pigment print.

Notes

¹ The initial trial of Michael Slager ended in a mistrial as jurors were unable to reach a unanimous decision. Even though charges of murder and voluntary manslaughter were considered, lawyers reached a plea agreement, and Slager was charged with violating Scott's civil rights. Alan Blinder, "Michael Slager, Officer in Walter Scott Shooting, Gets 20-Year Sentence," *The New York Times*, December 7th, 2017, accessed December 7th, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/07/us/michael-slager-sentence-walter-scott.html>.

² It is not my intention to reduce these individuals to only their names and circumstance. However, in the aftermath of such killings the individual becomes a martyr of sorts, and their names become rallying cries. I will only ever know Tamir Rice as the child who was killed by Cleveland police for playing with a toy gun.

³ The oppression of Blacks began with the institution of chattel slavery in America from 1619 to its abolition in 1864. Slavery was replaced by Jim Crow laws from 1896 to 1965. Coined by Michelle Alexander, "The New Jim Crow" refers to the age of mass incarceration which disproportionately affects Black individuals. This era begins around the mid-to-late 1980s and extends into the present. See Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow* (New York: The New Press, 2012), 40-96.

⁴ "By slow violence I mean violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is not typically viewed as violence at all." The role of "whitewashing" history—or providing the excuses that work against rectifying past injustices—is a micro-aggression which is also used to continue to ignore and perpetuate slow violence. See Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 2-6.

⁵ Shawn Michelle Smith, *Photography on the Color Line: W.E.B. Dubois, Race, and Visual Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 7-11.

⁶ Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39, Winter (1986): 3-64.

⁷ The public lynching of Blacks began in the antebellum and Jim Crow South as a way to instill fear in Black individuals and to continue the separation of races. This was done not only to continue economic oppression by promoting disunion between whites and Blacks of the working class, but to also prevent the interracial coupling of white women and Black men. The latter logic led to the common and often false narratives of Black men raping white women, and white men “protecting” the sexual purity of white women. See Dora Apel, “Lynching Photographs and the Politics of Public Shaming,” *Lynching Photographs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 43-44.

⁸ Orville D. Menard, “Lest We Forget: The Lynching of Will Brown, Omaha’s 1919 Race Riot,” *Nebraska History*, Fall/Winter (2010): 154-164.

⁹ Dan Kraker, “Duluth marks anniversary of memorial to 3 lynching victims,” Minnesota Public Radio News, June 15th, 2013, accessed March 27th, 2018, <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2013/06/15/regional/duluth-lynching-memorial>.

¹⁰ A reading of the subject—outside of violence being inflicted—is also an important element of this discourse because of the possibility of an empathic response. See Sarah Sentilles, “How We Should Respond to Photographs of Suffering,” *The New Yorker*, August 5th, 2017, <http://www.newyorker.com/books/second-read/how-we-should-respond-to-photographs-of-suffering>.

¹¹ The individuals being photographed are not expressing feelings of shame by participating in the act of being recorded. However, lynching photographs have been used historically by anti-lynching organizations to shame those implicated photographically. See Apel, 53-54.

¹² Between 1680 and 1682 the Virginia House of Burgess—the first legislative body in America—introduced laws that extended citizenship to white men of European descent while all other races were excluded. This was used as a way to justify slavery, and it is the first example in history where legislation was used to create establish racial hierarchy. See John Biewen and Chenjerai Kumanyika, Episode 33: How Race Was Made, Seeing White, Part 3, Scene On Radio, March 16th, 2017, <http://podcast.cdsporch.org/episode-33-made-in-america-seeing-white-part-3/>.

¹³ Federal Housing Administration, *Underwriting Manual: Underwriting and Valuation Procedure Under Title II of the National Housing Act With Revisions to April 1, 1936* (Washington D.C., 1936), paragraphs 901-999.

¹⁴ It should be noted here that whites also “othered” Native Americans as a way to justify genocide and take land that did not rightfully belong to them. See Alexander, 24-25.

¹⁵ During a presidential campaign stop in September 2017, Donald Trump is quoted as saying about urban African-American communities, “ Our African-American communities are absolutely in the worst shape that they’ve ever been in before, ever, ever, ever. You take a look at the inner cities, you get no education, you get no jobs, you get shot walking down the street.” These false narratives are deeply rooted in conservative politics stemming back to Ronald Reagan’s presidential campaign and his fabrication of the Black “Welfare Queen”. Trump’s falsehoods do not reflect the fact that Black poverty rates are at an all time low and violent crimes in major cities are decreasing. See Bryce Covert, “Donald Trump’s Imaginary Inner Cities,” *The Nation*, November 7th, 2016, accessed March 15th, 2017, <http://thenation.com/article/donald-trumps-imaginary-inner-cities/>.

¹⁶ Smith, 7.

¹⁷ Practices such as physiognomy, employed photography to promote a “negroid type”. These theories were then used to justify the oppression of Blacks. See Smith, 46-54. Also see John Biewen and Chenjerai Kumanyika, Episode 32: How Race Was Made Seeing White, Part 2, Scene On Radio, March 1, 2017, <http://podcast.cdsporch.org/episode-32-how-race-was-made-seeing-white-part-2/>.

¹⁸ This practice not only fractured established communities, but also tightened the financial chokehold already in place from redlining by diverting traffic away from business corridors. Due to the state of housing in the community during that time period, many of those who had to relocate were not able to do so in North Omaha. See Shara Lynne Montag, “A Game of Roads: The North Omaha Freeway and Historic Near North Side” (masters thesis, Creighton University, 2015) 29-36.

¹⁹ Christine Hauser, “Sacramento Man Fatally Shot by the Police in his Backyard,” *The New York Times*, March 21st, 2018, accessed April 2nd, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/21/us/stephon-clark-police-shooting.html>.

²⁰ Richard Winton, Paige St. John, and Joseph Serna, "Shot in the back: What the autopsy in the Stephon Clark killing says about officers' actions," Los Angeles Times, March 31st, 2018, accessed April 2nd, 2018, <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-stephon-clark-explainer-20180330-story.html>.

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Exhibition















3 Officers Are Charged In Aftermath Of Shooting

By JENNIFER DAVIES
and NICHOLAS SMITH

CHICAGO — Three longtime police officers were charged on Monday in connection with the death of Laquan McDonald, the black teenager whose fatal shooting in 2014 at the hands of a white Chicago officer sparked intense scrutiny over police conduct and transparency.

Unlike the officers accused in a series of police shooting trials that have rattled the city in recent weeks, those charged here did not fire their weapons. Their crimes, prosecutors said, stemmed from their actions after the shooting. The three officers, two of whom have since left the force, are charged with obstructing justice and covering up the police's role in the shooting.

They are charged with obstructing justice, in an effort to protect him from being arrested and charged, court documents show.

The officers were indicted on state felony counts of conspiracy, official misconduct and obstruction of justice. Among the claims were that they provided false reports about how McDonald, 17, behaved when he was shot. McDonald was shot on Oct. 12, 2014, on a street corner near Lake and Madison streets in Chicago. He was shot seven times, and the officers were charged with obstructing justice by not working together to address the shooting or at least three witnesses whose accounts of events would have conflicted with the official police version.

"These defendants lied about what occurred during a police-involved shooting in order to prevent independent criminal justice system from learning the truth," said Patrick Brown, Illinois' state's attorney, who announced the new charges. "The indictment makes clear that it is unacceptable to let an official cover up a crime."

The officers, who are scheduled for arraignments next month, were not taken into custody and representatives for them could not be reached. Leaders of Chicago's Fraternal Order of Police, the union representing cops and fire officers, declined to comment, saying they had not reviewed the indictment. Eddie Johnson, who was named police superintendent in the aftermath of the 2014 shooting, and has











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