

TRUTH, RECONCILIATION, AND BALTIMORE

# urbanite

NOVEMBER 2015 NO. 100





# urbanite

**TRUTH, RECONCILIATION, AND BALTIMORE**

NOVEMBER 2015 NO. 100

# BALTIMORE PROUD



JOHNS HOPKINS  
UNIVERSITY

*community.jhu.edu*

BLOOMBERG SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH | CAREY BUSINESS SCHOOL | KRIEGER SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
PEABODY INSTITUTE | SCHOOL OF EDUCATION | SCHOOL OF MEDICINE | SCHOOL OF NURSING | WHITING SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING



I want to be a construction worker.

Leo Lionni painted it, cut it out,  
and put it on another piece of paper.  
It's called collage.

I have a lot of happy things going on  
in my life.

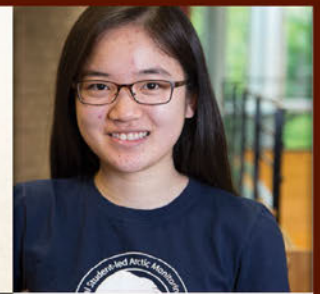
I know this because I go to Park.

The Park School of Baltimore is an independent, coeducational,  
non-sectarian, progressive Pre-K through 12 school located on  
a 100-acre campus just 18 minutes from the Inner Harbor.  
[parkschool.net](http://parkschool.net)



I look at things  
from a different  
perspective.

Wenrui, Grade 11 >



I care about  
helping people.

< Finley, Pre-K

I am a feminist.  
I am an athlete and  
a graphic designer.  
I want to reach my  
full potential.

Karinne, Grade 8 >



The world  
is like a puzzle.

< Neel, Grade 2

Mia, Kindergarten

I have a responsibility  
to the greater  
community.

Owen, Grade 8 >



When I learn  
something, it's like  
it's just been stored  
in a cabinet right in  
my brain.

< Lucy, Grade 1

I can modify  
a genetic sequence.

Jordan, Grade 11 >



A fun day is building  
a medieval structure,  
writing a monologue,  
researching, and  
doing math.

< Ryan, Grade 5





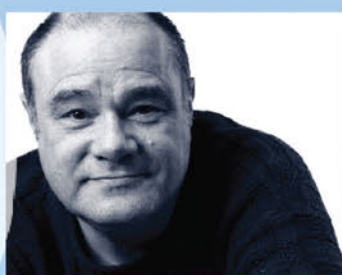
# Pratt Library & UB Live!

The Enoch Pratt Free Library is partnering with the University of Baltimore for a series of events while the Central Library is under renovation



## **Rick Moody**

*Hotels of North America: A Novel*  
Thursday, November 12, 7pm  
Learning Commons Town Hall  
1415 Maryland Avenue



## **Mark Segal**

*And Then I Danced: Traveling the Road to LGBT Equality*  
Monday, November 16, 7pm  
Business Center Auditorium  
11 W. Mt. Royal Avenue



## **Annual Cave Canem Poetry Reading**

*featuring* Camille Rankine and  
Reginald Dwayne Betts  
Sunday, December 6, 2pm  
Business Center Auditorium



## **Coming in 2016:**

### **Karen Finley**

*Shock Treatment*  
Wednesday, January 27, 7pm  
Learning Commons Town Hall



### **Lawrence Hill**

*The Illegal: A Novel*  
Thursday, January 28, 7pm  
Wright Theater  
21 W. Mt. Royal Avenue



### **Bert Ashe**

*Twisted: My Dreadlock Chronicles*  
Tuesday, February 9, 7pm  
Wright Theater

For more information on parking and Enoch Pratt Free Library programs and events visit [prattlibrary.org](http://prattlibrary.org)



ENOCH PRATT free LIBRARY



UNIVERSITY  
OF BALTIMORE



# Contents

## The Truth And Reconciliation Issue

*Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightening. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters.*

—Frederick Douglass

### **08 Publisher's Note**

### **11 Contributors**

*Features*

### **14 The Case For Reconciliation**

Long after the civil rights movement, American cities still struggle over basic issues of racial equity. Lionel Foster talks to three generations of Baltimore activists about the lessons of history and the elusive promise of restorative justice.

### **31 The Running Man**

Before his name became a rallying cry, Freddie Gray was a lot like thousands of other kids growing up in Baltimore. Michael Anft traces the forces that shaped the man whose death roused a movement.





## 51 **Saving Sandtown**

For decades, urban dreamers tried to restore one troubled Baltimore neighborhood. They failed. Lawrence Lanahan explores the fight for Sandtown-Winchester and asks what it will take to make it a success.



## 67 **Songs In a Key Called Baltimore**

What's it like to raise two young black sons in a city like this? As Karsonya Wise Whitehead says, it's often infuriating, sometimes terrifying, and ultimately inspiring.



## 72 **Fifteen Ways To Fix a City**

It's not easy, but there's *got* to be a way to make Baltimore work better than it does, right? We asked experts, academics, local luminaries, and city residents for their best ideas. Here's what we learned.



## 106 **Voices Rising Up**

Words of resistance, anger, and resilience from Baltimore poets





***THE VALUE OF  
LEARNING MAKES  
US ALL GROW.***

Northrop Grumman believes in supporting science and technology through education. Because when you give in the community, the whole world benefits, including right here in Baltimore.

***THE VALUE OF PERFORMANCE.***

***NORTHROP GRUMMAN***

[www.northropgrumman.com](http://www.northropgrumman.com)



# Publisher's Note

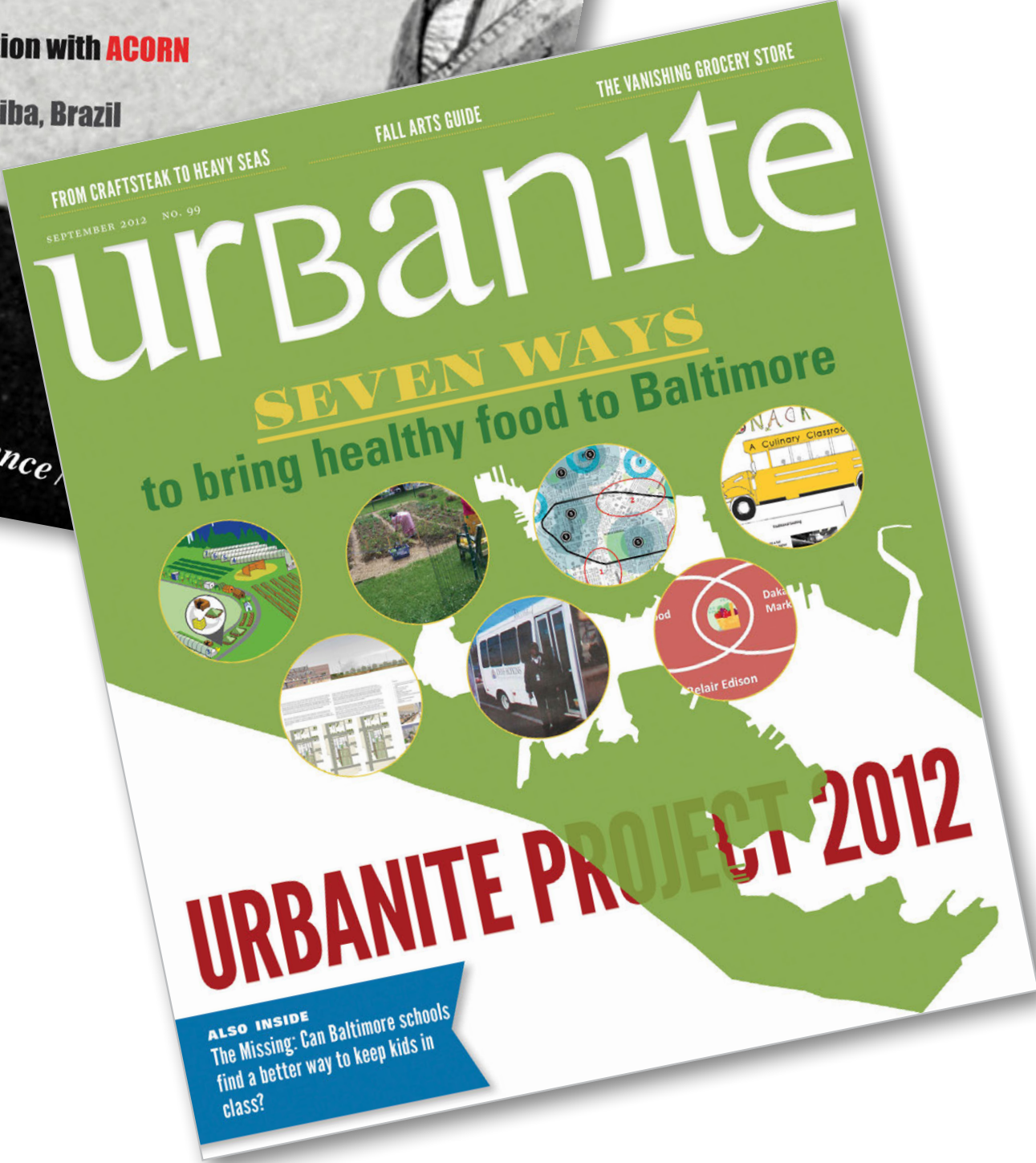
In *Urbanite's* first publisher's note in September 2004, I wrote: "*Urbanite* is a magazine that will focus unabashedly on Baltimore City and its many possibilities. It is a magazine that will be for people who love Baltimore and don't shirk from her demanding side."

Ninety-eight issues and nine years later, I shuttered *Urbanite*; a tough recession and an unstable media climate simply made it impossible to continue. During our run, we left no stone unturned in our exploration of Baltimore, tapping the best artists, writers, and thinkers to join in a dialogue about the fate of the city.

Yet Baltimore is demanding. So when Carl William "Bill" Struever, *Urbanite's* former investor, contacted me about publishing a special edition of the magazine after the civil unrest in spring 2015, I reached out to the former *Urbanite* gang to see whether they had any interest. They did. We all did. At a critical moment in the city's history, we were convinced that Baltimore needed clear-eyed perspective on its most intractable issues: racial justice, economic opportunity, and public safety. And it needed inspired solutions for moving past them.

Residents responded to April's unrest in lots of different ways—with anger, generosity, hope, and sometimes all of the above. We believe that their voices, stories, and perspectives must be heard. And we're convinced that the next chapter in the story of the American city can be written in Baltimore. That starts now.

—Tracy Ward



Urbanite's first issue, from September 2004, and its final issue in 2012.





*meet. shop.*

*dine. work.*

**All right here at your neighborhood destination.**

The Can Company Family is pleased to join *Urbanite* for this special issue devoted to reflections and constructive solutions for Baltimore's future. We congratulate the staff, contributors, and sponsors for their enduring commitment to this essential dialogue and look forward to building an equitable and peaceful Baltimore.

Alma Cocina Latina • American Business Forms • Babylon Nails & Spa • Brocato's Studio of Hair Design  
Canton Group • Chesapeake Wine Co • Chipotle • Cloud 9 Clothing • Cross Street Partners • DAP  
GameStop • GNC • Langermann's • Lens Crafters • Long & Foster Real Estate • M3 Financial  
Millennial Media • Nalley Fresh • Order Up • Outback Steakhouse • Pasticcio Italian Kitchen  
Starbucks • Subway • SunTrust Bank • Vircity



*free parking*  
IN THE GARAGE  
WEEKDAYS AFTER 5PM  
*and*  
ALL DAY ON WEEKENDS



**2400 Boston Street | Baltimore | In the heart of Canton**

thecancompany.com LIKE US.  

Managed by Cross Street Partners



# Contributors



## **Publisher**

Tracy Ward

## **Editors**

David Dudley  
Lionel Foster  
Greg Hanscom

## **Copy Chief**

Robin Reid

## **Art Director**

Jason Okutake

## **Production Manager**

Belle Gossett

## **Web Designer**

Kristian Björnard

## **Director of Business Development**

Jean Meconi

## **Senior Sales Advisor**

Susan Levy

## **Marketing Advisor**

Erin Becker

## **Editorial Intern**

Garrett Shaffel





**Contributors**

- Michael Anft
- Lawrence Brown
- Charly Carter
- Michael Corbin
- Rodney Foxworth
- Brennen Jensen
- Taylor M. King
- Lawrence Lanahan
- Chris Landers
- Joe MacLeod
- Myra Margolin
- Jim Meyer
- Wes Moore
- Sean Morrissey
- Douglas William Garcia Mowbray
- Cara Ober
- Donna M. Owens
- Gus Sentementes
- Stephanie Shapiro
- Martha Thomas
- Tanika White-Davis
- Karsonya Wise Whitehead
- Chin-yer Wright

**Art and Photography**

- Pierre Bennu
- Tom Chalkley
- Donald Ely
- Chris Hartlove
- Neil C. Jones
- Patrick Joust
- Noah Scialom

**Poetry Editors**

- Ailish Hopper
- OluButterfly Woods



## Special thanks to:

The Abell Foundation  
 Carl William Struever  
 The Open Society Institute-Baltimore  
 American Communities Trust  
 The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Editorial inquiries: Send queries to [Tracy@urbanitebaltimore.com](mailto:Tracy@urbanitebaltimore.com) The magazine is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts or artwork. Urbanite does not necessarily support the opinions of its authors.

Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission by Urbanite is prohibited. Copyright 2015, Urbanite LLC. All rights reserved. ISBN-13: 978-1518897641/ISBN-10: 1518897649

Urbanite (ISSN 1556-8105) is a free publication distributed widely in the Baltimore metropolitan area.

Advertising/Editorial/Business Offices  
 P.O. Box 353, Bozman, MD 21612  
[www.urbanitebaltimore.com](http://www.urbanitebaltimore.com)





Photo credit: Neil C. Jones

# The Case for Reconciliation

**In the wake of the unrest,  
Baltimore asks itself:  
Are we ready to come together?**

By Lionel Foster

# It was one of the most consequential trips to a drugstore in Baltimore history.

Last spring, rioting and protests over the death of Freddie Gray put Baltimore in headlines around the world and at the epicenter of a national struggle against police violence.

Anger on the streets was followed by a heated rhetorical battle over what to call what was happening and whom to blame. For Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, the violence was the work of “thugs,” a description she later retracted. But it was a common characterization that, in the age of social media, local residents countered with remarkable success.

Baltimoreans made news by criticizing the news, perhaps none more so than 21-year-old Kwame Rose, who dressed down Fox News’s Geraldo Rivera on camera. “You wanna report that we’re thugs and we’re breaking shit down,” Rose said. “We’re the ones that need protection. Report for us.”

Martin Luther King Jr. said, “A riot is the language of the unheard. And what is it that America has failed to hear? It has failed to hear that the economic plight of the Negro poor has worsened over the last few years.” If only it were just the last few years.

When anger and grievances stretch back centuries—recalling forced labor, murder, rape, theft, disenfranchisement, segregation, dehumanization, and more—is there another way to get a voice and relief? And what would such a process look like? In many other societies, the answer has been a truth commission.

South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, established in 1995 after the collapse of that nation’s apartheid system, may be the most famous. But there are other, earlier models for pursuing what is known as restorative justice in the wake of mass human rights violations by governments. From



1983 to 1984, Argentina's National Commission on the Disappeared sought answers for thousands of families who had loved ones taken during seven years of armed conflict. At least thirty-three other countries have employed variations on the model. That list includes some of the most chronically war-torn places on the globe, places like East Timor, El Salvador, and Rwanda. But not exclusively: A panel formed to study human rights abuses in East Germany helped facilitate reunification after the Soviet withdrawal. And just months ago, Canada concluded its own truth and reconciliation process that focused on crimes against indigenous people. The mechanisms vary, but in general these commissions employ public testimony supported by an officially sanctioned body, often followed by remuneration.

There are local and national precedents in the United States. In 1988, the Civil Liberties Act provided compensation for people of Japanese descent held in internment camps during World War II: More than 82,000 internment survivors and family members received checks of about \$20,000 each. In 2006, the Episcopal Church of the United States formally acknowledged and apologized for its role in slavery and segregation, and urged each diocese to document this history. And in May, Chicago became the first city in the country to create a reparations fund for victims of police torture. They used the R word, the one that Baltimore native and *Atlantic* magazine writer Ta-Nehisi Coates injected into mainstream American conversation with his 2014 essay "The Case for Reparations."

It's against this backdrop that I spoke with activists and advocates for racial justice here and abroad about Baltimore's unrest, its antecedents, and the prospects of some formal effort to repair the damage. They represent two countries, four generations, and a diversity of vantage points, including black nationalism, U.S. jurisprudence, and a memory that stretches back to the Jim Crow South.

These witnesses agree that confronting Baltimore's history of racial violence with such a process could be beneficial. But they also warn that doing so won't be as easy as many of us might hope.

The interviews have been condensed and edited for space.

# Making their Case

## Adam Jackson and Dayvon Love

are members of Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle, a black, Baltimore-based think tank and advocacy organization. [Full disclosure: I made a financial contribution to Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle in support of their first debate camp, and they've sought my advice on media relations.]

## Sherrilyn Ifill

is president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. She is a member of OSI Institute-Baltimore Advisory Board and has lived in the Baltimore area since 1993.

## Helena Hicks

helped desegregate public accommodations in the city during one of the first lunch-counter sit-ins in the country, at Read's Drug Store in 1955, as a student at Morgan State University. She has been an outspoken advocate for Baltimore's underserved communities for decades.

## Marie Wilson

is a member of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Up until the 1990s, the Canadian government took 150,000 aboriginal children from their families and placed them in Indian residential schools. The forced assimilation these children underwent was part of a larger pattern of abuses that the commission describes as cultural genocide.



## The First Days

**Love:** I got a text from a cousin of Tyrone West, who was killed by Baltimore City Police in July of 2013. [Editorial note: West died in police custody during a traffic stop; no charges were filed.] He sent me a picture of Freddie Gray in the hospital. I remember when I saw that picture, I said, “Wow. This is probably about to be my life for the next several months.”

**Jackson:** It was pretty crazy, those first few days. I got the same text message and photo that Dayvon got. I remember people saying, “Adam, are you going to the Freddie Gray protests?” And I'm like, “Nah, I'm not going. I'm good.”

As a person that's been around people that's been doing advocacy, I'm thinking that's pretty normal: a black person being brutalized and killed by a police officer. I don't know how much people are going to get mad about that. What I didn't see was all these people talking about it, and how suddenly it became national media. I had never seen anything like that. So I thought it was irresponsible not to be involved because that's what everyone's talking about, and what they're doing is related to what I'm doing.

## A Long Time Coming

**Ifill:** I gave a speech at HUD [the Department of Housing and Urban Development] several weeks ago in which I talked about the questions that we grappled with after the unrest. They were not mostly about the individual officers who were involved with Freddie Gray, but they really were about the circumstances, the policies, the laws, and the practices that led to that encounter between Freddie Gray and those police officers in West Baltimore that day. Those circumstances and laws and policies have very deep historical roots in Baltimore.

**Hicks:** I went through the '68 riots. They were horrible. They burned down much more of the city that time than they did this time.

There was always a fear that if enough blacks got in the street, they weren't going to be able to control them. That goes all the way back to slavery. That's



Adam Jackson of Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle: “It’s not my job to make white people feel good about racism.”

just a mindset. When people find out that they can terrorize you and get away with it, they terrorize you and they do get away with it.

I’m not completely surprised that this happened. You beat a dog and beat a dog and chain him up. The minute he comes off that chain, you’ve had it. He’s going to go for you. He’s going to pay you back for all the things you did to him. And that’s exactly what they did. They took their rage out.

I think about one of the books that Toni Morrison wrote in which she has a guy who tells a tale, and everybody likes the story. So he tells it over and over again to lots of people, different groups of people. And at the end of the story, he has told the story so many times, he begins to believe it was true. I think that’s what’s happened with our telling of the civil rights movement. It’s presented as being much less violent, much more successful.

There were some successes, but if it had been totally successful, we wouldn’t



have had the riots. They're presenting it as a story like they wanted it to be, not what it was.

So they rebel. And, rightfully, they should.

## Why Call It an Uprising

**Love:** I call what's happened since Freddie Gray's death an uprising, because historically, particularly in places that have been subject to colonial rule, the initial phase of sustained resistance is an uprising. People, to varying degrees and varying levels of organization, express in a very traumatic way their resistance to the current structure. "Uprising" politicizes it in a way that I think is very appropriate. I think using the term "riot" criminalizes and depoliticizes it to make it seem random and senseless.

## The Power of Protest

**Hicks:** Protest reminds people that we don't have it right yet and points out what still needs to be worked on: our inability to work together, go to school together, live together. We gotta keep working at it. If you don't protest it, people will simply accept it.

**Love:** I would go as far as to say that the uprising is probably one of the reasons our current mayor decided not to run for re-election and why that race will be so interesting. It's also opened up conversations among area foundations and philanthropic institutions about how they get their money and whom they fund.

I think it's opened a window that we need to take advantage of. If we organize properly, it can yield some pretty important and substantive results.

## What Happens Next?

**Ifill:** We have always believed that one way to address the culture of policing is through the federal government's grants to police departments. Over a billion dollars of taxpayer money goes to police departments all over the country to support them. Those grants should require training around issues

**“You can’t reconcile unless you have two groups on the same level. There has to be a common understanding that one side is just as good as the other. ”**

**—*Helena Hicks***

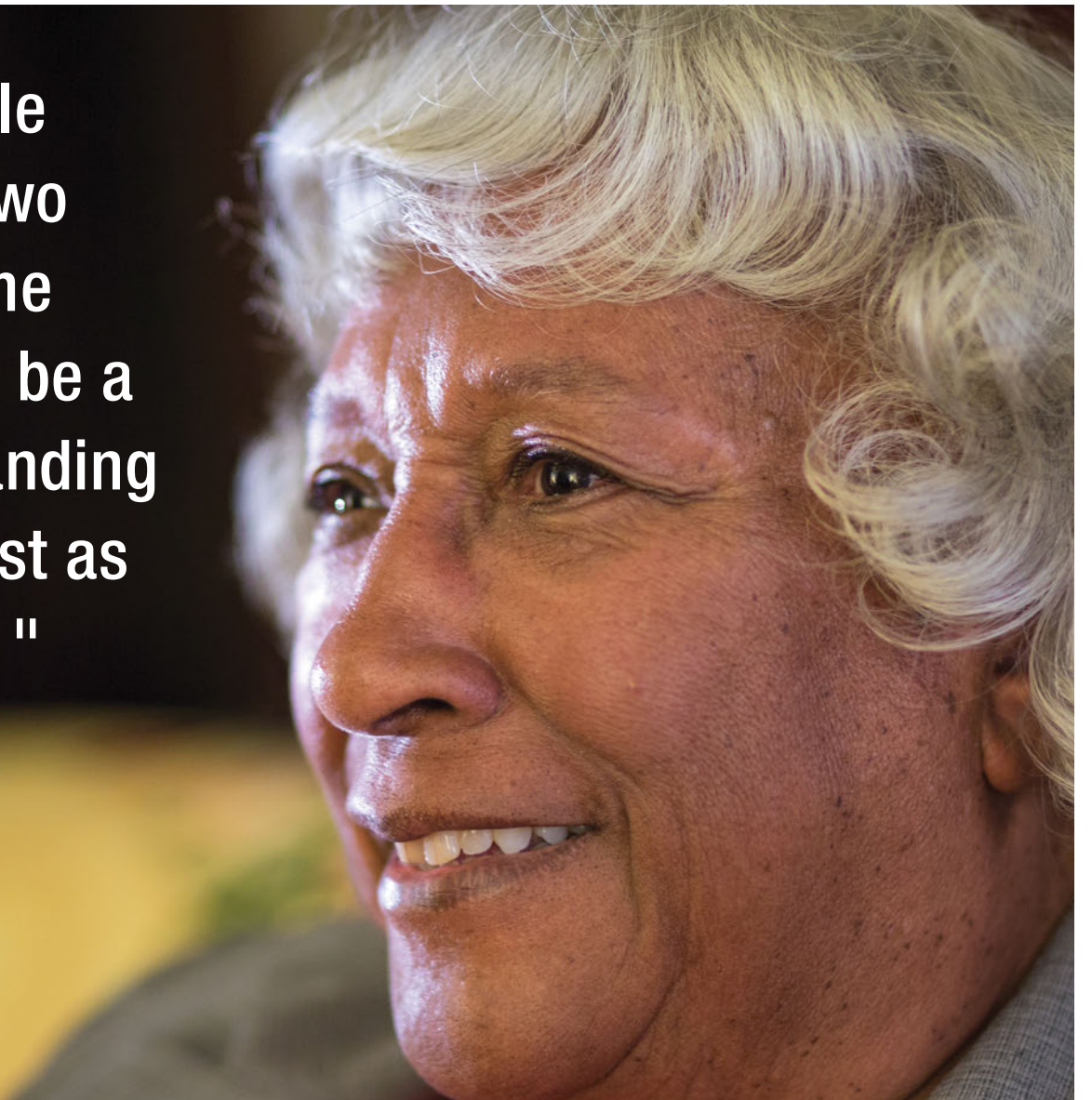


Photo credit: Chris Hartlove

of implicit bias, how to de-escalate encounters, how to engage in encounters with young people, and how to engage in encounters with the mentally ill.

Prosecutors have extraordinary discretionary authority. They are closest to the police. They very often know who the bad police officers are, and their own practices have to be examined and scrutinized, as they very often get these cases that come from police practices that involve racial profiling.

And in the courtroom, the reality of law-enforcement bias has been given too little weight. There’s too little room within the rules of litigation to account for this reality. Changing that will take time, but those of us who are civil rights lawyers have a laser-like focus on it.

**Love:** I think the fundamental piece is cultivating communal-based, independent black institutions. If you look at the black radical tradition and you look at the way movements have happened among people of African descent in this country, it was those independent black institutions that



provided the basis for all of the icons that we hear about and know about today. Without those institutions, you may have a policy or two that gets through, but the people who are most directly affected by these issues won't have the protections of their humanity that I think are necessary in a society like this.

**Wilson:** This is one of the things that is really important, I think, for the States and everywhere else to learn from Canada: It's wrong to assume that the institution is always in the right. It's wrong to assume that the institution always has adequate measures in place to supervise, to performance-manage, to discipline, and to get rid of people who shouldn't be there in the first place. We just saw example after example of people who were acting in ways that were not only vicious but in many instances criminal.

It's not just about the courts. Are there preventative safeguards to make sure there's a fighting chance from the beginning and not just perpetual, after-the-fact cleanup—which, meanwhile, has allowed for a whole lot more rancor, distrust, and rage?

## Is Reconciliation Possible?

**Wilson:** I don't want to be presumptuous about your situation in the States. I don't live there. It's not my truth. All I know is when you create safe space where firsthand accounts with real, lived experiences can be shared—when you bring good people into new rooms and allow each other to hear each other, perhaps for the first time—things can start to shift.

The most commonly used word at our events was “transformative.”

If you create mechanisms for people to take forward what they have learned, people will do good things.

**Ifill:** I wrote a whole book about truth-and-reconciliation processes, *On the Courthouse Lawn: Confronting the Legacy of Lynching in the Twenty-First Century*. There, I talked about the need for these conversations in local communities where lynchings happened.

But I think it's important that people understand it's not just talk. It is about policy, laws, and investments.

Look at, for example, housing segregation in this country, which was a practice that was created and perpetuated not only by individual races but by the federal government through a series of practices they engaged in fairly explicitly until the 1960s. The money and investments that we put into housing segregation—including what we put into the creation of the white suburbs and an interstate highway system that made those white suburbs possible—those are huge investments.

Well, if you decided you'd done that, and you realized you've created and perpetuated segregation through this effort, what's the answer to that?

This is not a matter of just feelings, and even frankly, to be honest with you, conversations around “truth and reconciliation.” It's also about investment. It is about investing in integration. It's about investing in an inclusive society. It's about investing in equal opportunity. And that's where you find many people don't want to go. But that is the reality of what it will take.

**Love:** The notion of truth and reconciliation makes sense to me as a way of putting demands on the table, concrete demands. And the response to those demands will determine the way that we relate to the other group.

I think that black folks have been socialized to not think in terms of power. We're willing to just do whatever it takes to get crumbs. So there needs to be a shift in thinking. You come to the table as equals and an understanding of what you have to offer. Only in that context does truth and reconciliation make sense. We have to make sure those on the other side of the table understand the terms—that we're not your pets, we're not a charity case.

**Jackson:** I agree. It's not my job to make white people feel good about racism. It exists, and you should be actively working with black people to build, and it don't mean we've got to be friends. Like a white person healing from their own personal prejudice; that's cool, you do that with white people, but it's not my job at any point to be like an arbiter in that. Like, you figure that out and if you do that, that's good for you. You go ahead. It's my job to do that with black people. It ain't my job to do that with white people.



**Hicks:** Segregation exists because of the way people are. People do not admit it, but people like to be with their own kind. We don't want to see ourselves that way, but it really is true.

You can't reconcile differences unless you have two people or two groups on the same level. There has to be a common understanding that one side is just as good as the other, entitled to the same future and advantages, is just as worthy, and has just as much to offer.

If we don't start from that perspective, no, it's not going to do any good. We keep going after the wrong things. You know, we need more guns, more rules, restrictions, ordinances, whatever. That doesn't change anything. I still don't trust you.

I've worked with the police on a regular basis. And I tell them all the time, "The day I can't trust you, that's the day this is all over." You want me to trust you, you have to trust me. You want me to respect you? You've got to respect me. If you see me as something different or less than, it won't work.

We're not ready. We're not ready. ■



Photo credit: Chris Hartlove

Dayvon Love of Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle: "The Uprising has opened a window that we need to take advantage of."

Video: Civil rights legend Helena Hicks talks race and reconciliation at [urbanitebaltimore.com](http://urbanitebaltimore.com)

# The Fire Last Time

In 1968, Fred Harris and the Kerner Commission saw this coming



Days of rage: A National Guardsman in Detroit during the riots of July 1967

In the new wave of opinion pieces about American racial unrest, a quotation from a 47-year-old government report often surfaces: “White society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it.”



The line is from the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, known as the Kerner Commission. Named after commission chair Otto Kerner Jr., then governor of Illinois, the group assembled in the aftermath of 1967 riots in Detroit and Newark, New Jersey. Lyndon Johnson appointed the commission to address three questions: What happened? Why did it happen? And what can be done to prevent it from happening again and again? The commission's report was unsparing, quotable ("Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal"), and remarkably prescient. It warned of the militarization of police and deepening segregation in cities. And it sharply chastised the media, which had "too long basked in a white world looking out of it . . . with white men's eyes and white men's perspective." Fred Harris, then a 38-year-old senator from Oklahoma, is the last surviving member of the commission. He visited Baltimore's Annie E. Casey Foundation in September to discuss American cities, then and now.

In the black section of Detroit there was an illegal drinking place called the Blind Pig. The police—one squad car with two policemen—came down there at about midnight to close the place down. This is midnight on a really hot night, and here's this big drinking crowd, out on the street. Somebody—nobody knows who—threw a bottle that crashed into the windshield of the squad car. That's how it all started.

We had 23 days of hearings and 150 witnesses, from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to J. Edgar Hoover. And we had a staff that went out to twenty-three cities and brought back facts about conditions. [New York City mayor] John Lindsay and I went out to select cities ourselves. In Cincinnati we met with this very militant group—well-educated young black men and women—who wouldn't shake hands with us, who couldn't even look at us. They said, "You white politicians, you ought to be studying yourselves. You're the problem."

Lyndon Johnson thought that there was some organization and conspiracy behind these riots, which was absolutely false. It was spontaneous. I tried to tell him personally that the conditions in these central cities are so terrible and there's such hostility toward the police that any random spark could start up these riots, and that's what happened. The commission's thinking

was, we should just say what we really believe: There's no conspiracy here.

We were ready to file our report in March 1968—we planned to have a big ceremony and to ask the president to keep the commission going to help implement our recommendations. But a member of the commission said to Johnson, “This report is going to ruin you. It has nothing good to say about anything you've ever done about poverty or civil rights. It's a disaster.” So Johnson—who never read the report—canceled the ceremony and refused to extend the commission's life.

We were going to spend a whole week backgrounding with the media, so people would know why we were saying these things. But the *Washington Post* got a copy early. It was chaos. I remember a reporter called me and said, “I've got a 30-minute deadline; can you capsule it for me?” Their headline was “White Racism Cause of Black Riots, Commission Says.”

A lot of white people felt, “Well, what about me? Hell, I'm having a hard time.” My dad—a cowboy kind of guy, a small farmer—the way he heard what we said was “Mr. Harris, out of the goodness of your heart, you ought to pay more taxes to help black people who are rioting in Detroit.” You know, that didn't appeal to him, frankly.

Today, the situation is tougher now for a city like Baltimore than it was then. These cities have lost population. The tax base has shrunk. Poverty is worse. And extreme poverty—that is, earnings of 50 percent or less of the poverty rate—is worse, and people have far less chance of getting out of it than they did back in our day.

If the Kerner Commission could have had a continued life, we would've done better, I think. Ferguson has just had a Kerner-like commission. [Missouri Governor Jay Nixon formed the sixteen-member Ferguson Commission in November 2014; its initial report was released in September.] It's going to stay in operation—to lobby for and push for its recommendations.

If there was to be a commission in Baltimore, first, it should be regional, because the problem is regional. A white person living out in the suburbs may say, “What's it to me that kids are getting a criminally inferior education, or have no chance to get a job? What do I care?” Well, those people are going



pay for it one way or another. Second, it ought to stay in operation afterwards. We need to help people see what the facts are—and then help them see their own self-interest in it.

I always said to the people in the civil rights movement, I'm against violence. Violence is inhumane and counterproductive. You'll never have as many guns as the government has. On the other hand, confrontation is important.

For me, there's hope. Occupy Wall Street was criticized for not having a well-defined platform, but it put income inequality on the public agenda. Some people criticize Black Lives Matter for the same thing. But we've got to keep the spotlight on it. A commission can keep it on the public agenda and help people to see where their own interests are involved in solving these problems. The message should be: We're all in this thing together.

*—As told to Martha Thomas*





**FRESH  
LOCAL**

**#GetYourFRESHon!  
Maryland farmers markets.**

***[www.marylandsbest.net](http://www.marylandsbest.net)***





*Madonna*, 1934 © 2015 The Estate of Ruth Starr Rose

**RUTH STARR ROSE: REVELATIONS OF AFRICAN  
AMERICAN LIFE IN MARYLAND AND THE WORLD**

**October 10, 2015–April 3, 2016**

**Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture**

**Presented by Brown Capital Management**





# The Running Man

By Michael Anft

Photographs by Noah Scialom  
Illustration by Pierre Bennu



# Freddie Gray's harried life was too typical of young black men in Baltimore. Until it ended, and his name became a rallying cry for change.

**W**hen all else failed, Freddie could run.

As a boy facing long odds in school and life, he would outrace friends on the football field and blow by them on the basketball court. As those odds played out when he was a young man, when he dealt drugs and made himself a presence in West Baltimore's streets, projects, and alleyways, he'd run from the heat.

Freddie's strategy—leave them grabbing at air—didn't always work. He was arrested a dozen and a half times. But movement is freedom. Without fail, he'd run.

So when, on a sunny spring Sunday morning at the corner of North and Mount, right outside the King Grocery Mart where Freddie Gray often hung out with his boys despite the "No Loitering" sign, he and a Western District police lieutenant riding a bike toward the corner from the east briefly locked eyes, Freddie was off. The bike cop, who'd been riding in formation with three other officers, took off in pursuit.

Westward a half block to Bruce Street, no more than a tree-shaded alley decorated with trash, where he turned left. Galloping past a rolled-up carpet, old tires, a sofa. Flying past the seven houses on the west side of the next block down, five of them boarded up. Skirting the grass lot with the signs banning pets and ball playing. Across Presbury and into Gilmore Homes, a drab, low-rise housing project, where he entered a walkway called Bruce Court and pulled up.

“They weren’t going to catch him—Freddie was fast, man. But he surrendered anyway, just stopped right here,” says Kevin Moore, who points to a spot right in front of his apartment. “People talk about his asthma, and he always smoked those Black & Milds, but it never affected his physicality.”

Several of the pursuing police officers corralled Freddie. Officers searched him and found a spring-loaded pocket knife, the legality of which is still in question. It was enough to bring a charge, however. They carried Freddie to a squat stone wall where Presbury meets Bakbury Court, a carbon copy of Bruce Court a half-block over. More police arrived in cars. This is where Moore pulled out his cell phone, followed the scene, and recorded the images that traveled around the world.

“He didn’t weigh more than a buck twenty-five, and they was just throwing him around,” adds Mike Coner, Moore’s next-door neighbor.

Not more than a week earlier, Moore and Gray ran into each other and joked about “hooking up in prison.” Now, Freddie was face down on the sidewalk and on the verge of becoming a statistic.

After he died a week later, his spine mangled, his name would assume a place at the center of a chain of events that would rock the city: accusations of police violence, protests, riots, curfews, standoffs between citizens and police, the charging of six officers with crimes relating to Freddie’s death, a \$6.4 million city payout to his family, and a national conversation about abusive policing and its effects on young men like Gray.

“There are thousands of Freddie Grays in this city,” says Warren Brown, a well-known criminal defense lawyer in Baltimore who has represented a few, though not Gray himself.

Friends and neighbors say he was a regular guy they called “Pepper,” though no one seems to know why. He was a joker—generous, respectful, easygoing, liked to get high. He preferred name-brand designer clothes, nice wheels, pit bulls, hot girls. His short life left us little more than that, and yet it has become a prism that reflects every ill that plagues this city. Crushing poverty. Fatherlessness. Joblessness. Childhood lead poisoning. Housing segregation. Police brutality. The endless street-to-jail cycle and the war on drugs that feeds it.





Photo credit: Family photo from court filings

A Baltimore childhood: Family photos of Freddie Gray and his two sisters were submitted in the family's lead poisoning lawsuit in 2008.

Whether you empathize with Gray and his messy race with life, or see him as a serial lawbreaker who shares responsibility for his fate, it is a Baltimore story. Freddie Gray was a scion of the city. He was raised on its streets, poisoned by its homes, educated in its schools, and then—allegedly—killed by its police officers. His was a life wholly shaped by the forces that act upon thousands of other young people here, and it bears a closer look.

**I**t's no longer easy to get a clear picture of Freddie Gray. As the legal drama surrounding his death proceeds, members of his immediate family have been largely shielded from the media by Billy Murphy, the attorney who negotiated the settlement of their civil brutality case against the city. Several did not answer a reporter's calls or visits for comment, and Murphy declined to speak on the record. Police officials and leaders of the police



union refused to comment on the specifics of Gray's case, citing the pending case against the six officers involved.

But here's what we do know: Born several months prematurely along with a twin sister, Fredricka, at Maryland General Hospital twenty-six years ago to a mother who had been addicted to heroin, Freddie Carlos Gray Jr. grew up in slum houses in Sandtown, just a few blocks from where he was last arrested. Gray's father, Freddie Sr., didn't live with Freddie, Fredricka, or an older daughter, Carolina.

Before Freddie and Fredricka turned three, their mother, Gloria Darden, filed paternity suits against Freddie Sr. He signed off on papers stating he was the twins' father and agreed to have \$40 of his wages from a job at Johns Hopkins Hospital garnished weekly for child support.

Money was always an issue for the young, broken family. Darden, who has said she couldn't read, had been expelled from middle school and lived on a disability check. Former neighbors say that Richard Shipley, the man she lives with now, sometimes worked in construction. At least once, when Darden was in drug treatment, their home was without food or electric service, according to court records. By the time the twins were three, Child Protective Services had become involved.

Despite their troubles, neighbors say that Darden and Shipley, who assumed the role of the children's stepfather, did what they could to keep the family together. But the children were subject to a variety of predators, ones they couldn't run from. At least one of them was sexually abused by someone outside of the immediate family, according to a lawyer's testimony in an unrelated case.

Then there were the walls that closed in on Freddie and his sisters. The first six years of the twins' lives were spent in homes that shed lead paint like dandruff, so the children could eat it, suck it from their hands, or breathe in its dust. From the time Freddie was two, the family paid \$300 a month for a house on North Carey Street where, they said in a court deposition, paint flaked from window sills and the walls of bedrooms and hallways.

At one point, the Gray children each had lead levels in their blood that were





Gray and his sisters all tested positive for greatly elevated levels of lead in their bloodstreams, which can cause severe brain damage.

more than seven times greater than what the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) say can cause brain damage. In the years Freddie lived there, his blood maintained a level that was at least twice the CDC threshold. He was one of more than 65,000 Baltimore children found to have dangerously elevated blood-lead levels between 1993 and 2013, a rate considered one of the highest in the nation.

Owned by Stanley Rochkind, an oft-cited inner-city landlord, the Carey Street house was home until 1996, when the family is believed to have moved one block north.

Neighbors remember young Freddie as a playful, agreeable kid. “I was devastated, I was numb to hear what happened to him,” says Rosalind Brown, who lived two doors down from the family, then moved into their Carey Street home two years after they left. “He was a nice boy, always smiling.”



She raises her ten-year-old grandson Dominic in Freddie's old house, and the child attends Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School, next to a playground recently dedicated to Gray in Upton. The house is safe now, she says: "They painted it up real good."

Freddie was a thin, smallish boy who would later play wide receiver in a local football little league. Sports were a refuge for him, remembers another former neighbor, Will Tyler: "It was something to do besides run the streets."

After Freddie entered school, he was diagnosed with ADHD, was often truant, and, along with Fredricka, attended special education classes. The pair exhibited behavioral problems. Freddie failed several grades. Although some published accounts say he graduated from Carver Vocational Technical High School, the nearly all-black public school that serves the neighborhood, it appears Freddie actually dropped out in ninth grade. High school graduation was a criterion for successfully completing one of several stints on probation. There's no evidence, at least in the court record, that he met that requirement.

The long-term impact of the Gray children's lead exposure would play out in court a dozen years after they moved out of the Carey Street house. In 2008, the office of local attorney Evan Thalenberg filed a lead paint lawsuit against Rochkind on the Grays' behalf, asking for a combined \$5 million-plus in damages, nearly \$2 million for Freddie. The suit alleged that lead poisoning from living in the Carey house resulted in "permanent and severe brain injury" to all three siblings and "will prohibit the Plaintiffs from gaining in any painful [sic] occupation, activity, or pursuit, as well as from performing any duties requiring the full and normal use of their mind, body, and limbs."

The children had been treated at the Kennedy Krieger Institute, sometimes as inpatients. Pictures presented as evidence in the lawsuit show a smiling four-year-old Freddie with his sisters against a backdrop of almost-bare walls—he looks both happy and doomed.

But the child in that photo was long gone. The twins were eighteen when their lead-poisoning case was tried, and both were incarcerated by that time: They had to petition the court to allow them to wear "civilian clothes." (The charges against Fredricka would ultimately be dropped.) Freddie, after saying his piece in court, went back to jail, a place he would become too accustomed to.





Bail bondsman Quintin “Toak” Reid knew Freddie well: “He had charisma. I could tell by looking at body language. People walked behind Freddie, not alongside him.”

**H**ow closely could Freddie’s consistent criminality—his rap sheet shows a break in the flow of arrests only during times when he was jailed—be linked to the developmental impact of lead-tainted blood?

Social scientists and criminologists have long posited that there is a direct link between childhood lead exposure and crime: Just as higher blood lead levels have been associated with lower IQ and struggles with learning and behavior, they also correlate with higher rates of arrests for adults, several studies have found. And lawyers who tackle the cases of inner-city young people say their clients often bring up this connection.

“I’ve asked many of my clients, ‘Why do you have this problem? Why did you drop out in eighth grade? Why do you have this lengthy arrest record?’” says Jill Carter, a state delegate and defense lawyer. “Way too often, they’ll tell me they’ve been lead-poisoned.”

While his neighbors say that Gray showed few signs of impairment, one lawyer who defended him in court says the effects were manifest. “It was clear to me that there were some lead issues,” says the attorney, who did not want to be identified. “His reading and writing weren’t good. He wasn’t unintelligent, but you wondered just how far he could go.”

A bail bondsman the family hired to bail Freddie out of jail said he’d have to read the charges when Freddie stumbled over them. “He couldn’t make out words like ‘eluding’ or ‘fleeing,’” says Quintin “Toak” Reid. “He had a lot of street smarts, though. He was just trying to survive out here. People feel like they can take care of their families at age sixteen by selling drugs. That’s all they can do.”

And Freddie knew his neighborhood: Sandtown-Winchester, home to around 8,500 people in a Census tract that is one of the city’s poorest. It’s also one of the tightest. “Everybody here is cousins, almost literally,” says Reid. “This is the wrong community for something like Freddie Gray to happen because they take care of their own here.”

Though Freddie was known as “Pepper” on the street, he was just as often called “Nephew” or “Cuzz” in the neighborhood. Mike Coner called him “Nephew” because his nieces went to school with Gray. In turn, other neighbors say, Freddie called them “Big Daddy,” “Mama,” or “Uncle.”

“Uncle” Will Tyler qualifies as a street relative because Freddie knew his daughter, Aaliyah. Tyler runs a nonprofit that organizes basketball tournaments and other athletic events for Gilmore Homes youths. “I give kids a place to go,” he says. “They haven’t had one for a long time. They’re tired of their illegal activities, of being arrested all the time.”

As a young man, Gray would take part in basketball round-robins that Tyler put together, playing a variety of positions with daring and skill. “He was a



good kid who did what kids do,” says Tyler. Gray had a bit of gumption, he adds—he talked about going to community college, maybe even getting a job in law enforcement. “He wasn’t lazy. He had a thing about himself. I always told Freddie he could get a job if he worked at it.”

Tyler lives at Gilmor Homes’ southern side, several blocks from the site of Gray’s last arrest. There’s a balloons-and-bottles monument to a recent victim of Sandtown’s violence nearby, on Mount and Presstman, and plenty more as you head north. Mount and Baker. Mount and Presbury. 1827 North Mount. Around the corner at North and Carey. Even without the three shrines to Freddie in and around Gilmor’s northern end, and the scores of dead-eyed vacants and yawning lots, it’s like wandering through a cemetery.

Yet this place was Freddie’s life, where he hung out, helped out neighbors. And, if his criminal history is to be believed, it’s where he plied his trade.

Freddie’s record as a juvenile offender, if there is one, is not available to the public. But his advent into adulthood suggests that he had already embarked on a budding career as a corner boy, a street-level drug dealer. A week after he turned eighteen, when he became an adult in the eyes of the law, he was arrested for dealing heroin and lying to police. Four days later, another arrest. The next day, another bust for drug dealing, for which he’d serve a few months of hard time, and receive a suspended three-year sentence, which he’d spend instead on supervised probation.

In all, Gray would be arrested at least eighteen times before his death. At one point, he had been busted at least eleven times during one period of probation. Almost all the charges were drug-related, usually just-large-enough amounts of heroin and cocaine to be hit with distribution charges. A few were typical “nuisance” complaints—playing dice, hanging out in a vacant apartment. His only violent charge occurred about a year before his death, when he was accused of hitting an acquaintance.

Freddie may have been in trouble a lot, but Tyler says he did what he could to brighten things up in the neighborhood. “I last saw him four days before [his arrest] and he was playing jokes on his friends,” he adds. “You never felt threatened by him.”





The witness: Kevin Moore shot the video of Gray's arrest.

Big Daddy—aka Earl “Manny” Williams—says Freddie would spread his money around. “I’m not going to say Freddie was a saint because he wasn’t, but he had a good heart. He’d look out for people, buy them groceries, that kind of thing,” says Williams, who watched Freddie grow up “chasing his friends around the neighborhood.”

“He had charisma,” Reid adds. “I could tell by looking at body language. People walked behind Freddie, not alongside him.”

Another Mount Street denizen, Alethea Booze—  
“Mama” to Freddie—says he would make sure older neighbors had what they needed. He’d walk by her stoop with his buddies on his way to King Grocery and ask her if she needed ice cream or a soda.



“When he’d have money, he’d buy some of the kids new tennis [shoes],” Tyler says. “He understood that the peer pressure is crazy around here. You don’t come up with the best clothes or tennis, you won’t be running with the hip crowd.”

The cash, or some of it, came from the monthly “lead checks” he started receiving at age twenty-one in 2010, when the lead paint lawsuit against Rochkind produced enough evidence to encourage his lawyers to settle. Though the terms of the agreement were sealed by the court (and attorney Thalenberg didn’t return calls), it’s clear that each Gray sibling received a sum well into six figures, at least. Spread out over many years, such settlements may come to only a few hundred dollars every month, but they do guarantee regular income.

In 2013, however, Freddie traded in a considerable part of his lead settlement for a smaller lump sum. An August *Washington Post* investigation found that the Gray children sold off their rights to future payments to Chevy Chase-based Access Funding, a company that markets to lead poisoning victims and offers immediate payouts.

The sisters relinquished \$435,000 in long-term checks for a one-time-only check of \$54,000—about 20 cents on the dollar. Freddie sold \$146,000 in future guarantees, worth \$94,000 at the time, for around \$18,000.

**U**p on Bakbury Court, a group of young men sit on stoops on a hot weekday and reminisce about Freddie. They say he had the money to strut around. He liked the big brands—Gucci, Prada, 7 for All Mankind, True Religion, Under Armour, Louis Vuitton—and expensive sneakers. Though he always walked when he was in Sandtown, friends say he often had wheels—a van or two, plus, depending on who you talk to, an Acura, Cadillac, or Lexus. Smoking some good weed, maybe guzzling a “Gatorade”—a concoction that includes the central nervous system depressant GHB—got him through the night.

Did Gray have a drug habit? About a year ago, he was arrested for possessing a few oxycodone tablets. Several of his busts for distribution were for a

relatively small amount of drugs—a possible sign that he was selling to pay for drugs for his own use. Along with evidence of marijuana use, the medical examiner found opiates in his body.

But several people who claim to have known him say Freddie dealt drugs for the income, and to help out his family. One young man, who refused to give his name “because police will come after me,” says he last saw Gray on the morning of his arrest. As usual, he had started his day early. “We’d get going at six in the morning,” he says. “We’ve got a job to do too, you know.”

One of the Bakbury guys shows a picture on his phone of Freddie mugging with arms spread, in front of four friends, taken almost on the same spot of his final arrest and just a few days before, looking like he couldn’t be more at home.

**“He wanted more than this, but he couldn’t leave us.  
This was his place. This is where he belonged.”**

When Freddie took off on the morning of April 12, he ran toward the only refuge he knew. “He was trying to get back to the projects,” Reid speculates. “Once you’re there, you’re safe. A lot of those doors are unlocked. He could jump in, lock the door behind him. There’d be a lot of people who wouldn’t think twice about helping him.”

Even though his mother and sisters lived in better neighborhoods—Belair-Edison and Harwood, respectively—Gray never really left Sandtown. He always ended up back around Gilmore Homes.

“He wanted more than this, but he couldn’t leave us,” Kevin Moore says. “This was his place. This is where he belonged.”

He and Moore would often ponder what a new life outside the neighborhood might look like, Moore recalls. “We all want to get out of the projects.



We'd talk about what it would be like to get out of Baltimore. But he died. It never happened."

Up to the end, his neighbors kept an eye out for him.

Alethea Booze was in her kitchen on April 12 making turkey wings, greens, and mashed potatoes for when her family got back from church. She heard someone yelling down the alley. Because she had suffered a stroke and had trouble walking, she had her friend Robin help her down past six houses and an empty lot to see what was going on. She saw Moore and a young woman taking video of someone on the ground. Freddie. No surprise there. "I'd seen them chase him several times," she says.

Gray was yelling in pain as one officer put his knee on the back of his neck and another pulled his legs up behind his back. Williams says, "They had him in the Boston crab"—a wrestling hold. Police started dragging Gray to a paddy wagon as he screamed in pain. "We said, 'His legs are broke! Take him to the hospital!'" Booze recalls. "A black cop was there. We asked him, 'Can't you do something?' But he walked right by."

Gray was put in the van, still yelling, but not buckled in. The vehicle lurched off toward the Western District police station, six blocks south, maybe a minute and a half away. It arrived forty-six minutes later, after several stops. Somewhere along the way, Freddie Gray sustained the spinal cord injuries that would kill him.

"Freddie was just like a lot of guys here," Booze says. "But he would always stop and ask me if I was doing OK. Now, his little friends do the same."

**I**n May, an investigator from Baltimore City State's Attorney Marilyn Mosby's office visited Sandtown to learn the circumstances surrounding Gray's death. The investigator dropped by Mount Street and talked with Earl Williams, who told him to go back outside, lean against his car, and see what happened. Within minutes, Williams says, an officer in a passing cruiser yelled at the investigator to get off the street.

The irony is that Mosby's office had earlier in the spring asked for police to crack down on street activity—thus contributing to the heavy-handed style of policing that residents say they have long endured. The toll of street arrests, whether successfully prosecuted or not, can be devastating: Those with police records are half as likely to find a job as those who have never been arrested, researchers have found.

This incarceration cycle runs rampant in places like Sandtown, which sends more people to jail than any other Census tract in the state and where one in four juveniles has been arrested—double the rate elsewhere in the city. “[Police] treat the courts like a dumping ground and make an ever-increasing percentage of the population unemployable,” argues defense lawyer Warren Brown. “We need a Marshall Plan for these parts of Baltimore. What are the plans for uneducated, unemployed people here for the next ten to fifteen years? They're treated like the nuclear waste from power plants. They're contained. The police are charged with enforcing that containment.”

A. Dwight Pettit, a defense attorney who also has filed brutality lawsuits against the police, echoes that position. “I've seen questionable searches and seizures triple in the last ten years,” he says. “People are running from police because they can't afford \$50 for bail, whether they are guilty of a crime or not.”

Even older Sandtown residents, who often lament that succeeding generations haven't found real work and bring gunplay to the neighborhood, say that younger men face indignities at the hands of law enforcement that they never should have. Around the time of Gray's arrest, it was routine to see police jack up people on corners, Booze says. “Then, they'd pull their pants down in front of the public to search them, or Taser them, or throw them on the ground,” she says. “They were getting away with murder the way they treated people.”

In late May, Major Sheree Briscoe took over the Baltimore Police Department's Western District, blocks from the worst of the rioting that flared in April. A Baltimore city native and a City College grad, Briscoe now shoulders the formidable task of repairing the frayed relationship between this com-



munity and police after Gray's death. She takes what she calls "intentional community walks" in uniform: With her close-cropped hair, strong build, and bolt-upright posture, she cuts a warm, yet imposing figure, a combination of maternal care and no nonsense.

"When I look around Sandtown, I see a lot of nice people," she says. "A lot of people gather on the corners just to meet. Others are doing something else. It's our job to separate that out."

How her officers do that job, Briscoe says, is changing here in what is often called the post-Freddie-Gray era. Besides introducing herself to people, she and a police captain look for housing and business code violations. They report trash heaps and overgrown lots and hand out quick-reference guides to city services. They remind people they're entitled to those services. And they do social outreach, helping people with mental health issues and getting to know those who hang on corners.

**"I feel like I need to apologize, even if it's something that happened twenty years ago," says Major Sheree Briscoe, who just took over the Western District.**

What she's describing represents a dramatic shift from the aggressive, zero-tolerance model to a more holistic style of "community policing." But this is a community that may be a skeptical partner. "It's not popular to be seen holding hands with the police right now," Briscoe says.

Not that it ever was. Generations of distrust have built up in neighborhoods like this. "I need to be sincere with people to make these relationships grow," Briscoe says. "We've been talking to people who've had trouble with the police. I feel like I need to apologize to them, even if it's something that happened 20 years ago."

The guys on Bakbury Court aren't impressed—"police is police," one says. But Earl Williams and others have seen improvements in how the force treats the community since Briscoe's arrival. "She comes to whatever meeting she's invited to and listens," Williams says. Cops have taken a noticeable step back from the aggressive approach of clearing corners, and there's a bit more breathing space. "Things are different now. I haven't seen anybody chased in a while."

The death of Freddie Gray—and the groundswell of protest following it—has fed the momentum behind a host of criminal justice reforms. State laws that went into effect in October allow people arrested but not convicted of crimes to expunge their records. Petty marijuana convictions can now be wiped clean as well. A Second Chances Act shields nonviolent misdemeanor convictions from public view after a three- to seven-year period, giving offenders a better shot at finding jobs. In August, the state's Department of Justice issued new law enforcement guidelines that strongly condemn racial profiling by police, making Maryland the first state to follow the federal guidelines banning discriminatory profiling issued in December 2014.

City officials are looking to extend the Safe Streets antiviolence program to Sandtown. Based on the principles of violence interruption pioneered by Chicago's CeaseFire program, Safe Streets employs former offenders to defuse neighborhood disputes before they escalate. The program has been shown to be effective in lowering gun violence in several sites in the city, including McElderry Park and Cherry Hill, but it's also been rocked by troubles, most recently in July when police found guns and drugs stashed in the McElderry Park program site office.

A constellation of programs, conferences, classes, and seminars now carry Freddie Gray's name, all part of the citywide conversation about what needs to be done to change the circumstances under which he lived. His long-troubled neighborhood is the focus of renewed redevelopment attention (See "Who Can Save Sandtown?" p. 28). At the University of Maryland School of Law, a new course called "Freddie Gray's Baltimore: Past, Present and Moving Forward" is scheduled become an ongoing part of the curriculum.





Nowhere to run: Sandtown-Winchester resident Nathaniel Silas in one of the the troubled neighborhood's alleys

The school has expanded its work in West Baltimore in the past year, connecting with nonprofit groups and a student bar association to teach kids from four urban high schools their legal rights. In June, more than fifty sat in while Marilyn Mosby and others told them about their constitutional protections; a separate program led by law students holds workshops for middle school kids on freedom of speech.

Freddie's old bondsman, Toak Reid, says he's getting involved with the law school's efforts to inform kids of how to behave when police officers confront them. It's no fix for the real issues that led to Gray's death. But it might help save a few lives. He wants to reach a new generation of West Baltimore schoolchildren, he says. "So they don't run like Freddie did." ■



# The Worst City in America to Be Born Poor

Merely by being raised in a low-income Baltimore neighborhood, Freddie Gray was lost in a sea of disadvantage. Two Harvard economics professors produced a study in May showing that boys who grow up in poor Baltimore families earn 1.4 percent less as adults for every year they've lived in impoverished areas. For Freddie, who spent his entire childhood (defined in the study as twenty years) in Sandtown, that meant he could expect 28 percent less in total adult income than children from average situations during his working life.

What's more, Baltimore ranked dead-last among the nation's 100 largest cities or counties in providing good outcomes for impoverished boys. The city fits all too neatly into a pattern the Harvard professors, Raj Chetty and Nathaniel Hendren, discovered during their research of five million families who moved from one city or county to another: Racially segregated areas with little opportunity and surrounded by suburban sprawl are especially vulnerable to growing kids who are more likely to have dire adulthoods.

Girls suffer too, losing about 6 percent in earnings as adults. But the effect on boys is particularly stark, Chetty says. "What's troublesome is that the situation we described in the study also generally means that those kids will later be faced with a higher probability of jail time, drug use, and teen pregnancies. All of these things seem to go together."

The study doesn't offer a template for avoiding such situations, though it strongly hints that the children of families who get out of neighborhoods like Sandtown do better. Children who eventually live in better areas earn higher incomes in their twenties, the study found, with each year lived in what the researchers call "higher-mobility communities" contributing to higher earnings.





DANCE  
THEATRE OF  
HARLEM

APRIL 2, 2016  
8:00 PM

**Murphy Fine Arts Center**  
2201 Argonne Drive  
Baltimore, Maryland

443-885-4440

[www.murphyfineartscenter.org](http://www.murphyfineartscenter.org)



“Resurrection Intersection” in Sandtown was once the site of gang warfare. Today it is home to the Harris-Marcus Center, which houses Jubilee Arts and Newborn Holistic Ministries.



# Who Can Save Sandtown?

**Violent crime, unemployment, and addiction plague Freddie Gray’s neighborhood despite a strong community and tens of millions spent on revitalization. What more is it going to take?**

Story by Lawrence Lanahan  
Photography by Patrick Joust



This is as quiet as a city gets.

It's 4:45 a.m. The streets are empty. A mural of "Mr. Charlie," the late community leader Charles Johnson, surveys the stillness on this West Baltimore corner, his face glazed by a streetlamp. Here and there a car passes in a wave of white noise.

A few yards down North Fulton Avenue, Phebe Norfleet opens the turquoise door of her Formstone rowhouse and sits on the stoop. She wears her work uniform—a muted dark blouse and pants—but her personality shows through in a lock of hair curling up from under her Ravens hat, and purple and gold feathers hanging from her earrings.

Phebe works as a housekeeper at the Greater Baltimore Medical Center (GBMC) in Towson, six miles away. Her shift starts at 6 a.m. It's an eighteen-minute drive, but like four out of ten residents in her neighborhood, Phebe doesn't have a car. She could walk five blocks up to North Avenue, catch a quick eastbound bus, then transfer north at Charles Street, putting her at work in a little over an hour. That's how she goes on the weekends when her husband, George, walks with her.

But a temp agency just placed George on the overnight shift at a Pepsi bottling plant in Woodberry, so during the week Phebe gets on a bus that stops right across the street. It goes south, toward downtown, and lets her off at Charles and Baltimore streets, where she transfers to the 11 bus and turns northward again. This adds ten to fifteen minutes to her commute—more if the bus is running late, which she says it is maybe two or three times a week. But it saves her from having to walk across Sandtown-Winchester alone. She doesn't even leave her stoop to cross the street until she sees the bus headlights.

"I don't like to go places by myself," Phebe says. She says that more than anything else, she's afraid of the police, who view anyone on the streets at night with suspicion.

The police's treatment of local resident Freddie Gray, and the unrest that



Phebe Norfleet helped rehab her home with volunteers from Sandtown Habitat for Humanity.

erupted following his funeral in April, have brought Phebe’s neighborhood worldwide infamy. Even before April, however, Sandtown had established itself as an emblem of everything that’s not working in Baltimore City, from joblessness and drug addiction to gun violence, police brutality, and mass incarceration.

But for residents like Phebe, this is home. She didn’t grow up here: She’s from the South Baltimore neighborhood of Cherry Hill. In 2006, a friend told her about a program called Sandtown Habitat for Humanity that used volunteer labor to rehab derelict homes for low-income residents. Phebe applied for a Habitat house that October, and soon she and her family and friends were putting in more than 300 hours of “sweat equity” on a Fulton Avenue shell. “I did mortar, worked with circular saws,” Phebe says. “It makes you value it a little more.”

Phebe moved into her house the following December. Today, the skinny, two-bedroom rowhouse feels spacious and homey. It has an open floor plan and a warm living room. There are trees and birds stenciled on the white walls. She says her monthly mortgage payment is \$242. It’s a no-interest loan. Despite the recent surge in violence, Phebe says she feels safer here than in Cherry Hill. “I have wonderful neighbors,” she adds.



To an outsider, this might come as a surprise. Because Sandtown has become an icon of urban dysfunction, there's a growing conversation about how we can "save" it. But any would-be-saviors from outside the neighborhood must realize two things. One is that a good model for saving Sandtown already exists inside Sandtown. The other is that the impulse to "save" is really an impulse to fix, and, as Phebe Norfleet's protracted daily commute suggests, you can't fix Sandtown until you fix the region as a whole.

**L**ong before Freddie Gray's death drew the eyes of the world to Sandtown, a coalition of public and private interests undertook a massive effort to put the neighborhood back on its feet.

It started in 1989, with Kurt Schmoke, Baltimore's then-mayor, and James Rouse, a developer who built the town of Columbia, Maryland, around ideals of equality and inclusivity and later developed Harborplace. The duo brought together Baltimore City, Rouse's nonprofit Enterprise Foundation, and a coalition of local churches called Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD). The team aspired to "change all of a neighborhood's broken systems simultaneously: housing, education, employment, health care, human services, public safety, and commercial real estate."

The coalition's goals were ambitious—in retrospect, too ambitious: Knock unemployment from 22 percent to 9 percent; push the proportion of students meeting state education standards from 10 percent to 95 percent; eliminate "blatant drug dealing;" and reduce crime "to the level of that in typical middle-income neighborhoods."

Over the next decade, the project modernized public housing at Gilmore Homes, built and renovated hundreds of affordable houses, reformed the curriculum at three elementary schools, created leadership development programs, started job search and training organizations, renovated a community center, and started youth recreation programs. By 2000, public and private entities had poured \$130 million into Sandtown.

As the years went by, however, a chasm grew between residents and project staff from outside the neighborhood. That's what Howard University

law professor Harold McDougall found when he studied the project in the early 1990s for his book *Black Baltimore: A New Theory of Community*. “They had these charettes to try to get community buy-in on ideas they’d already generated,” McDougall says of the coalition. “People would come once or twice, then attendance would fall away.”

McDougall says projects like this need residents to feel a sense of connection—and autonomy. “You have to immerse yourself in a community,” he says, “before you figure out how to fix what you think is wrong.”

The millions of dollars produced plenty of housing and other tangible “deliverables” that foundations and government agencies like to see. Where the coalition fell short was preparing local residents to build on the project’s successes. A 2001 Enterprise Foundation report noted that “lasting social change” requires a “shift in power—one that allows residents to mobilize resources, influence rules, and control the institutions that affect their lives.” That didn’t happen in Sandtown.

“You have to immerse yourself in a community before you figure out how to fix what you think is wrong.”

- *Howard University law professor Harold McDougall*

Instead, the report found, the more powerful players in the partnership “viewed the community structure as weak.” They gradually shifted away from community building and tried to push changes through more quickly. Residents, increasingly left out of the process, wondered why results were so slow to materialize. There was new housing, but not enough new economic opportunity. Over time, “mistrust and resentment” grew.

“By not investing in indigenous organizations or using them strategically,” the report said, the project “missed an opportunity to build grassroots capacity and ownership—elements that are crucial for long-term success.”





Elder Clyde Harris founded Newborn Holistic Ministries, an organization rebuilding Sandtown from within.

In 2013, sociologists Stefanie DeLuca and Peter Rosenblatt evaluated the project and found that the needle had moved in Sandtown, but it moved both ways. Elementary school student achievement improved, but Sandtown students' gains trailed those of other comparable neighborhoods in the city. Crime dipped, but it dipped across the city, too. The poverty rate dropped eight percentage points, but it dropped as much or more in Greenmount East and Penn North/Reservoir Hill.

One of the most promising indicators was the homeownership rate, which rose from 24 percent in 1990 to 36 percent in 2009—yet even that came with a downside. “The increase in homeownership looked significant,” DeLuca says, “but it seems to have made some homeowners vulnerable.” When the real estate market collapsed, Sandtown had more foreclosures than any other neighborhood in the study: more than 350 between 2008 and 2010.

One-third of Sandtown's housing units sit vacant today, according to DeLuca and Rosenblatt. There are no bank branches here. Only one in twenty Sandtown adults has any college education at all. One in ten is on parole or probation. Life expectancy is only 65 years. (Just a few miles away in Roland Park,

it's 83 years.) In the hundred days after the April 27 riot, the neighborhood saw fourteen shootings and three homicides.

Whatever its progress since 1989, Sandtown still looks from the outside like a neighborhood in desperate need of a major transformation.

**E**lder Clyde Harris looks out the window of his third-floor office at Newborn Holistic Ministries. There, at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue, North Fremont Avenue, and Presstman Street, he sees a triangle park with a fountain and beautiful landscaping. But it wasn't always this way. "We call this 'Resurrection Intersection,'" Harris says. "I wish you had seen this back in 1996, brother. I walked across the street here, and there was a gang war."

Newborn Holistic Ministries and its partner, New Song Community Church, have a major footprint in the northern half of Sandtown. There is an innovative pre-K to 8th grade school called New Song Academy, an arts center, an addiction recovery home, and an urban farm that employs five neighborhood residents. Sandtown Habitat for Humanity, which was created by New Song founders Allan Tibbels, Susan Tibbels, and Mark Gornik and merged in 2014 with Habitat for Humanity Chesapeake, has now finished more than 300 homes.

The leaders of these homegrown efforts got some momentum in the 1990s from the Schmoke/Rouse project, and they're happy to work with the government to bring resources to the area, but there is a palpable skepticism of outsiders. It's not that outsiders aren't welcome or that their help isn't needed. But there are high expectations. New Song follows a model called "Christian Community Development" that encourages middle-class whites and African Americans to move to the community.

"You don't find many," says Harris. "There's a dedication, what we call a lifelong commitment for those who relocate, and lifelong is to see a child from birth through college."

New Song seeks "returners," or locals who rode their success to more affluent neighborhoods, and "relocators" who grew up in more stable com-



munities. If white folks want to start a program in the neighborhood, they're expected to tap someone from the neighborhood as a co-director.

"That, to me, is the way to go," says Prudence Brown, a consultant with a long background in "comprehensive community initiatives" who co-authored the 2001 Enterprise evaluation of the Schموke/Rouse project in Sandtown. "I'm attracted to the New Song philosophy. You need relationships and local leadership to have anything happen of major import."

But resources are meager compared with the need. There might be 300 Habitat houses in Sandtown, but there are more than 800 vacants. With unemployment so high—22.7 percent as of 2013—many Sandtown residents can't even picture aspiring to homeownership. And in contrast to the 1990s, public investment in even basic services is sorely lacking.

"We can't even get sanitation workers to come through a couple times a week and empty trash cans," says Ray Kelly of the No Boundaries Coalition, a community association that includes Sandtown and nearby neighborhoods of different racial and economic makeups. "We actually don't have trash cans on most of our corners. Most of the bus stops don't have benches. It's hard to convince people that we can make change, that things can get better, when they see things like this."

Residents are trying to organize themselves to attract more outside resources. The Sandtown Resident Action Committee recently became active after a period of dormancy, and this summer it merged with a new group, Sandtown-Winchester United, that has been holding frequent meetings since the death of Freddie Gray. But there is nothing in the pipeline even close to the scale of what happened in the 1990s.

"What does it take, realistically, to change the real estate and human capital and all the social systems that neighborhoods need?" asks Diane Bell-McKoy, the president and CEO of Associated Black Charities, who was involved in the earlier transformation initiative as an aide to Mayor Schموke. "What is the price for that?"

Clearly it's more than \$130 million. Bell-McKoy points to East Baltimore

Development Inc., where she served on the board until resigning last year. EBDI has spent \$546 million of a planned \$1.5 billion to transform (displace, some would say) a poor black community that, unlike Sandtown, has a major university anchor in Johns Hopkins. Mike Kelly, executive director of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, says EBDI is having a spillover effect in the nearby Oliver neighborhood, attracting developers with private capital. “It’s created a housing market where one didn’t exist,” Kelly says.

However, the statistics in the area encompassing Oliver and EBDI still look much like Sandtown’s: A third of residential properties were vacant in 2013, and poverty rates were above 30 percent.

Mike Kelly and Prudence Brown suspect any transformation of Sandtown will take generations to unfold. “The conditions in these places were not created overnight,” Kelly says, “and they won’t be solved that way.”

And whatever happens to spark that transformation will have to extend beyond the borders of Sandtown.

**A**round the same time that Schmoke, Rouse, and their coalition were trying to rebuild Sandtown, an effort was under way to improve the prospects of poor African Americans by moving them out of the inner city.

In 1992, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) launched “Moving to Opportunity,” an experiment that gave vouchers to Baltimore public housing residents to use in the private market in low-poverty neighborhoods. A similar experiment in Chicago two decades earlier had moved black families from public housing to more racially integrated private housing, mostly in the suburbs, with some success.

Early research on the Moving to Opportunity experiment was disappointing, showing some benefits for health, but not much for wealth. An August 2015 study led by Harvard economist Raj Chetty, however, compared children who moved to the suburbs through the program in the 1990s to a control group and found higher college attendance rates and \$3,500 in extra annual earnings.

Today, the “mobility” approach is getting new life, thanks to two federal





Hobbled by a criminal record, George Norfleet has been unemployed for stretches as long as 18 months.

court rulings. In January 2005, a federal judge ruled that it would be impossible “to effect a meaningful degree of desegregation of public housing by redistributing the public housing population of Baltimore City within the City limits.” He directed HUD to deal with Baltimore public housing regionally. As a result, the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program is helping hundreds of poor families settle in affluent suburbs.

The second ruling came in June, when the Supreme Court sided with fair-housing advocates who argued that a Texas housing agency had violated the Fair Housing Act when it denied tax credits for affordable housing developments in white parts of the Dallas region. Two weeks later, HUD announced a new rule that puts more pressure on governments to comply with

fair housing rules, meaning that more families of color may soon be able to find affordable housing in “communities of opportunity.”

It’s progress. Research shows that poor, inner city neighborhoods can be difficult to escape: A recent study by New York University sociologist Patrick Sharkey found that “over 70 percent of African Americans who live in today’s poorest, most racially segregated neighborhoods are from the same families that lived in the ghettos of the 1970s.”

Providing a way out from places like Sandtown, however, doesn’t do much for the people left behind. Recognizing this, a regional consortium of county governments, nonprofits, and universities has a plan that could begin to bridge the gap between increasing mobility and investing in underserved communities. Called the Opportunity Collaborative, the group used a HUD grant to create a development plan for the Baltimore region.

The aim is to coordinate housing, workforce, and transportation policy to create a more sustainable, inclusive economy, says the Baltimore Metropolitan Council’s Kelly, who spearheaded the project.

The plan, released in May, suggests investing in areas, mostly clustered in Howard and Anne Arundel counties, that are already integrated racially and economically, and working to create more areas like them. But places like Sandtown may require a different approach, Kelly says: “If we can’t bring more opportunity to people, we want to connect them to opportunity outside the neighborhood.”

Sandtown workers have the longest average commute in the city, according to the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance. That burden can be alleviated, Kelly says, with better transit and by training residents for the kind of jobs that can be reached with our existing transit system.

The burden of the current system becomes obvious watching George and Phebe Norfleet scrambling around the region every day between 4 and 6 a.m. But as they know all too well, the long commutes aren’t the only factor keeping opportunity out of Sandtown’s reach. During the 1980s and 1990s, George ran drug shops in South Baltimore. He has stayed out



of trouble since he came home in 2003 from his second prison term for dealing drugs and violating probation, yet his criminal record has made finding work difficult.

George has been unemployed for stretches as long as eighteen months. Recalling one such period, he says, “I sat back behind a computer shooting out resumés like a quarterback, but nothing was being caught.”

The Opportunity Collaborative found that one out of five job seekers in the region lists a criminal record as a barrier to employment. In neighborhoods like Sandtown, small decisions made in other parts of the region can make a big difference to those facing barriers like a criminal record or inefficient public transportation.

“What does it take, realistically, to change the real estate and human capital and all the social systems that neighborhoods need? What is the price for that?”

- *Associated Black Charities CEO Diane Bell-McKoy*

George’s temp agency, Kelly Services, is willing to take on ex-offenders. Not long after Phebe started at GBMC, the Maryland Transit Administration began sending the 11 bus onto GBMC’s campus rather than dropping passengers off on Charles Street, which saves Phebe 20 to 30 minutes of walking and a dash across six lanes of 40-mile-an-hour traffic. The hospital allows Phebe to work either from 6 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. or 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., which keeps her out of trouble if one of her buses runs late.

Maybe those small decisions were made with racial equity as an explicit goal. Maybe not. But transforming the region from one that keeps producing segregation and inequality to one that offers opportunity will require asking questions about racial equity at all levels of policymaking, says Diane Bell-McKoy. “Is that what the residents want?” she asks. “Do we know

it'll make a difference? Who was on the ground as part of the protests who can inform us?"

**A**t 4:53 a.m., Phebe Norfleet spies two wide-set headlights coming south on Fulton, and she crosses the avenue's six lanes to catch her bus. With Sandtown so dark and the bus so bright and empty, the windows only reflect a chaotic web of yellow handrails.

After a few minutes, the lights of downtown cut through, and at 5:10 a.m., Phebe steps off the bus at Charles and Baltimore streets. Behind the bus stop, three homeless people sleep beneath the four-story Ionic columns of the old Savings Bank of Baltimore. At 5:16 a.m., the northbound bus pulls up. Phebe sees some regulars onboard: There's Miss Annabel, a GBMC co-worker, and a woman who works at Sheppard Pratt.

Several minutes later, the bus approaches North Avenue, and Phebe smiles. One recent morning, George had surprised her at this stop. His Pepsi shift had ended early, and as he walked west on North Avenue, he called Phebe to see where her bus was. When the bus stopped at North Avenue, George got on, planted a kiss on her, and got back off.

The bus rumbles north for another fifteen minutes. At 5:43 a.m., the dimmest dawn breaks. Through a green-gray smudge of fog, a street sign emerges: Bellona Avenue. Baltimore County. The bus continues past the brick duplexes of Rodgers Forge, where many Baltimore City parents migrate to raise their families and keep their children out of the city's underperforming public schools. Then Phebe heads up Charles Street, past the patch of deep woods enveloping the lavish homes of Ruxton. Then a right turn for GBMC. Just after 6 a.m., the bus stops, and Phebe disappears into a crowd of employees entering the front door of the hospital.

A hospital is a place where all lives matter, where people from all over the region work together to make those lives as long and healthy as possible. At 2:30 p.m., Phebe will walk out those doors and wait for another bus to take her back to a place that most people here in Baltimore would rather not think about, a place where lives are constantly at risk, a place where people, nearly all of them black, are trying to convince the rest of the world that their lives matter at all. ■



# The Making of a Ghetto

## BALTIMORE TRIES DRASTIC PLAN OF RACE SEGREGATION

Strange Situation Which Led the Oriole City to Adopt the Most Pronounced "Jim Crow" Measure on Record.



Councilman Samuel L. West, Who Introduced the Segregation Ordinance.

ON last Monday, Dec. 19, the City Council of Baltimore passed and the Mayor signed what was probably the most remarkable ordinance ever entered upon the records of town or city of this country; certain it is that it is unique in legislation, Federal, State, or municipal—an ordinance so far-reaching in the logical sequence that it may be said to mark a new era in social legislation.

For this ordinance seeks to compel by law the separation of the white and black races in their places of residence; to prohibit the negro from intruding himself and his family as permanent residents in a district already dedicated to the white race, and equally, to prevent the white man from forcing himself upon a district given over to the negro.

This ordinance, shorn of its legal verbiage, provides as follows:

1. That no negro may take up his residence in a block within the city limits of Baltimore wherein more than half the residents are white.
2. That no white person may take up his residence in a block wherein more than half the residents are negroes.
3. That whenever building is commenced in a new city block the builder or contractor must specify in his application for a permit for which race the proposed house or houses are intended.

These are the affirmative mandates of the ordinance. It is further provided that present conditions shall not be disturbed—that is, that negroes resident at the time of the passage of the ordinance in a block wherein the majority of the residents are white shall not be disturbed, and vice versa. A penal clause is attached providing for violation of the law a fine of \$500 as a maximum, with imprisonment from thirty days to one year.

Now, it may be said that this is not a new departure in legislation, that numerous acts providing for the segregation of the races in street cars, schools, theatres, and other public places have in many States been passed and upheld as legal by the final court. But herein lies the difference between such laws and the Baltimore ordinance: The former are special, designating certain places of particular character; the Baltimore ordinance includes everything, without regard to the character. The former are temporary, as it were, in their nature; the Baltimore ordinance is pronounced permanent. In short, while the Baltimore ordinance may be technically of the same class of legislation as these other laws, it goes beyond



George W. McMechen, a Negro Lawyer, Whose Occupancy of the House 1,834 McCulloh Street, Caused the Segregation Ordinance.

follow when the colored family would move into a neighborhood that had hitherto been exclusively inhabited by white people. That such depreciation does of necessity follow we of Baltimore have learned after years of hard and sad experience. There is no theory about that proposition; a negro owning property in an exclusively white neighborhood would no more think of occupying or leasing that property to another negro than a white man would—simply because he knows that such an act would result in the depreciation of the value of his property perhaps one-half. There are several instances of this kind of which I know.

Our problem here in Baltimore is different from that in any other city in the country. In the Far South the negroes would never dream of pushing their way into the white residential districts and intruding themselves upon the dwellers there. What the result of such action would be, if such were taken, I presume the readers of THIS ISSUE are about as

tempt to worm their way into the white residential districts, but for years all their efforts were fruitless. During the last few years, however, they have been more successful; several streets, formerly white residential streets, have been given over to them, because as soon as the negro appears the white man moves away. Druid Hill Avenue, a few years ago a white residential street, is now

vision which granted practically plenary power to the City Government in the matter of exercising its police power. The following is the provision under which the ordinance was drawn:

"Police Power: To pass ordinances for preserving order and securing property and persons from violence, danger and destruction, protecting the public and city privileges from waste or encroach-

of the city appeared and declared in its favor. The opposition appeared in the shape of about twenty negroes. Later in the month there were two more hearings. And between the first and last hearings there seems to have been quite a deal of excitement throughout the Oriole City by reason thereof. And well there might be, for it was a ticklish business, this of trying on such a novel legislative



Mayor J. Barry Mahool of Baltimore.

practically given up to the negro, because as the negro came in the white man got out. The races cannot live together.

It was on McCulloh Street, however, a white residential street parallel to Druid Hill Avenue, that the circumstances arose which culminated in the present drastic ordinance. This street had been kept free of the negro. Early last May,



Milton Dashiell, Author of the Ordinance.

said, "that even the best of the well-to-do colored people should invade our residential districts. I am sure the colored race has no better friend than I and those situated as I am. From my earliest recollection my feeling for the race has been one associated with affection; my old negro 'mammy,' my little nurse-girl playmate, all are among my happiest recollections.

"But the idea of their assuming to live next door to me is abhorrent. I am sure no good can come of it to them. They will be lonesome up here away from the rest of their kind. It is a sad thing, and I do hope there will be found some way to put a stop to it. I would hate at my time of life, after living so many years in such pleasant relations with the darker, as all my family always have, to be compelled to change my ideas upon the subject."

City Solicitor Edgar Allan Poe.

some places to separate the two races, and in others to allow them to mingle. The answer is simple.

It is because in certain communities the maintenance of public order and the general welfare do not require or render proper or reasonable the separation of the two races, while in other communities a proper regard for public order and the general welfare render such separation necessary.

All the reasons of the Courts upholding legislation for the separation of the races, when analyzed are found to be based upon the assumption that because of irrefutable facts, well-known conditions, inherent personal characteristics, and ineradicable traits of racial character, close association on a footing of absolute equality is utterly impossible between them wherever negroes exist in large numbers in a white community, and such association invariably leads to irritation, friction, disorder, and strife.

The separation of the races enforced by law in public schools, on railroad trains, in the street cars, and in public places is founded on and supported by solely the considerations which I have just mentioned.

Why should the State put itself to the extra expense of providing separate schools for the colored race? Why should common carriers be put to the extra expense of providing separate accommodations for the colored race? Why should marriage between the races be prohibited unless it be that because in the communities where such legislation prevails the people actually know and correctly be-

This much for those who advocate the ordinance and would restrain the negro from living in juxtaposition to the white. As to the other side of the question, none could be better qualified to speak than George W. McMechen, the negro lawyer whose occupancy of the premises at 1,834 McCulloh Street practically precipitated the whole matter into the form of the present ordinance. He is a native of Wheeling, West Va., and after being graduated in the academic course from Morgan College, Baltimore, in 1885, took the law course at Yale, whence he obtained his degree of B. A. in 1887. He is one of the most successful of the negro members of the Baltimore bar.

For some time the white people of Baltimore have objected to all attempts of the colored people of the city to better their opportunities by moving into respectable localities," he said to THE TRIBUNE representative, "and it seems as though this spirit became more pronounced last Spring in different sections of the city, when it was rumored that certain colored families were going to move into the West La. Fayette Avenue neighborhood, a district exclusively white. The citizens of that district, as well as others, organized associations to prevent colored people from moving there."

Nothing ever came of the West La. Fayette Avenue affair, however. Whether because the colored families changed their minds voluntarily or were intimidated, I do not know. Affairs like this have been going on for years intermittently, but, as I say, the feeling was never so strong as it appeared to be last Spring.



To understand why Sandtown's problems are so persistent, look back to 1911, when a city ordinance banned black families from white blocks and white families from black blocks. The ordinance was white Baltimore's way of putting black Baltimore under quarantine. Progressive reformers cited unhealthy conditions in black slums, but the quarantine was just as much about containing crime and depressed property values.

When the U.S. Supreme Court struck down segregation ordinances in 1917, government policy and real estate practices continued to perpetuate segregation. Most famously, the federal government "redlined" black communities, cutting off access to credit even as it offered mortgage guarantees in suburban, white communities. (For a defining chronicle of Baltimore's racially divided real estate market, read Antero Pietila's book *Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City*.)



The quarantine boundary only broke with the advent of “blockbusting.” Speculators bought homes for bargain prices from whites fleeing the city, and then charged black families, who had been penned into small and increasingly crowded areas, an arm and a leg to move in. In Sandtown, the blockbusters’ first target was the street Phebe crosses every morning to catch her south-bound bus: Fulton Avenue, a rigid black-white boundary until the mid-1940s. (Phebe’s own house passed through the hands of Robert Leavitt and Herbert Kaufman, two speculators who appear in Pietila’s book.)

Over the next few decades, exclusionary housing policies outside the city helped keep low-income black families in black communities. A 1971 report by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights noted that development in Baltimore County during the 1960s “functioned to substantially reduce housing opportunities for low-income, predominantly (but not exclusively) black households.” At the time, close to 200 families were moving into Baltimore’s public housing from outside the city each year, but the city’s poor had no options in the suburbs. “It is a one-way street,” Baltimore City housing commissioner Robert Embry (now president of the Abell Foundation) told the *Baltimore Sun*.

Right on through the 1970s, the region’s white power structure evinced a clear belief, just as it had in 1911, that integration was a financial risk. Home values in black communities appreciated at a lower rate than those in white communities, creating a racial wealth gap. In neighborhoods like Sandtown, residents watched deindustrialization decimate low-skill jobs while mid-skill jobs moved to suburbia. They watched drugs flood their communities, they watched the War on Drugs flood their communities with aggressive police, and they watched their sons flood the prisons.

The situation is reinforced today by zoned city schools that reflect the poverty and segregation of their neighborhoods, by the policing of a regional illicit drug market that takes root among concentrated poverty, and by policies that discourage affordable housing in the suburbs. In the past two years, elected officials in both Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties voted to effectively shut down plans for low-income housing developments.

More than 100 years after Baltimore passed its pioneering segregation ordinance, the quarantine analogy holds.



**We believe:**

**Every child is a naturally enthusiastic learner.  
Every child is an imaginative thinker.**



***Roots & Branches School brings this belief to an academic curriculum that integrates visual art, music, movement, and creative expression into all subjects. Students develop a love of learning – and they excel – with our inquiry-driven, project-based approach.***

Now accepting applications for K-5th grade.

Contact us at:

info@rootsandbranchesschool.org or  
443-642-2320 to schedule a personal tour.

***Applications due: February 11, 2016***

***Lottery: February 17, 2016***

**443-642-2320    [www.randbschool.org](http://www.randbschool.org)  
1807 Harlem Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21217**



**ROOTS &  
BRANCHES  
SCHOOL**

*Creatively exploring the arts & sciences*





# Songs in a Key Called Baltimore

by Karsonya Wise Whitehead



I would like to write a song about peace/about reconciliation/about a city coming back together and working for the common good.

I would like to proclaim that #BlackLivesMatter and then point to the ways in which this simple concept/screamed and shouted, cried over and prayed about/has transformed the city and altered our space.

I would like to teach my sons about peace even though I am raising them in a city where peace has never been the norm/where peace is not taught on the playground/nor practiced in the school/nor modeled on the street corner.

I try and hide my frustration because in the aftermath of the Uprising/a time when black and white people named their pain/life has settled back down to the familiar/to a time where black bodies are once again endangered, black life is once again criminalized, and black spaces exist, once again, only on the edges of both the city and our minds.

I am not old enough to remember life before Brown v Board, when black and white spaces were clearly marked.

I suspect (though) that it was not much different than it is now in places around Baltimore and places across America where the crime of breathing while black is still punishable by death.

My heart always skips a beat when a cop's car is behind me while I am driving at night/ And though my sons are not old enough to drive, I am already frightened/concerned/angry/frustrated as I think about the day when they will be stopped for the crime of driving while black.

There are days when being black in America overwhelms me and makes me want to spend the day in bed/and times when being the black mother of black boys in Baltimore City makes me wish I had enough money to move them somewhere where I could keep them safe.

Safe from them—the ones who see their lives as expendable and unnecessary/and safe from us—those who look at them without realizing that they are mirrors that simply reflect all of who we are supposed to be.

I often think about slavery and how different life was when you could see the hand that held the chain that was attached to the ball that was tied to your ankle.

We come from a people who experienced this daily and still chose to survive.

Survival is our legacy.

And since we survived the Middle Passage as involuntary passages on a trip that sealed our fate/ And we survived slavery, whips and latches by learning how to give way and stay small/ And we survived the Civil War by claiming freedom at the hands of those who looked like our oppressors/ And we survived Jim Crow by teaching our children the unwritten rules that were marked by our blood/ And we survived black mayors who moved from our communities, took a piece of our spirit but left their humanity behind—we will survive this.

And though there are times when we are like strangers in a foreign land/We look around and wonder how we got here/We take stock and realize how little we actually have/We wonder how long we will continue to suffer and die at the hands of both the oppressor and of the oppressed—and despite all of this, we survive anyway.

There are days when I look at my sons and my heart swells with pride/ As I think about all that they used to be and all that they can become/ And then I stop and catch my breath/ I grab my chest and clutch my pearls/ I blink back tears and shake my head/because I am the mother of two black boys being raised in a post-racial world/where cries for justice for Freddie and for Tyrone West and for Rekia Boyd and for Sandra Bland and for Aiyanna Jones and for Tamir Rice still get swallowed up and suppressed.



There are nights when I stand in the doorway of their room—not to wake them up for the revolution but to simply remind myself that, just for a moment, they are still safe and they are still here.

All I want is what every other mother wants around this city—the simple comfort of knowing that my sons’ lives matter—to those who look like them and those who don’t/and that my work, to pour love, light, and truth into them, will not be in vain.

And with this very simple truth/as my songs of peace get lost in my never-ending cries for justice, I know we will survive. We will rebuild. We will move on. Survival is our legacy and surviving everyday—in this racist and unjust system—is our goal.

## **Karsonya Wise Whitehead**

is an associate professor at Loyola University Maryland and the author of *Letters to My Black Sons: Raising Boys in a Post-Racial America*.

## **About the photograph**

In the summer of 2015, photographer Noah Scialom dropped off a box of donated point-and-shoot cameras at the newly opened Penn North Kids Safe Zone in Sandtown-Winchester and “let the kids run wild with as little instruction as possible,” he says. To see a gallery of their images, go to [urbanitebaltimore.com](http://urbanitebaltimore.com).



*here's to our city!*

# WE STAND WITH BALTIMORE

**WOODBERRY KITCHEN** ◊

2010 Clipper Park Rd  
410.464.8000

TRADEMARK  
**PARTS & LABOR**  
BALTIMORE

2600 N Howard St  
443.873.8887

**ARTIFACT -COFFEE-**

1500 Union Ave  
410.235.1881

GRAND  
**CRU**

527 E Belvedere Ave  
410.464.1944

LA  
CUCHARA



Cuisine and cocktails inspired by the Basque region



Meadow Mill, 3600 Clipper Mill Road, Baltimore MD | [www.lacucharabaltimore.com](http://www.lacucharabaltimore.com)



# FIX the CITY



ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM CHALKLEY

We went in search of the best solutions to the problems that lie at the root of the unrest: poverty, racism, disempowerment. Here's what we learned—from local luminaries, academics, and experts, and from Baltimoreans who took the time to share their thoughts at [urbanitebaltimore.com](http://urbanitebaltimore.com).

**FIX the CITY**

**GO TO JAIL**  
MISS 3 TURNS AWAITING CHARGES

**YOU LOSE THE LOTTERY!**  
PLAY AGAIN. AND AGAIN. AND AGAIN.

**GOVERNOR CANCELS RED LINE**  
MOVE BACK 2 SPACES

**CITY BUILDS MEANINGFUL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**  
JUST KIDDING! MOVE TO COUNTY

**YOU WIN CONTRACT FOR CITY'S RED-LIGHT CAMERAS**  
MOVE AHEAD 2 SPACES

**TAX BREAK!**  
CITY PAYS YOU TO DEVELOP YOUR PROPERTY

**MURDER RATE SPIKES**  
TIME TO CHANGE THE City Slogan!

**"BELIEVE"**  
YOUR SLOGAN HERE!

**"GET IN ON IT!"**

**"The City That Reads"**

**WELCOME TO Baltimore!**  
Bowling, Hon!

**THE GREATEST CITY IN AMERICA**  
Baltimore is Best

**FOOD TRUCK EXPLOSION**  
RUINS STREET FESTIVAL  
LOSE TURN PICKING GUISNA OUT OF BEARD

**WATERFRONT CONDOS!**  
LOSE FIVE BLUE-COLLAR JOBS

**BILLIONAIRE UNDERWEAR MAGNATE INVITES YOU TO HIS BIODOME**

**CASINO OPEN!**  
HIRING, HIRING!

**CASINO FALLING!**  
FIRING, FIRING!

**NO THAT'S THE OTHER BALTIMORE**

**ROLL DICE TO BEGIN!**  
EVEN: YOU ARE "BLACK"  
ODD: YOU ARE "WHITE"  
CONTINUE AS TWO BALTIMORES OR PROGRESS AS ONE BALTIMORE?

**WHITE PEOPLE gentryify your poor white neighborhood**  
LOSE TURN arguing about privilege

**WIN THE CHARTER SCHOOL LOTTERY**  
SKIP AHEAD 3

**YOU GET SPONSORS TO PAY YOU TO PAINT YOUR LOGO AS "MURALS" IN 20 NEIGHBORHOODS**  
ADVANCE 20 SPACES.

**AFTERNOON AT INNER HARBOR**  
LOSE A TURN DENYING YOU ENJOYED IT

**A DAY IN THE PARK**  
LOSE A TURN GET BACK IN THE GAME

**PREFER SQUIRRELS TO RATS**

**CAN'T AFFORD PRIVATE SCHOOL FOR KIDS**

**TAXES TOO DAMN HIGH**

**MOVING TO THE COUNTY**

**BECAUSE**

**NOT FEELING PRIVILEGED ENOUGH**

**JUST A RACIST**

**LOSE TURN EXPLAINING THE TWO BALTIMORES**

**MAYOR APPOINTS NEW POLICE COMMISSIONER**  
CONTINUE PLAY UNAFFECTED

**DRUG DEALER ON YOUR BLOCK**

**LOSE PARKING SPACES TO 'VISITORS' FROM COUNTY**

**SLIP HIM YOUR FAN-FICTION "WIRE" SCRIPT**

**CALL 311**

**TAKE A SELFIE WITH HIM**

**CHECK ZILLOW TO SEE HOW MUCH YOUR HOME VALUE HAS DROPPED**

**GO TO REPORT MUGGING, FIND POLICE STATION LOCKED.**  
GO BACK 5 SPACES

**UH-OH! you live in a FOOD DESERT**  
GOT DIABETES? JUNK FOOD AVAILABLE!

**MUGGED ON YOUR STREET.**  
MISS 2 TURNS WAITING FOR POLICE.

**MAYOR SWIMS IN FISH TANK**  
I SPELL ARTISTS!

**SPECULATORS DISCOVER YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD**

**ARTISTS DISCOVER YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD**  
SIX DOLLARS  
FRIES ARE NOW CALLED "FRITES"

**WAIT 3 TURNS FOR WHITES TO GET A HEAD START**

**YOUR GRANDMA IN OHIO DISCOVERS 'THE WIRE'**  
LOSE TURN EXPLAINING THE TWO BALTIMORES

**YOUR FACE-OFF WITH GERALDO RIVERA GOES VIRAL**  
ADVANCE 3 SPACES

**YOUR RED-LIGHT CAMERAS SUCK! BUT THAT'S OK, HERE'S ANOTHER CITY CONTRACT**

**DAVID SIMON IS SCOUTING LOCATIONS FOR NEW MINI-SERIES ON YOUR BLOCK! WHAT DO YOU DO?**

**HOPKINS SELLS YOUR GENETIC CODE**  
MOVE AHEAD 10 SPACES 40 YEARS AFTER YOU DIE

**RED LINE COMING!**  
MOVE AHEAD THREE SPACES

**HIGHWAY TO NOWHERE**  
MOVE BACK ONE SPACE

**THE OTHER BALTIMORE**

**CHARMING.....+4**  
**UNPRETENTIOUS.....+3**  
**SHOT-AND-A-BEER.....+2**  
**RESILIENT.....+1**  
**GRITTY.....0**  
**HARDSCRABBLE.....-1**  
**EMBATTLED.....-2**  
**VIOLENCE-PLAGUED.....-3**  
**DYSFUNCTIONAL.....-4**  
**DYSTOPIAN.....-5**  
**DOOMED.....-6**

**SAVE CITY WITH GRAND PRIZ**  
DRIVE BACK THREE SPACES, CUT DOWN EVERY OTHER TREE

**HOPKINS 'SAVES' YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD**

**LEAVE NEIGHBORHOOD**

**INCREASES TOURISM IN 4-BLOCK RADIUS, IGNORES BLACK NEIGHBORHOODS FOR 30 YEARS**

**Writers: J. MACLEOD, J. MEYER, D. DUDLEY, T. CHALKLEY**



# 1 **Make Black Neighborhoods Matter**

When Baltimore erupted in flames on April 27, it seemed that the apocalypse had come. But there was no apocalypse. What transpired was a flesh-and-blood uprising against a city that must come to terms with the devastation of policies and practices that are traumatizing residents living in disinvested Black neighborhoods. To begin to heal, Baltimoreans must become intimately aware of the forces that shaped our city. Then we must act decisively to undo those policies and practices.

Our sickness should be clear by now. It has been well documented by historians and activists such as Antero Pietila, Marisela Gomez, Arnold Hirsch, and Garrett Power. In the early twentieth century, Baltimore mayors, policy makers, and city residents laid the foundation for apartheid in this city, pioneering the use of racially restrictive housing covenants and institutionalizing racial housing discrimination. From the 1940s to the 1970s, city leaders enacted forced displacement (a.k.a. Negro Removal) via slum clearance, urban renewal, and highway construction projects. From the 1970s up to the present day, city leaders have pushed policies of waterfront redevelopment while allowing redlined Black communities to languish.

How can we undo the damage done by decades of segregation and forced displacement? We must invest heavily in disinvested Black neighborhoods. Investment means enforcing the Community Revitalization Act of 1977 and demanding equity in mortgage lending terms, eliminating discrimination Black homebuyers face. Investment also means funding and supporting policies that engender community control and prosperity: community land trusts for affordable housing, democratic community benefits districts for problem-solving, community-based policing for public safety, and worker-owned cooperatives (supported by our medical and educational anchor institutions) for economic sustainability. As a model for worker-owned cooperatives, we can use Cleveland's Evergreen Cooperative—a network of worker-owned businesses.

We must also push to affirmatively further fair housing by vigorously mandating inclusionary housing and by building quality, affordable public housing



in Roland Park, Guilford, Homeland, Canton, and the harbor area. The primary barriers to this are the stringent zoning policies and building codes that were written precisely to exclude the types of buildings that house lower-income people affordably. This means that before the city council passes Transform Baltimore, the new zoning code, we must write the code to allow more flexibility for quality, affordable public housing in "greenlined" communities.

Baltimore leaders allowed redlined communities to decay for over 100 years; it will take a dedicated, long-term effort of restorative justice to help make these communities whole. But by marshaling public and philanthropic funds toward a plan of reconstruction and reparations, we can create cooperative communities all across our city—communities that bring us together so we can heal and grow.

*—Dr. Lawrence Brown is an assistant professor of community health and policy, Morgan State University*

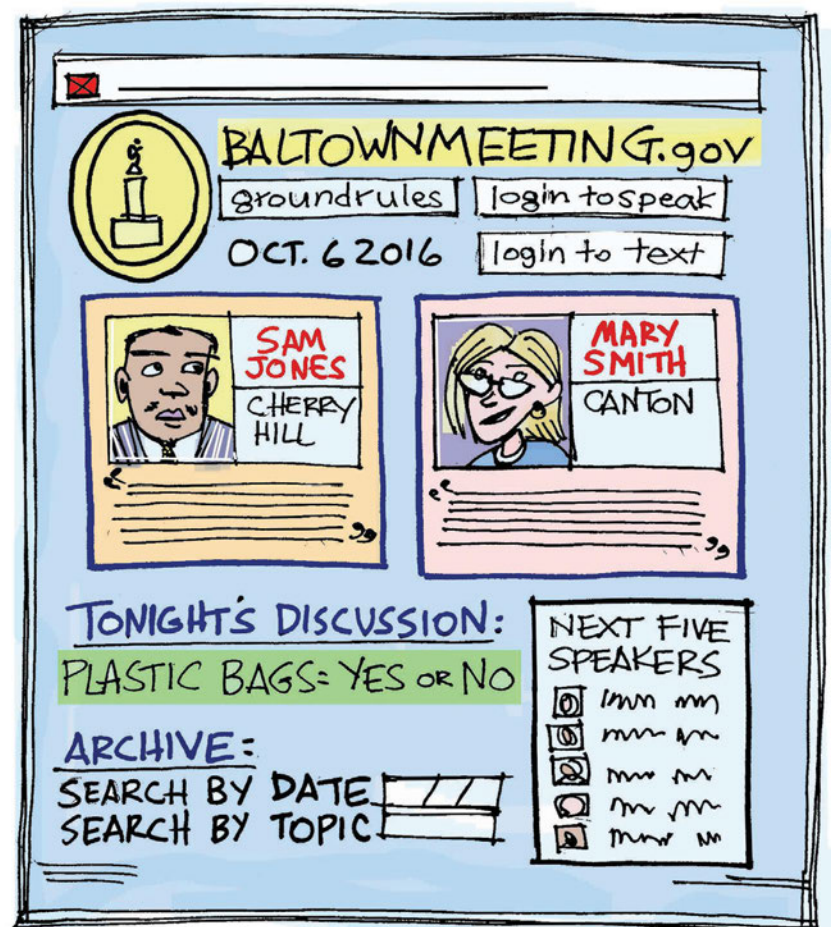
## 2 **Build a Digital Town Square**

There are plenty of silos in Baltimore, with its steady state of hyper-segregation. How do we break through them and allow ourselves to be influenced by the best ideas? One way is through civil engagement online.

This is why I launched CityExplainer, to live-stream community and public meetings for free to the public via my Web site and YouTube. I also launched the Facebook group Baltimore Election 2016, a closely moderated forum that is meant to be an alternative to the anonymous, bile-riddled forum of local newspapers' Web sites and is open only to city residents. (We don't need to waste time arguing with people who live in Pennsylvania and only know Baltimore through watching *The Wire*.) Other group moderators include several people who are passionate about our city, such as Dave Troy (410 Labs), Dennis McIver (The City That Breeds podcast) and Carol Ott (Baltimore Slumlord Watch). In a matter of weeks, the group topped 2,200 members.

Soon after, I launched the Baltimore City Schools and Maryland State Politics Facebook groups to act as central spots for these conversations on the biggest social network in the world. My hope is that we can create digital town squares for citizens who want to share, follow, and break news, and debate their views in civil ways. We also need to hold our political leaders accountable in public ways. We want transparency and accountability. We will get it, in part, through the smart and relentless use of these digital tools.

—Gus Sentementes is a former Baltimore Sun reporter and the founder of CityExplainer



### 3 Confront Police Bias

The problem is easy to name, hard to fix. “Implicit bias” is the term social scientists came up with to explain why otherwise well-meaning people engage in everyday acts of subconscious discrimination: why pediatricians give black and Hispanic kids lower doses of painkillers, for example, or why job applicants with black-sounding names land fewer job interviews than those with white-sounding names. It also plays a big role in why police officers (even black ones) are more likely to pull the trigger on dark-skinned suspects.

Implicit bias isn’t full-throated racism exactly, but it is an artifact of a society shaped by discrimination. And because it’s “not accessible through introspection,” according to researchers at the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at Ohio State University, it can be immune to the let’s-get-along bromides of diversity training.



But if we can't eliminate implicit bias, we can blunt its power to kill. That's what police in Las Vegas found when they instituted a series of reforms aimed at bringing down the number of use-of-force reports by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. The reforms were masterminded in part by the Center of Policing Equity, which applies social science to what co-founder Phillip Goff has termed "evidence-based social justice." Among their recommendations: An arrest policy called "No Hands On." If a police officer is pursuing a fleeing suspect, another officer must be the one to physically subdue the suspect and make the arrest. It's an acknowledgment that the first cop—exhausted from the chase and jacked-up on stress hormones—may not be in a good place mentally and will be more likely to make a bad, implicit bias-borne decision.

It's not yet clear whether such an approach would have spared Freddie Gray from the fatal treatment he received at the hands of the officers who chased and arrested him last April. But it's certainly easy to see how Michael Brown in Ferguson or Eric Garner in New York might still be alive. And in Las Vegas, the numbers tell a hopeful story: Between 2005, when the new policy went into effect, and 2013, use-of-force reports dropped by nearly half.

—David Dudley

## **4 Expand Voting Rights for Ex-Offenders**

At age 54, Perry Hopkins has never voted. He's an ex-felon who has served more than 19 years in prison, mostly for drug possession and distribution. Six months ago, he finished his parole sentence, which means that he'll be able to vote for the first time in the Baltimore mayoral race and the presidential primary this April.

The Maryland Constitution of 1851 barred felons from voting for life, a provision that disproportionately excluded African Americans from the ballot box. The Maryland General Assembly passed a law in 2007 that restored felons' voting rights after they completed parole and probation sentences.

But those sentences can drag on for years. Recognizing this, the General Assembly earlier this year overwhelmingly passed a bill that would have reinstated voting rights to former felons upon completion of their jail terms. But in May, Gov. Larry Hogan vetoed the bill, leaving forty thousand ex-felons, nearly two-thirds of whom are black, disenfranchised.

As Hopkins sees it, not much has changed since the days of Jim Crow. “I came home, and I wasn’t able to vote in elections on a local or a national level,” including Barack

Obama’s historic run for the presidency, he says. Now an organizer with Communities United, a Baltimore-based advocacy group for low- and moderate-income residents, he is a vocal figure in the movement against felon disenfranchisement.

Hopkins works with the residents of Gilmore Homes, where Freddie Gray lived. More than 60 percent of African American men who live in Gilmore have criminal records, he says, and most can’t vote because they’re still on parole or probation. The toll of that political disinvestment is clear: “For communities where the voter count is extra low, look at the environment: the grounds, the grass, the trees.”

Restoring the vote to ex-offenders would force the city to invest in neglected communities, Hopkins says, as well as contribute to stronger hiring policies, job creation, and re-entry programs. “If you give us the right to vote, we are going to use this to reform current discriminatory policies and gain our due respect as taxpayers,” he says. “Like a new bike, we can’t wait to ride this one.”

—Stephanie Shapiro



Straight time: Perry Hopkins battles to restore voting rights to felons who have served their sentences.



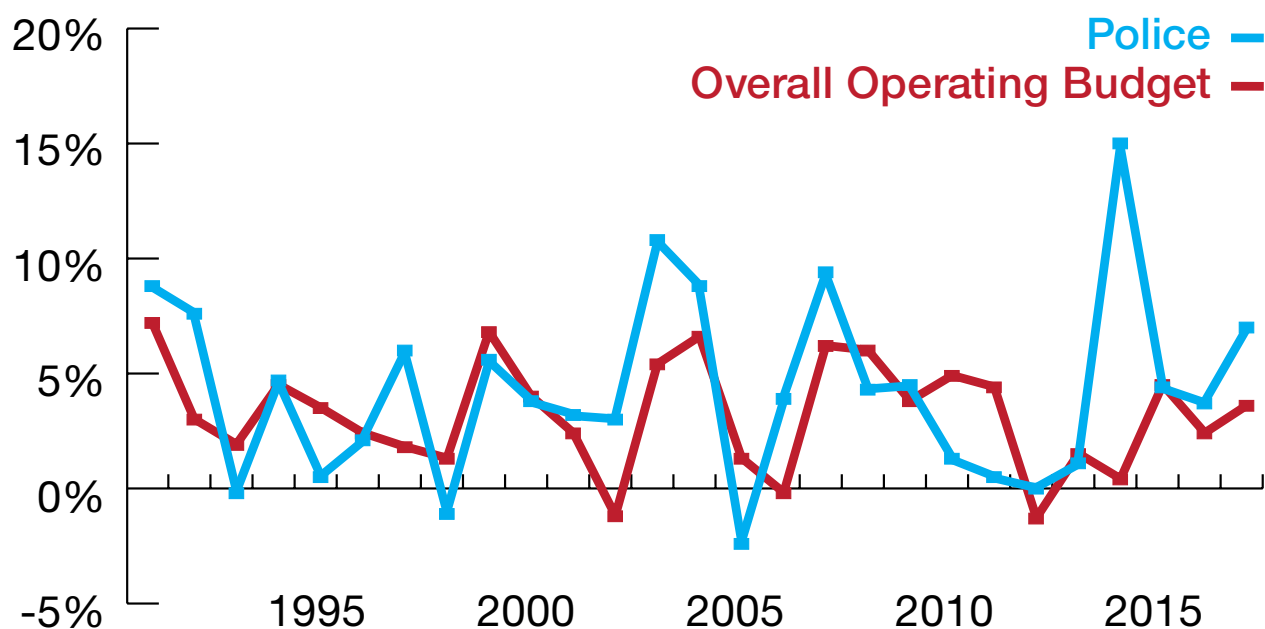
# 5

## Rewrite the Scarcity Narrative

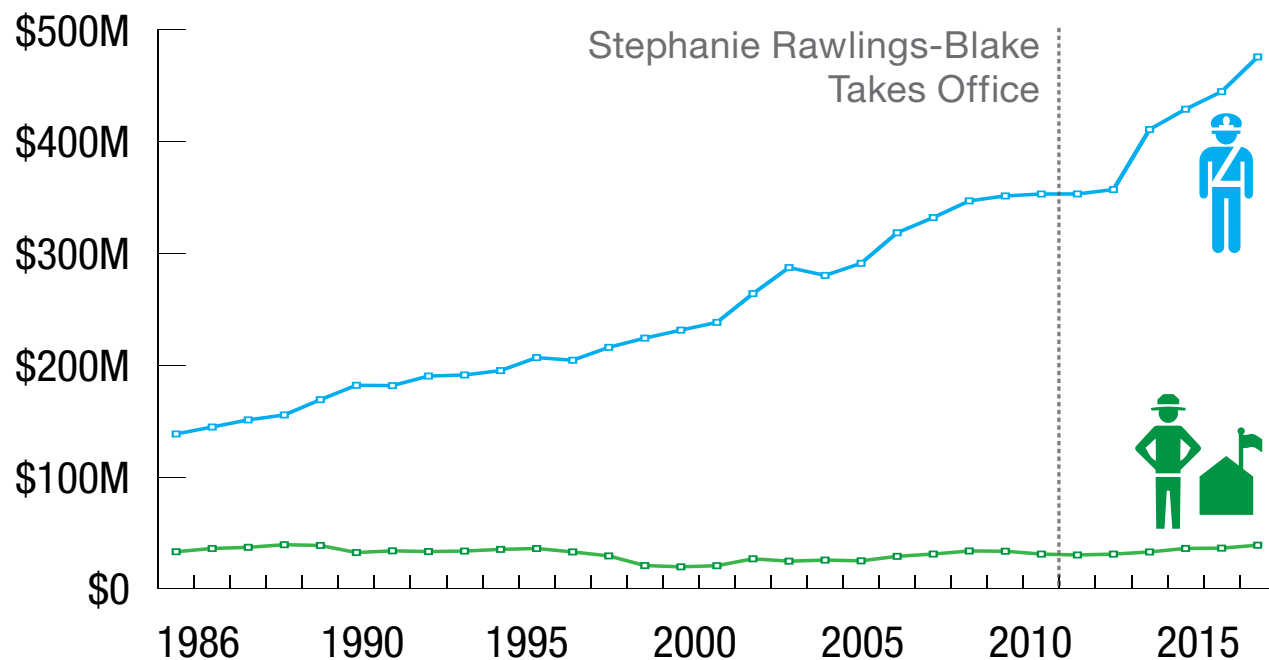
There's is a narrative of scarcity in this city. Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake has used it to justify closing and privatizing recreation centers, hosting the Grand Prix and Horseshoe Casino, and giving downtown developers public subsidies and tax breaks. In the past sixty years, Baltimore's population has fallen by nearly 35 percent. Tax dollars left the city, and now, the narrative goes, we must do anything and everything to bring in money.

Yet the narrative does not apply to all things equally. Funding for police has increased more under this mayor than any mayor in the past thirty years. While the city budget has increased 11 percent since Rawlings-Blake took office, the police budget has grown by 25 percent. In 2013, the overall city budget experienced no growth, but the police department's budget increased by 13 percent.

**PERCENT CHANGE IN BALTIMORE CITY'S  
OPERATING BUDGET AND POLICE BUDGET  
1990-2016**



## POLICE vs PARKS & REC BALTIMORE SPENDING, 1986 -2016



As the city was shutting and privatizing recreation centers, the police department's budget rose by \$54 million, or five times what it cost to run all of the city rec centers. The city could have tripled the rec center budget and still put more money into police.

In fact, the city's parks and recreation budget has experienced very little growth in the past thirty years.

This year, Baltimore City is spending \$5.7 million on police helicopters, \$8.7 million on its SWAT team, and \$45.6 million to "target violent criminals," above the \$248 million it spends on police patrol. The city spends more on police than on health, housing, and community development, arts and culture, employment development, and the library combined. The police department's budget rose \$31 million this year alone.

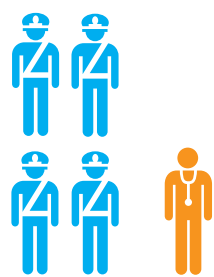
The next mayor could change that, shifting funds away from programs that criminalize people to those that support people. Cutting the SWAT team budget in half could quadruple the budget for Safe Streets, the violence preven-



## BALTIMORE SPENDS

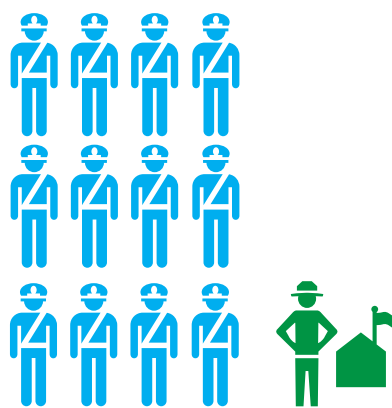
**4x**

more on Police  
than on Health



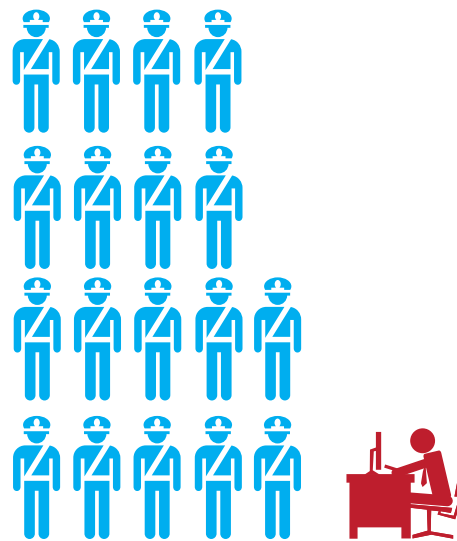
**12x**

more on Police than  
Parks and Recreation



**18x**

more on Police than  
on Job Development



tion program. One third of the money spent to “target violent criminals” could double the rec center budget. Five thousand additional youth could receive summer jobs if the city was willing to give up its four police helicopters.

Between the city budget, development dollars, and nonprofits and foundations, there is enough money circulating in the city to redistribute wealth to historically disinvested neighborhoods and the people who live in them. There is enough to build institutions for employment, create permanently affordable housing, and provide health and educational services.

The money is there. We just need to spend it more wisely.

—Myra Margolin is a community psychologist specializing in community-based media production



"I see the College as  
that **LIGHT** on the hill  
that just gives  
a sense of **HOPE.**"




*BCCC student*



Enroll Today.



BALTIMORE CITY  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Like us on  Follow us on   @Bmoreccc

410-462-8300 • [www.bccc.edu](http://www.bccc.edu)



# 6 **Cling to Our Anchors**

In urban-wonk-speak, they're called eds and meds: institutions like universities and urban hospitals that are major employers and economic development generators. Others call them anchor institutions because, unlike other industries (or people), they can't just pack up and leave. Baltimore is well-equipped with anchors, and that's supposed to make us better off than fellow distressed cities like Detroit. But the relationship between these institutions and surrounding communities can be adversarial: eds and meds are big-footed, space-hungry entities, and they've been known to treat people in nearby inner-city neighborhoods more like dangerous interlopers than partners.

In the wake of the Freddie Gray unrest, however, Baltimore's anchors are getting a chance to reboot those relationships and recommit to community outreach. There's evidence that they're stepping up.

Johns Hopkins, the city's largest private employer, announced a major initiative in September called HopkinsLocal, aimed at boosting local hiring and spending: goals include filling 40 percent of targeted positions at JHU with city residents from low-income neighborhoods by 2018, growing spending at local businesses by \$6 million over three years, and enlisting more minority-owned contractors in Hopkins' many building projects.

At the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), whose main campus intersects several neighborhoods on the city's blighted west side, President Jay A. Perman says the school is redoubling its commitment to community outreach: The university is increasing the business it does with community merchants who employ residents and helping them find jobs on campus. "And we're working closely with a coalition of neighborhood organizations—the Southwest Partnership—to help our neighbors achieve the community development goals they set," Perman says.

In late September, UMB launched the Community Engagement Center in the university's BioPark in West Baltimore's Poppleton neighborhood. The center will work to promote learning among area children and adults, build residents' capacity to advocate for policies and programs, and provide residents with health, legal, and social services. The BioPark is also home



Photo credit: University of Maryland

West Side savior? UMB's growth could be an economic boost.

to Baltimore City Community College's Life Sciences Institute, designed as a pipeline to feed BCCC students into jobs in the city's health care and bioscience sector—it's the only community-college biotech training program that's built into the research institution that could later employ its graduates. To reach younger West Baltimoreans, UMB teamed up with nearby Franklin Square Elementary/Middle on a summer camp for students who visited the campus every Friday, and the university's Summer Bioscience Internship Program mentors West Baltimore students in possible careers in health care.

And in Northeast Baltimore, Morgan State's Community Mile initiative, which began in 2013, continues to use that school's resources to improve public health, public education, and economic development in the 12.2 square miles surrounding campus. The historically black university also is exploring part-



nerships with the University of Baltimore and just launched a year-long task force—dubbed “Gray” Days, Brighter Tomorrows—to examine policing and poverty. Morgan Vice President Maurice Taylor, who chairs the group, says the university has a special responsibility because, like fellow historically black university Coppin State, it enrolls a large number of city residents.

Taylor holds out hope for one big potential game changer: the city’s application to the Say Yes to Education Foundation’s citywide scholarship program, which would guarantee free college tuition to all city residents, regardless of income, to attend public state universities. Buffalo and Syracuse, New York, currently are enrolled in the program, which comes with \$15 million in start-up funding for the winning site. Morgan and several local foundations are lobbying heavily to boost Baltimore’s odds. To Taylor, it represents an opportunity to turn the post-Freddie Gray soul-searching into real change. “Every time there’s a crisis, we like to talk about it, and once the salve of conversation has passed, we move on,” he says. “Fifteen million dollars will really help. In the absence of that money, it’s all just talk.”

—*Donna M. Owens and David Dudley*

## 7 Flip the Script on the Waterfront

There's a lot going on in Cherry Hill and the adjoining community of Westport, which hug the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River. The relocated Maritime Industries High School opened this fall, and Cherry Hill Middle/Elementary is scheduled to be rebuilt by 2018. The National Aquarium's fence around a long-stalled waterfront park came down. And Under Armour CEO Kevin Plank's Sagamore Development has unveiled plans for a major redevelopment, including neighborhoods, parks, hotels, marinas, and a new global headquarters for Under Armour.

Michael Middleton, who grew up in Cherry Hill and is now head of the Cherry Hill Development Corporation, is hopeful that this activity will breathe life into his neighborhood. But he also wants to make sure that the current residents will be a part of it. "We need to flip the script," he says. "We need to make sure that anyone who wants to stay in Cherry Hill can stay in Cherry Hill."

Displacement is not an idle fear. One of the city's youngest communities, Cherry Hill was chosen to house war workers in 1943 as the site of what was then (and is still) the largest planned suburban black community in the country. The *Afro-American* newspaper called the industrial waterfront site a "damnable selection"; for city leaders, it had one advantage: Its isolation meant that there were few neighbors to complain.

A decade later, low-income housing came to Cherry Hill for much the same reason; today, it is home to the largest concentration of public housing east of Chicago, contributing to what Middleton says is a sense of transience that has kept the neighborhood from coalescing. "Cherry Hill has had a bad rap," adds Ray Winbush, the director of the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University, which just completed a study on the Middle Branch area. "I've rarely seen an area so maligned, in terms of stereotypes. I think the people who are developing Middle Branch, they want to say, 'We're going to save the community from itself.' And in every case that involves displacement of African-Americans."

Winbush may be pessimistic about the future, but he does hold out some



hope that this time could be different. “People are now talking about these things in light of the uprising that occurred in April,” he says. “I think there’s a willingness to say, ‘How do we shape black neighborhoods, and how do we stop this intrusion that has occurred in our historic communities?’”

Both Winbush and Middleton insist that a key part of any future vision of the area should involve mixed-income housing. Winbush cites Chicago’s Hyde Park as a template: This waterfront neighborhood on the city’s South Side, home to the University of Chicago, maintains a balance of subsidized and market-rate housing and is one of its most integrated parts of a heavily segregated city.

Middleton isn't naïve to the challenges of redevelopment without displacement, but he thinks residents can overcome them. “Cherry Hill wants to plan its own destiny. If the nature of this community continues, it will be a community that is compassionate, because all of us have been in that position of being poor, and understand that all of us must help one another. We're aware of gentrification. We're aware of people losing their homes. It is up to us to use whatever resources we have available to stop it.”

—Chris Landers

## 8 **Take a Page from the Past**

Some called it a riot. But to others, the violent, racially tinged confrontation that unfolded in Christiana, Pennsylvania, in 1851 was known as the Resistance. What’s happened since may be instructive for our city.

The Christiana conflict was about runaway slaves—four men who’d fled from the fields belonging to Edward Gorsuch of Baltimore County in 1849. The men had escaped along the Gunpowder Falls, through the hills, into free Pennsylvania. Under the protection of the newly passed Fugitive Slave Law, Gorsuch and his son Dickinson raised a posse to capture the runaways.

On September 11, 1851, the bounty hunters were met by a large crowd of free blacks and escaped slaves who'd settled in Lancaster County, a key way station on the Underground Railroad. Aided by white Quaker townspeople, they fought back. Gorsuch was shot, hacked with corn knives, and died in a bloodbath that became national news.

President Millard Fillmore sent in federal troops to pacify the area and round up the instigators. Forty-two white men were tried for treason in a Philadelphia courtroom. The trial was a cause célèbre for the abolitionist movement, and the subsequent acquittal of the Christiana resistance outraged Southerners. Many historians describe the Christiana Riot as the unofficial beginning of the Civil War.

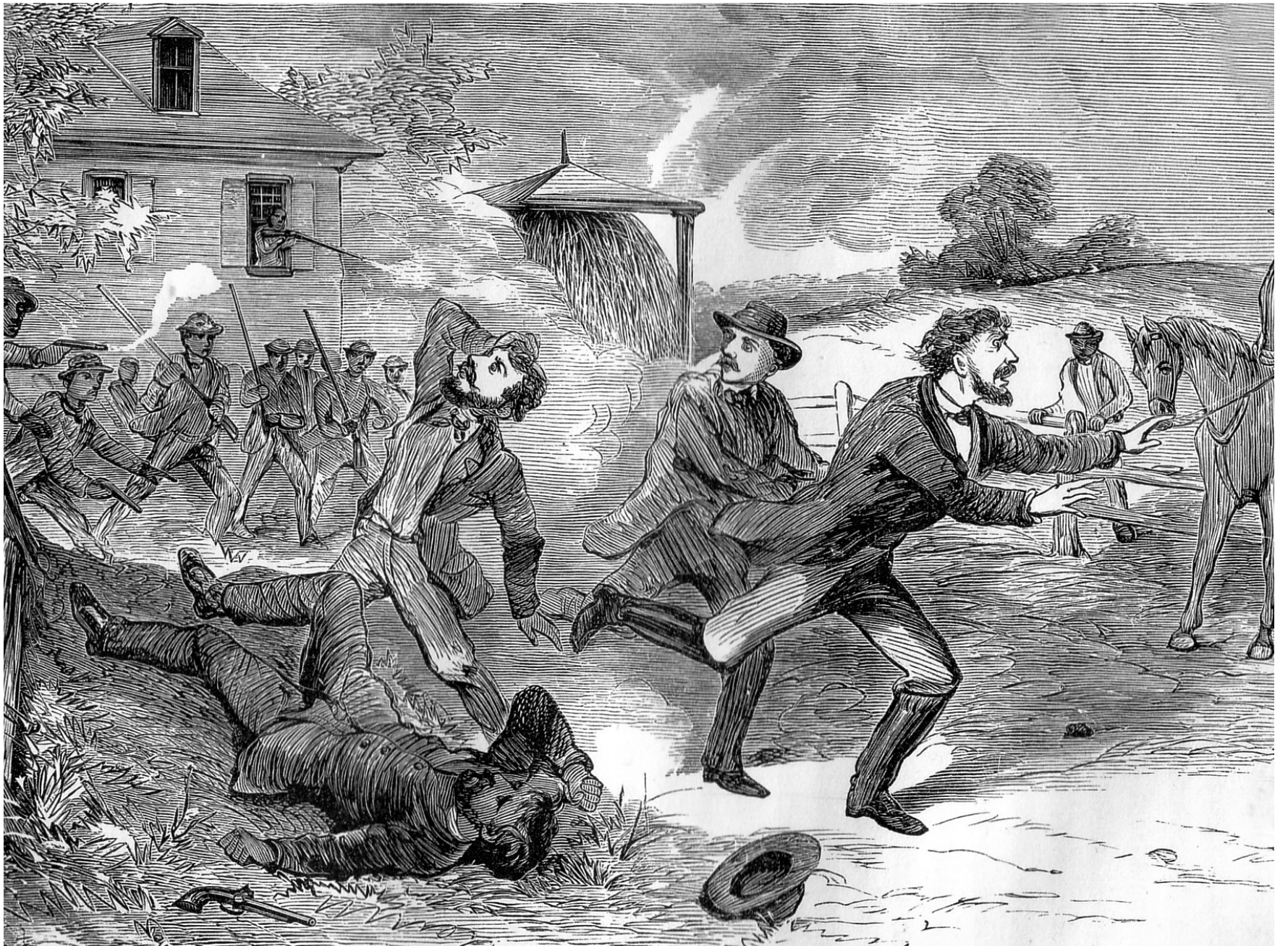
In 2001, on the 150th anniversary of the incident, descendants of the escaped slaves and the Quakers who supported their resistance gathered for a funnel-cake-filled celebration and what was called a "Forgiveness Dinner." Among those on the guest list: the great-great-great-grandnieces of Thomas Talbot Gorsuch, and Frank Parker, the 39-year-old great-grandson of William Parker, the former Maryland slave who boarded the fugitives.

Helen Mayo, who still lived on a parcel of the original Gorsuch Farm, admitted that she wasn't sure who was supposed to be forgiving who, and what for. "God's not going to ask me what my ancestors did 150 years ago," she said at the time. Another Gorsuch descendent, Karen Riddlebaugh Hunter of Ohio, expressed her own ambivalence about the killing of a distant relative and what it meant to her today. "When my family told the story," she explained, "it was told that he'd been caught in history."

But, as the event proved, the descendants of the two opposing sides no longer felt so trapped; their dinner of reconciliation proved to be a friendly social gathering, full of hugs, speeches, and some tears. Since then, the Christiana descendants have taken bus tours to the northern Baltimore County land still owned by a relative of Edward Gorsuch. There, they've eaten more meals together. Somehow, the people whose families once clashed have crafted an understanding, a peace.

"We continue to come together and continue to talk about it," says Darlene Colon, 61, of Lancaster, whose great-great-great-grandfather, Ezekiel





Credit: Image courtesy of the House Divided Project at Dickinson College

Uprising, 1851-style: Pre-Civil War violence between Maryland slaveholders and free blacks in Christiana, Pennsylvania, led to a modern reconciliation effort.

Thompson, participated in the resistance. “We have events every year. The families, the communities, we try to keep the story going. We try to keep those relationships open.”

In April, Colon watched the news from her home about Baltimore protests-turned-violent. She felt, she says, “a terrible sadness.” With each hurled bottle, she recognized the kind of suffering that led her ancestors to rise up 150 years ago—but she holds out hope. “The kind of dialogue and togetherness we have fostered here could work in Baltimore,” she says. “Despite the hurt in our history, we have a sort of pride about how we all came together. This was a fight for freedom. It’s a fight we’re still fighting.”

—*Tanika White-Davis*



# 9 Rethink Philanthropy

Here's a radical proposition: What if foundations' decisions were informed and influenced by residents of communities most impacted by their philanthropic largess? What if residents of disinvested communities sat on foundation boards and advisory panels, helping to shape local grant-making and policies? What if these communities wielded the power to define the public good?

Foundations cast a wide shadow here—even if most of us are unaware of it. The mentoring program where you volunteer? A family foundation may have given it a grant to keep its lights on and pay its staff. The training program that helped your niece or nephew find a job when they returned from prison? It may have received a foundation grant to identify industries with the most potential to pay living wages.

Private foundations are a unique institution. They are required to disburse at least 5 percent of their assets every year, but face no market accountability. They are obligated to support the “public good,” but are free to define that however they want. They affect public life, but their leaders are unelected and their business practices can be rather opaque.

While it is true that many foundations demonstrate a level of transparency, communities at large rarely understand the grant-making process, and impacted communities are rarely invited to inform it. In fact, most foundation boards are composed of individuals from communities that seem worlds apart from those being “served.”

There are other models. The Brooklyn Community Foundation, for example, recently launched a resident-led, grant-making program in the Crown Heights neighborhood that awards grants between \$5,000 and \$25,000. The \$100,000 budgeted for the program pales in comparison to the \$20 million disbursed by the foundation since its founding six years ago, but it's a step in the right direction.

Foundations contribute mightily to strengthening Baltimore and advancing



solutions and programs that make our city a more prosperous, vibrant place. But we also have a rare moment to consider their collective role in exercising equity and being responsive to communities most impacted by April's unrest and the decades of disinvestment that precipitated it.

—Rodney Foxworth

## 10 **End Public School Apartheid**

The Civil Rights Project at UCLA calls schools where whites make up less than 1 percent of the enrollment “apartheid schools.” Baltimore has apartheid schools. I teach in apartheid classrooms. They are test-driven, culturally hostile, and institutionally racist. They are not “vestiges” or accidents. As with policing and housing, they are intentional, policy-created, and policy-perpetuated—and they need to be confronted at the federal, state, and local levels.

### Reader Contribution

#### **Jobs!**

What does Baltimore need? A local industry wealthy enough to pay tens of thousands of people a decent wage, profitable enough to do so for decades and competitive enough that it doesn't move to Indonesia, Brazil, or China. ... Solid employment will rebuild the city, literally (as in replacing the rapidly deteriorating water and sewer lines) by increasing tax revenues. It will provide people with a sense of purpose and savings to improve their homes and buy homes that they once could not. People will come back to the neighborhood in twenty to thirty years as a professional in some industry and a role model for a future generation.

—Greg Bissonette

At the federal level, the Obama administration could follow through on the recommendations of the National Coalition on School Diversity—reducing racial and economic isolation and segregation in local schools and districts, for example, and requiring states to report on efforts to promote racial and economic diversity in the public schools in order to receive federal education dollars. The administration and Congress could expand and fund the 2009 Technical Assistance for Student Assignment Plan (TASAP) grant program and the ten Equity Assistance Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education under Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, both of which help states and school districts with desegregation. Similarly, the Justice Department and the Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Education could make educational apartheid a focus of their work as they once did in the long-ago civil rights era.

At the state level, Maryland could combat the hyper-segregation of Baltimore and Prince George's County schools, and the growing segregation and racial isolation in its suburbs, by creating district student assignment policies that foster diverse schools, and producing inter-district programs like city-suburban transfers and regional magnet schools. For working models, Maryland could look to inter-district choice programs in Minneapolis, Rochester, and Omaha, and the eighty-four magnet schools in Connecticut designed for cross-district metropolitan desegregation.

At the local level, we can give students, families, and communities more meaningful ways to opt out of the current oppressive system. As University of Chicago urban education scholar Charles M. Payne has written, we need schools that are “intended to help people think more critically about the social forces that shape our lives and think more confidently about their ability to react against those forces.” Such schools “can take a variety of forms,” he goes on: “Freedom Schools, Afro-centric schools, Native American survival schools, Black Panther Liberation schools.” Despite the language of “choice,” such schools do not exist in Baltimore right now. Let's build them.

Until we do, the real opportunities for intellectual liberation and genuine education for Baltimore students are in its rich community-based, co-curricular educational programs. From urban debate to spoken-word poetry to theater, photography, and political organizing, you will find amazing young intellec-



tuals, artists, and academic stars in Baltimore. The tragedy is that they find inspiration only in the cracks of this damaging, racist school system.

—*Michael Corbin is a teacher at the REACH! Partnership School in Baltimore*

# 11 **Raise the Minimum Wage**

In Baltimore City, nearly one quarter of residents live in poverty. They survive by making impossible choices and inhuman calculations: Should I get my medication or buy food? Can I let the BGE bill slide so I can buy school clothes for my kids?

## Reader Contribution

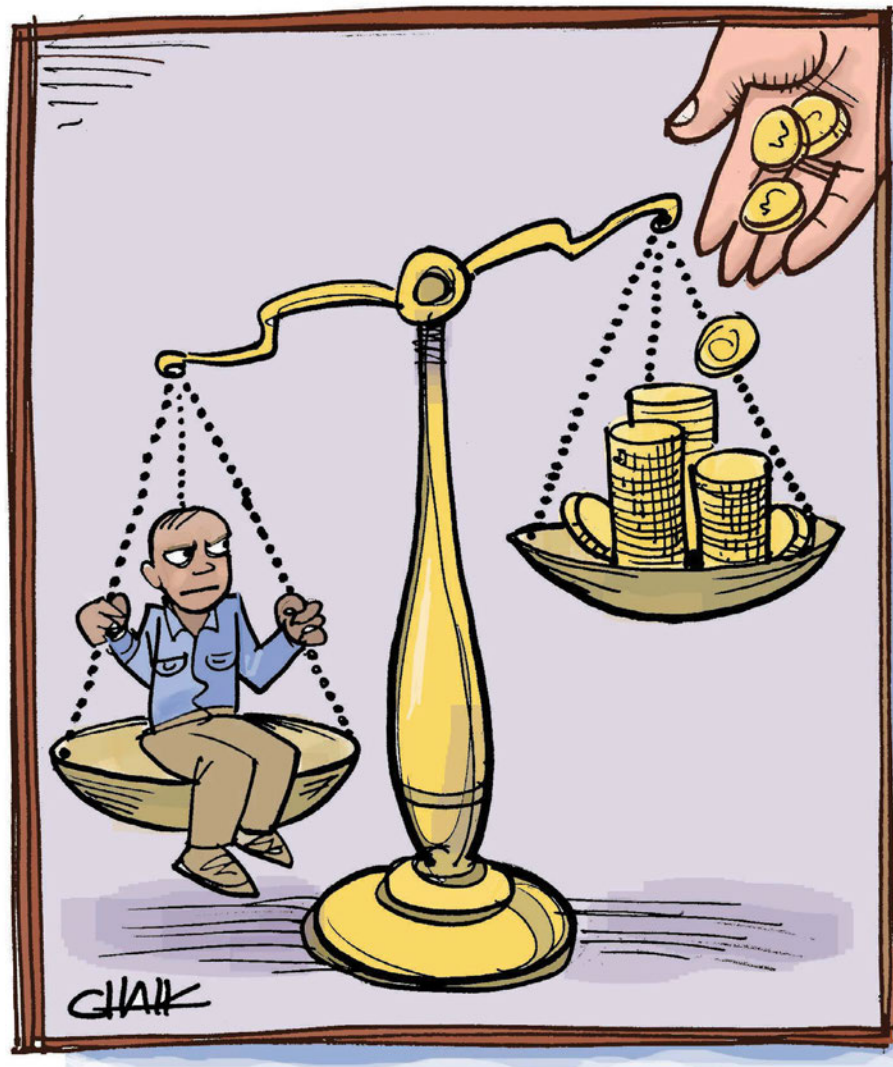
### **Legal Weed!**

Baltimore is a city without an industry, a city that's been brutalized by the drug war, a city divided along color lines and poverty lines. Decades of "the new Jim Crow" have turned our streets into combat zones. But at this moment we have before us an unprecedented opportunity: We can save Baltimore with legal cannabis.

I see a thriving cannabis economy where there used to be illicit open-air drug markets. I see ancillary companies that buy up vacant properties for vertically integrated manufacturing facilities and offer job training, partnering with local schools, and finding their employees in the community. I see nonviolent offenders being put back to work in an industry that values their insight and experience. I see police who don't have to waste their time locking up cannabis smokers and communities that appreciate cops who aren't at war.

Do you see it?

—*Jenn Lauder*



To remedy this, we should consider raising the minimum wage from the current \$8.25 per hour to \$15 by 2020, enough to provide a full-time worker \$31,000 per year. That's a wage that can sustain families and honors the value of work.

Opponents of a wage increase say that companies would hire fewer workers, causing greater unemployment and higher demand for social services. Research and experience suggests that is just not the case. Over the past eighteen months, six U.S. cities and counties, including Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, have approved \$15 minimum wages without the predicted disastrous results.

In fact, raising the minimum wage would save taxpayers money and boost the economy. Providing benefits to impoverished Baltimoreans cost the government more than \$102 million last year, and it's not because they're not working; 56 percent of public assistance recipients statewide live in households in which at least one person works. In other words, right now taxpayers are subsidizing low-wage employers. Many workers would no longer need assistance if they were paid a fair wage.



And by boosting the purchasing power of workers' paychecks, we can generate new consumer spending and support job growth as businesses expand to meet increased customer demand. A minimum wage increase to \$15 per hour would also have a profound impact on the economic status of minority workers. In our city, African Americans are nearly twice as likely to live below the poverty line than whites, and are more likely to work in low-paying jobs like food service, health care, and personal care.

When jobs pay too little, opportunity is out of reach. Raising the minimum wage will put more money in more families' pockets, promoting economic growth and creating economic justice that makes a better Baltimore for all of us.

—Charly Carter is the executive director of Maryland Working Families

## 12 **Build a Black Business Incubator**

You can't understand so much of the things that are happening in Baltimore now without understanding the economics in a community that has been historically ignored, and particularly the people who have been historically ignored. We have to do a better job of creating an entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurial class in Baltimore, especially among black men and boys.

I think that we should come up with a \$100 million fund that is exclusively for developing small black businesses in the city of Baltimore—and not just helping to build them now but also creating new entrepreneurial ideas and new entrepreneurial cultures. Look at what happens in Silicon Valley; look at the lack of diversity, and see how difficult it is for people to break in.

A lot of people may think \$100 million is a very big number, but it's not. Think about the philanthropic support that we have in the city of Baltimore, and also look at the fact that the state and the city have budgets that go toward economic development. You could take a small fraction of that money, and this could be something that could clearly move significant obstacles out of the way for economic development.

Do you care about the future of the city? Do you care about the future of Baltimore? Because there is going to be no future in Baltimore if we're not doing a better job of incorporating black men and boys into that conversation. When we look at the next 10 years, in Baltimore, we can be a city of 800,000 and thriving. Or we can be a city of 500,000 and dying.

—*Wes Moore, the author of The Other Wes Moore and The Work: My Search for a Life That Matters, is the founder of BridgeEdU, a social enterprise working to boost college completion rates by reinventing the first year of college*

## 13 Heal By Design

Melissa Moore's cure for Baltimore's many real-world ills—creative expression through Buddhist-inspired “contemplative design”—may seem a little esoteric. To the contrary, she says, it's an antidote to the oppression and trauma of Baltimore living: “It is above all pragmatic and essential to helping achieve economic empowerment, economic justice, and positive social transformation in our city, where there is an incredible amount of suffering and latent potential.”

Under the umbrella of the Youth Learning Lab of Education and Applied Design, (Y-LLEAD), Moore leads programs for city youth that provide lessons in product design, spiritual resilience, and economic security. Last spring's Grow & Gather event in Greenmount West brought together community members to design a public gathering space on an empty lot. Over on the west side, the Liberty Holistic Design Village offers young adults and high school students free training in wood turning, woodworking, weaving, textile design, and other crafts. In the next year and half, Moore plans to launch an artisan-craft cooperative that produces and sells eco-friendly home goods.

“Marginalized folks are brilliant and come with ancestral knowledge, but it's been lost or hidden or covered over by so many things,” she says. “We are all creative beings, want to have our basic needs met, and all have the ability to heal.”

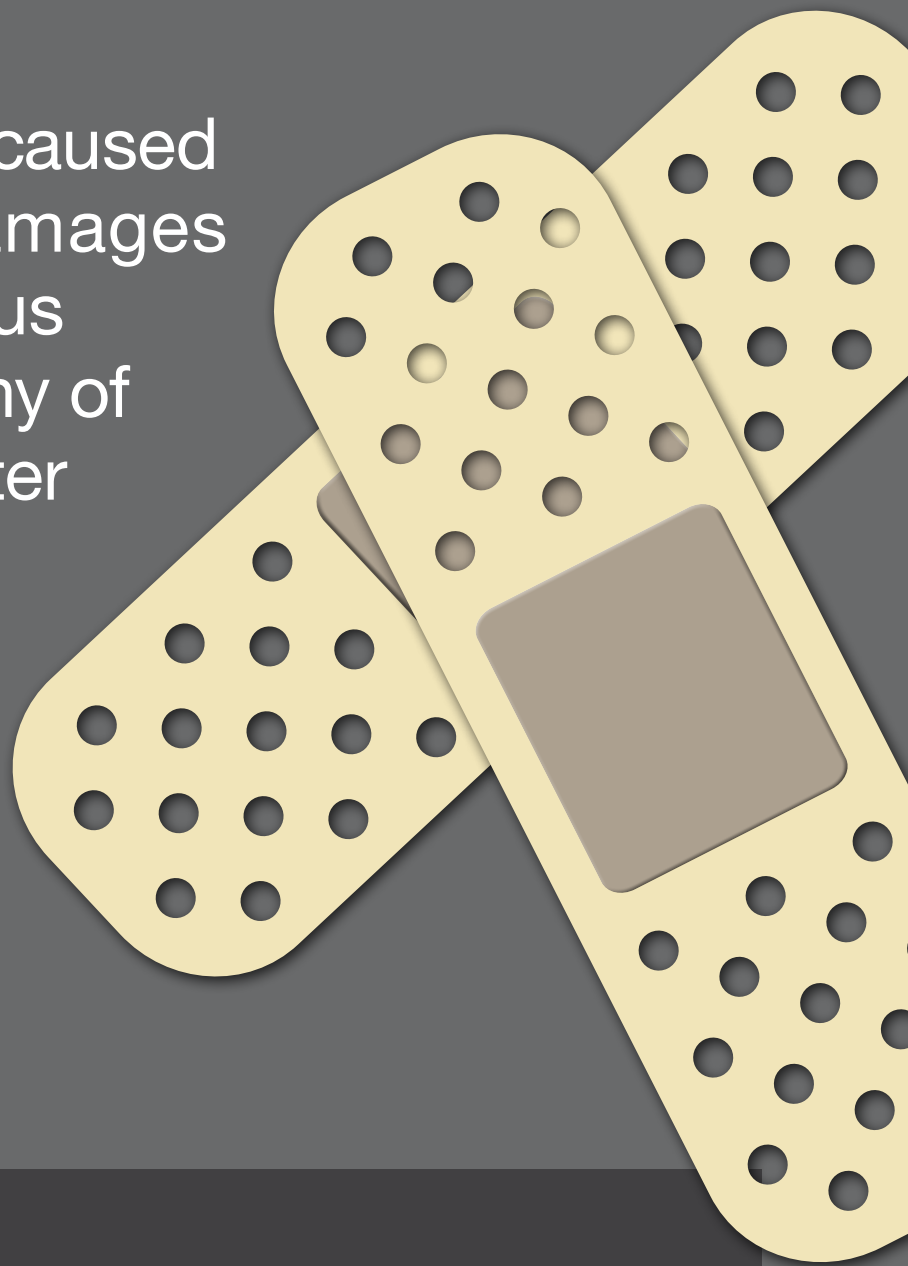
—S.S.



# There, I Fixed It

Baltimore's civil unrest in April caused an estimated \$20 million in damages and launched several ambitious fix-the-city initiatives. But do any of these blue-ribbon urban-disaster commissions ever work?

—Brennen Jensen



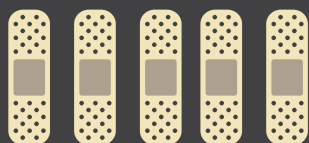
## 1904: Baltimore Fire

**What it was:** A thirty-hour blaze in central Baltimore destroyed 1,500 buildings

**Cost:** Nearly \$4 billion (current dollars)

**Response:** Mayor refused federal and state funds for cleanup and redevelopment, and a Burnt District Commission oversaw reconstruction, which included wider streets, buried utilities, and fire hydrants with standardized couplings. Two years later, real estate values in the Burnt District were greater than pre-fire.

**Rating:** Five Band-Aids



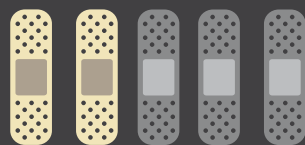
# 1906: San Francisco Quake

**What it was:** A temblor estimated at 7.7 or more on the Richter scale killed more than 3,000 people and destroyed 28,000 buildings.

**Cost:** \$8+ billion (current dollars)

**Response:** Hundreds were shot for looting, and the city's Subcommittee on Relocating the Chinese tried unsuccessfully to move Chinatown from downtown. The city rebuilt rapidly with little planning and no improved building codes; an urban redesign proposed by architect Daniel Burnham was nixed.

**Rating:** Two Band-Aids



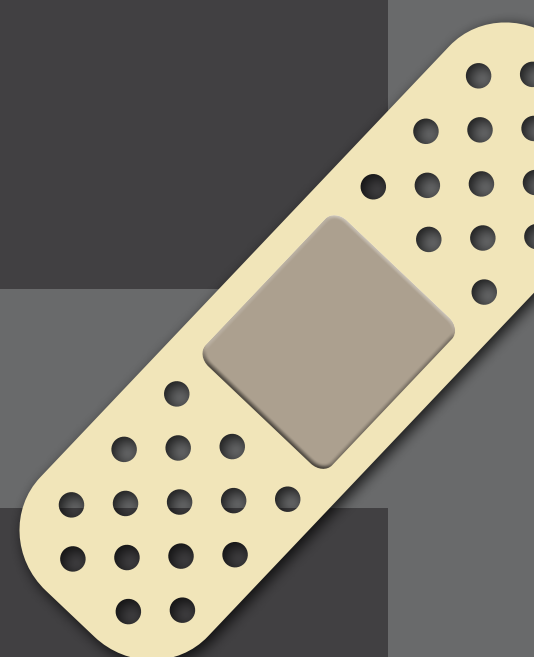
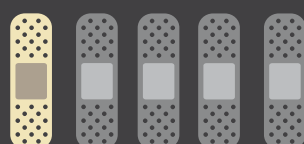
# 1992: Los Angeles Riots

**What it was:** Six days of unrest following acquittal of police officers charged with beating Rodney King: 53 people killed, 2,300 injured, and more than 1,000 buildings burned.

**Cost:** More than \$1 billion

**Response:** The nonprofit Rebuild LA, led by ex-baseball commissioner Peter Ueberroth, pledged to raise a billion dollars for rebuilding. Ueberroth split after 13 months, and the group fell consistently short of its goals, including the fizzling of \$100-million plan to build a dozen supermarkets in riot-torn areas.

**Rating:** One Band-Aid





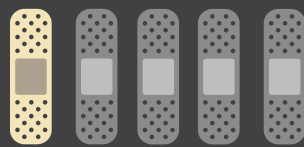
# 2005: Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans

**What it was:** 80 percent of city flooded following levee failures; more than 1,400 people killed, city population reduced by more than half.

**Cost:** More than \$150 billion

**Response:** The \$10 billion Road Home program to help individuals repair or replace homes has been criticized for delays and red tape. Tourist areas and wealthier districts have largely recovered, while lower-income and predominantly black areas remain depopulated.

**Rating:** One Band-Aid



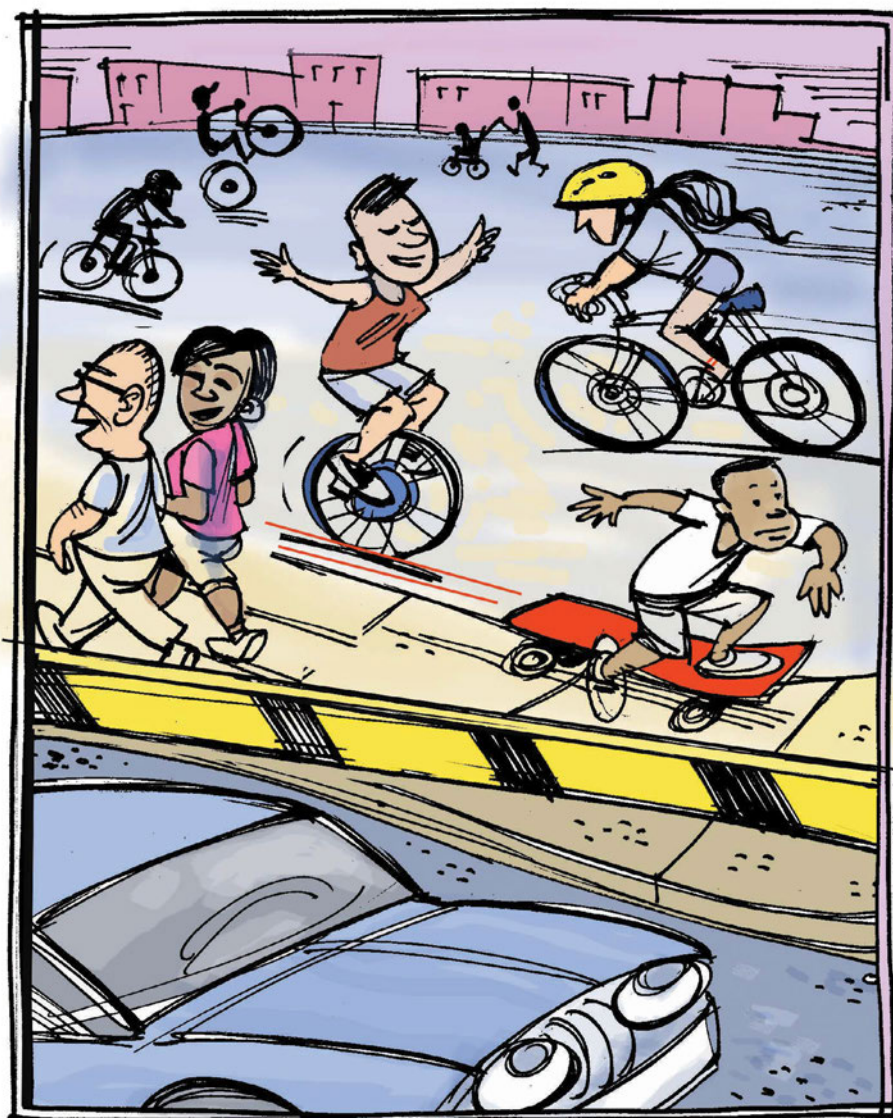
1904: Baltimore Fire

# 14 Wage War on Cars

The private automobile has been an unmitigated disaster for Baltimore: We scoured holes in the heart of the city to accommodate its needs, strangled neighborhoods in ligatures of highways, and trapped our most vulnerable citizens in the dead zones left behind. The car has been the chariot of white flight, the devourer of public funds, and the solvent of social cohesion.

But its death grip over U.S. cities may be loosening. Americans are driving fewer miles every year; car-sharing and self-driving technology may make private car ownership an artifact of the last century. And Baltimore could take a lead role in this process.

Other cities have made progress on this front. London Mayor Boris Johnson established a congestion charge for drivers who wanted to enter the central city in 2003. Some 246 European cities and towns agreed to hold car-free days during a “European Mobility Week” in September. And





during the pope's recent visit, Philadelphia residents marveled at the "traffic box" that temporarily broke the siege of cars in the downtown area for two days. Residents were stunned and delighted to discover that their city's 19th-century street plan and dense rowhouse neighborhoods suddenly made sense.

Decent transit can have a big impact on seemingly unrelated factors. In the mid-1990s, the mayor of Bogota, Colombia—a city whose crime, traffic, and general dysfunction level made Baltimore look like Geneva (think four thousand murders per year)—launched a bus rapid transit system that, combined with a network of feeder buses, a bike-path building boom, and a strict limit on cars during rush hours, tamed a seemingly ungovernable city. Crime plummeted, livability soared, and a broken place came back together.

But papal visits, occasional Sunday-morning *ciclovias*, and other sporadic car-free holidays are the only way we tend to get glimpses of this state in American urban space. If Baltimore got serious about reclaiming its streets,

## Reader Contribution

### **Smarter Development!**

I've lived in Sandtown for five and a half years now. I have been honored to work with leaders within the community like C.W. Harris and Antoine Bennett. However, they need more support—expertise, training, support staff, and funding.

Baltimore City's political and business leadership needs to stop practicing "trickle-down" political economy and pouring massive resources into downtown areas as opposed to the less developed neighborhoods. Privileged people in Baltimore—particularly those who live in the "White L"—need to think about how they are either reinforcing or tearing down the structural barriers that hold people back.

—*Matthew Loftus*

we'd go Full Bogota and permanently close key corridors to four-wheeled traffic, establish a weekday congestion charge, and radically expand bus service—a Circulator on Steroids—to liberate chronically under-served parts of town. Buses aren't as sexy as maglev trains, floating personal-transit pods, or any of the other fanciful transit suggestions getting bandied about in the wake of the Red Line cancellation, but they're cheap, flexible, and they actually work. Imagine, in a decade or so, fleets of electric robo-jitneys humming along placid surface streets, swift articulated rapid-transit buses tear-assing up and down I-83, and a downtown core full of humanity, not machinery.

As then-New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg learned when he tried and failed to convince state lawmakers to import Euro-style congestion pricing in the mid-aughts, any American mayor who messes with drivers is on a political suicide mission. Business leaders and suburban commuters will say that cracking down on cars in the city would be an economic disaster. They might even be right, in the short term. But so what? The suburbs have written us off anyway. The private automobile and the world it made is about to get seriously disrupted. Baltimore has a shot at being—for once—on the right side of history.

—D.D.

## 15 **Keep Talking About It**

On April 29, Andrew Copeland grabbed his Canon 7D and tailed MICA students as they poured into the streets to protest the death of Freddie Gray. Copeland, creative manager for communications at MICA, soon found himself in the midst of a march from Penn Station to Baltimore City Hall.

His photos of protesters of different races and ethnicities captured a reality that got lost in the media frenzy: “The media tried to make it seem like [the uprising] was a black and white thing,” he says. “But it was a people issue, not a one-race-versus-the-other issue.”





Copeland, 35, contributed nine images of the march to the Baltimore Uprising digital archives housed at the Maryland Historical Society, which now includes more than nine thousand submissions from amateur and professional photographers.

“The role of this project is to provide a space for the people who are directly impacted by the death of Freddie Gray, to make sure the protests are represented the way they think they should be represented, so they can control the story,” says Denise Meringolo, a University of Maryland, Baltimore County historian who helped create the archive.

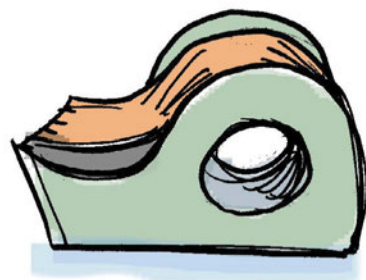
The digital collection is one of several initiatives by historians to use Baltimore’s past to help move the city forward. A 2008 conference at the University of Baltimore also created a rich online trove of images, oral histories, and documents related to the 1968 riots. Back then, “people didn’t want to talk about

it,” says University of Baltimore assistant professor of history Elizabeth Nix, who helped organize the conference. Today, she is in demand as a lecturer on Baltimore's segregation history.

The more people who contribute to these archives, “the better understanding we can have of history,” says Jessica Douglas, an archivist with the Maryland State Archives. “One hundred years from now, when people are researching the uprising and everyone who experienced it is long gone, there will still be an accurate record of the kids who weren't able to get home, the people that walked ten miles in one day on a march, and the protesters outside City Hall.”

Morgan State historian David Terry, an advisor to the archive, hopes that “a much wider swath of society” will see their lives reflected in the digital collection: When people can see themselves in the context of history, he says, they're empowered to change it.

—S.S.



See more fixes, meet more changemakers, and contribute *your* best ideas for Baltimore's future online at [urbanitebaltimore.com](http://urbanitebaltimore.com)





## *Discover The Irish Shrine & Railroad Workers Museum*

Maryland's only memorial to Irish immigration honors the tens of thousands who relocated to Baltimore to escape the Great Famine of the mid-1800s.

The Irish Shrine consists of two historically restored alley houses built in 1848 to provide homes for workers of the B & O Railroad. One house is furnished as a period museum, reflecting the lives of the Irish-immigrant family who lived there in the 1860s. The other offers changing exhibits, a film, photos and writings about the Irish immigrant experience, and a memorial garden.

*Houses are open Friday - Saturdays from 11am to 2pm and Sunday 1pm to 4pm. Admission is free.*



Take a free Irish heritage walking tour for a fascinating glimpse of Irish life in southwest Baltimore in the 1840's. Tour the Irish Shrine, St. Peter the Apostle Church, Hollins Street Market, a local Irish pub and St. Peter's Cemetery.

**Register by emailing [tours@irishshrine.org](mailto:tours@irishshrine.org) or call 410-669-8154.**

Visit our website for tour dates and times.

918 - 920 Lemmon Street (one block from the B & O Railroad Museum) • [www.irishshrine.org](http://www.irishshrine.org)

A project of the Railroad Historical District Corporation. Made possible through generous support from the Maryland Historic Trust, the Municipal Arts Society and the Maryland Historical Society. A Baltimore City Historic District ~ Eligible for National Register of Historic Places



ENSURING A  
*vibrant Baltimore*  
ONE MITZVAH AT A TIME

At The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, we're committed to *mitzvahs* – or good deeds – that meet vital needs of the most vulnerable in our city.

**You can make Baltimore better.**

Learn how you can share your time and talent:

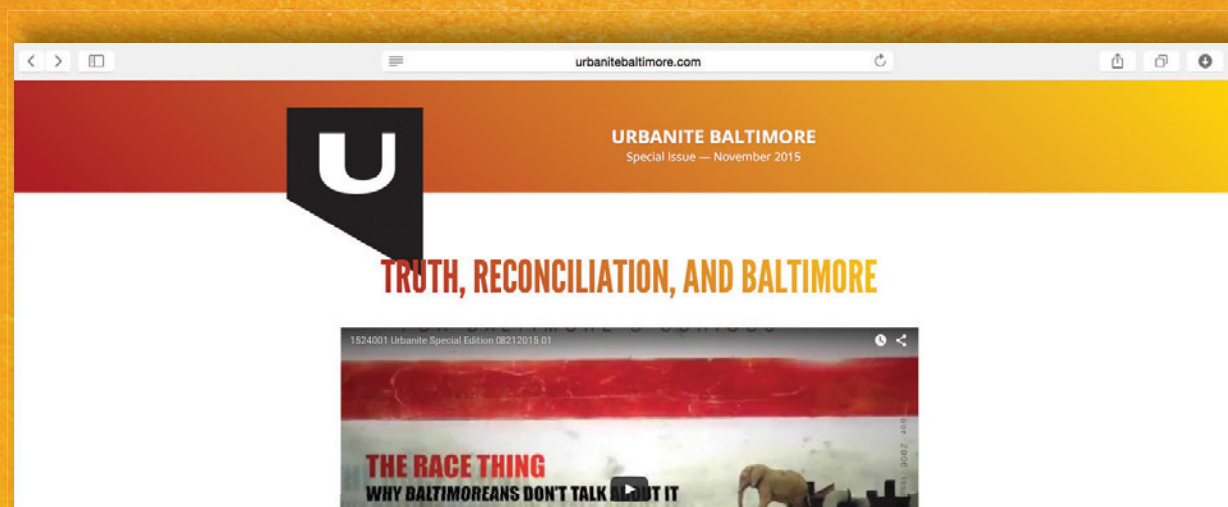
[associated.org/volunteers](http://associated.org/volunteers)



Visit [www.urbanitebaltimore.com](http://www.urbanitebaltimore.com) to further explore

# urbanite

SPECIAL ISSUE - NOVEMBER 2015



ALSO AVAILABLE ON KINDLE OR AMAZON PRINT ON DEMAND



# **Voices Rising Up**

**There is not one Baltimore. There are many. These poems are just a brief glimpse of the city's tones, tongues, and tribes, and they show, we hope, the ways that poems—and people—reflect both the uprising, and the causes of it. You can find more poems at [urbanitebaltimore.com](http://urbanitebaltimore.com).**

**— Ailish Hopper and OluButterfly Woods**





Stephen Towns, I Wish it Were That Easy, 2014



# The City that Breathes

Baltimore, 2014

The city cat perches  
on the city backyard fence  
still ogling the squirrel  
who makes himself dizzy  
scurrying around  
the trunk of the gingko tree.

The gingko drops  
thousands of seeds  
and hundreds of futile seeds  
will latch into the city backyard  
while the other hundreds  
and hundreds perfume  
the neighbor's yard with  
their dog vomit declaration.

An unorganized chess match  
of nothing but bishops  
underneath the grand shadow  
of one mighty gingko  
long since given up the outrage  
persevering for decades  
in this city backyard behind  
a neglected city house.

The squirrel scurries on  
drunk on inertia  
ignoring the seed bombs  
and the helicopter foster parents in blue  
and the foul-mouthed rat,  
no longer bemused  
at neglected city houses.

This city aches with defiance  
of asphalt and concrete.  
It aches with three kinds of defiance—  
neglect, outrage, inertia.

It aches. It defies.

This city deifies its aches.

— *Douglas William Garcia Mowbray*

## **Tender Bricks**

For D. Jennings, April 29, 2015

who wrote poetry too      from bible verses  
and put them in grocery store  
shopping carts because they keep  
the fruit fresh      hard candy clicking  
past convoys and char as we drove  
and sang about Telling It on a Mountain,  
    who thanked me for the ride  
and prayed we meet again there.

— *Sean Morrissey*





Stephen Towns, The Juice Ain't So Sweet, 2014





Stephen Towns, Without Inspection or Appraisal, 2014



# Ode to dead black Baltimore boys

White life spans  
divided by three  
Marked for death with melanin  
Your maleness decoded  
as the sign of the beast  
You are our most  
unprotected  
jewel  
You are misunderstood  
anger  
You are the reasons  
behind  
The most powerless  
And unanswered prayers  
And meaningless marches  
And justified chokeholds  
And  
We women selfishly attempt  
To write poems  
to ease our guilt

As if these words  
Could ever resurrect you

I remember  
asking my 17-year old  
male student  
where he saw himself in the next 5 years  
And he replied  
"dead"

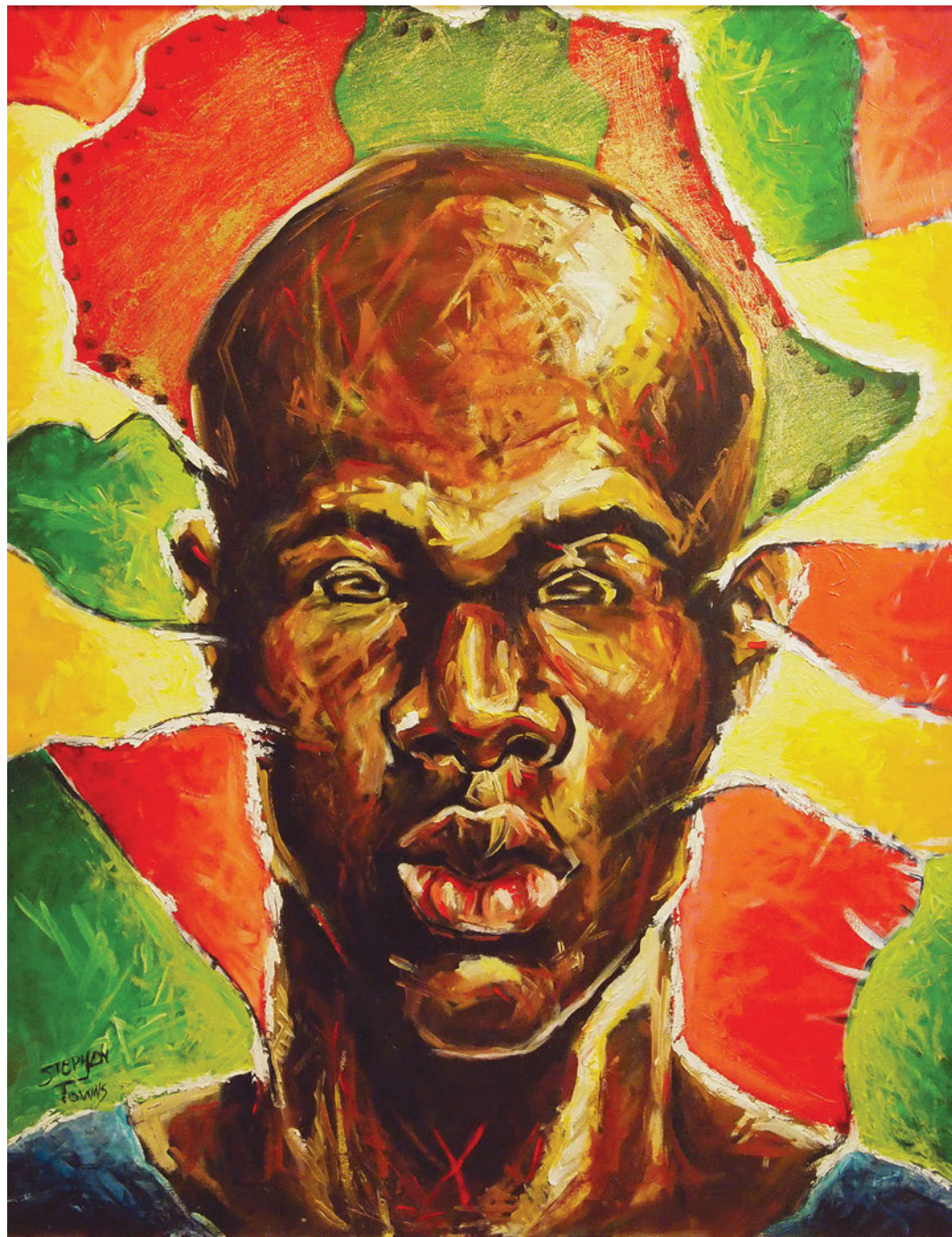
I haven't seen him since  
And I haven't even bothered to look for him

All I have is a black teen's name  
written on this disposable  
dry erase board picket sign

It's not even dawn, I already see his name fading  
And I  
Know damn well  
I better do something  
More  
than write this poem  
something more than marching  
something more than crying

— *Chin-yer Wright*

Stephen Towns, Fingerprints, 2000





# Judge me not

grabbing life by its horns is harder than what i thought  
im not trying to be a quitter, that is not what i was taught  
i come from a family that is "society successful"  
but when it boils down to it, they really cant help you  
they will tell you read the bible and hang in there  
or like my cousin just told me apply yourself failure will be rare  
easier said than done

wont commit suicide because im afraid of hell  
but then again i question myself of the stories we tell  
is it all for nothing  
so much promise when i be-gan  
now this plateau has me questioning where i stand .....

i just wanted to act and fuck,  
make millions and press my luck  
discovered at a young age the positive(s) of the all mighty Marijuana  
they tell you how to hit and hold it  
but they never warn ya  
weed can have you stuck

living in a nation where most feel, there is no room for grey areas  
i am a brown skinned girl that soaks up useful information and knows  
how to carry it  
we ALL want peace, so cant we all just get along  
we end up grabbing a "piece" for protection and teach ourselves how  
to hold on  
but thats not being strong.  
I WILL NEVER GET IT.  
life will hit your daughter or son hard  
like when the bush administration shrugged their shoulders to the Vic-  
tims of Katrina  
or as we just saw this city being indignant

and our own police not changing their demeanor  
Baltimore we will get through the complexity of our situations  
because everything isnt black or white  
there was a time when Pennsylvania avenue offered a positive outlet  
to the vexed.  
day and night.  
we should have listened to our mothers.  
and our mothers should have listened to their mother  
somewhere we got confused and not to be rude  
but it is time for those true grandmas to come through.  
im not ashamed of any of my friends, no matter what their skin tone  
i try not to be evil towards any one who hasnt done me wrong  
and the church taught me that  
if it takes the churches to bring us back to our sanity then yes, lets  
use that.  
right now i am seeing undiagnosed multiple mental disordered people  
walking on what used to be cobble stones  
self medicating their complexed minds,  
not wanting to talk to anyone because they “dont need shrines”  
and yes my poetry touches on different subjects  
all of which i have not mastered having a complete thought  
time changes a persons perception so i keep them in my heart  
my city is so complex they raised a girl in 21217  
that grew up on the other side of the drama  
and as she got older she traveled to different states and learned  
that Baltimore as a whole had some trauma  
and as much as she hates to admit it, she was sheltered from it all  
thanks to her mama  
and she realizes now everybody in this beloved city wont have the  
same outcome  
the lesson learned here as i gather them are the same that many die  
from  
lessons

— *Taylor King*



# POETS

**Sean Morrissey** currently serves as artist-in-residence at the Johns Hopkins Children's Center and is an active member of the Right to Housing Alliance.

**Taylor M. King** is 24, and a single mother. She played Zenobia in season four of *The Wire*, and in May of 2015 was included in the cast of *Listen to Your Mother*. She lives in Baltimore and dreams of becoming a published author.

**Douglas William Garcia Mowbray** lives in Waverly with his wife and son. He is co-founder of Poetry in Community, and an Assistant Director of the Baltimore Community Poetry Library.

**Chin-yer Wright** is the founder and executive director of the the Baltimore Scene art movement. She organizes the city's Word War poetry slam series, the Baltimore Crown Awards, Rap God, and other artistic events for youth and artists.

# CURATORS

**Ailish Hopper** is the author of the recent book *Dark~Sky Society*. She's the recipient of a Maryland State artist grant and residencies at the MacDowell Colony and Yaddo. She also teaches at Goucher College and performs in the poetry band Heroes are Gang Leaders.

**Olu Butterfly Woods** is the author of the poetry collection *The Revenge of Dandelions*. She is a GBCA Rubys Project Grant and Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Award recipient, as well as an internationally traveled performer.

# ARTIST

**Stephen Towns**, a Baltimore-based mixed-media artist and muralist, is originally from Charleston, South Carolina. Towns' work is deeply rooted in the reality of race and its effects on society—and more importantly, the legacy of that reality on Americans. Towns draws visual inspiration from Medieval altarpieces, Impressionist paintings, and wax cloth prints. Much of his work is based on growing up in the Deep South and responds to the issues affecting Black American culture. ■



FOR A  
**STRONGER  
BALTIMORE**



**HOPKINS**LOCAL  
BUILD. HIRE. BUY.

*HopkinsLocal is a commitment by Johns Hopkins University and Health System to leverage our role as the largest private anchor institution in Baltimore to create lasting economic opportunities in the city. With this initiative, we are expanding our outreach to local businesses and residents, including women and minorities, when we build, hire, and buy. [HopkinsLocal.jhu.edu](https://HopkinsLocal.jhu.edu)*

**JOHNS HOPKINS**  
UNIVERSITY & HEALTH SYSTEM

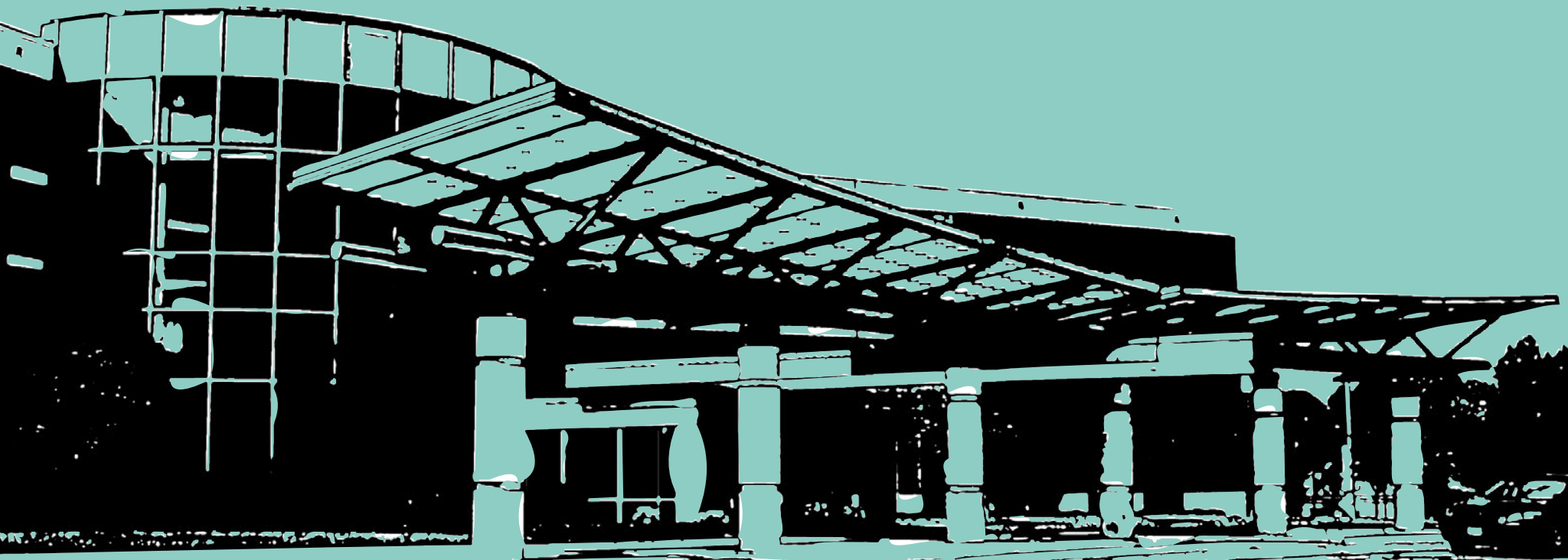
[www.urbanitebaltimore.com](http://www.urbanitebaltimore.com)





# om • mu • ni • ca • tion

1. the sharing of information, news, or ideas.
2. a means of connection between places or people



**THE HEARING AND SPEECH AGENCY**  
Helping Baltimore communicate better since 1926



[www.hasa.org](http://www.hasa.org)

