

the entire social composition² economic as well as cultural² of a suppoVHGO4owntrodden´
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Since the 1960s, historians who have explored both U.S. urban history and the African American past have done a tremendous amount of research on how black ghettos came into existence. An early pioneer in this field, Gilbert Osofsky, developed two arguments that captured the way that first generation of historians approached the history of the African American ghetto. First, the American ghetto had history. It had not always existed. It was not timeless. Instead, for Osofsky, the black ghetto came into existence during the late-nineteenth century, after the end of the Civil War enabled people of African descent to form new lives in American cities. The cities those black citizens found, however, were socially inhospitable places that relegated black workers to menial positions and substandard housing. Both specific historical circumstances and social practices of racism made the American ghetto.²

However, KLOHKL VWRUDQUDFLVPFUHDWHGWKHJKHWWR2VRIVNDUJHGWKDWDEQLC and tragic sameneVVGHILQGEODFNOLIHWKIUIHVQHQVLDQOVWUWVWHDQQWVHRIWKH1HJUR JKHWWR2VRIVN\WDWHGKDYHUHPDLQGUHPDUNDEOGKDECHVLEQHWKH in the 1RUWKLEQVRIUHVVLGHQVLDQOVHJUHDWLRQDUGHQGRYHIVWLEPH geography of the ghetto expanded. Black ghettos increased in size and reproduced specific social and economic FKDUDFWHULVWLFVQPHOSRYHUWDOQVWPHLEKMPHQV VWKHVLVHHHPHGWRFRQUDGLFW 2VRIVN\ILUVWVKHVLVWVDVSHFLILFKLVWRULFDQFLUFRVWVDEQVDEQV RFLDOSUDFWLFF ghettos. Apparently, once ghettos came into existence they became undesirable, tragic places where time stood still and generations of inhabitants suffered seemingly endless social ills.³ LVWRULDQLQYLWDEOTK VVWLRQ2VRIVN\DUJHQQHEDVHGKLVFODLPVRQWV LHVRI1HZ York and Philadelphia, referenced the cities interchangeably, and provided no comparative

evidence from black urban communities elsewhere in the country. Certainly, his assertions that racism played a powerful role in black urban life made historical sense, but racism, like ghettos, ~~QYHUVWRRGRWVLGHRIWLPHDQSODFHSDFLDODQVDJRCQMPKIDVMDU~~ over both place ~~DQWLPHQWHG.HQWKXPHULWVHIIHFVVKDYHEHHQKDKQOHGLQLVWLQWLYHDLVLQ~~ different types of communities; and it has impacted upon various elements of the black ~~FRPPQWLQLIHUHQVDV~~ ⁴ Simply put, neither black ghettos, nor the social practices, public policies, and economic conditions that created them, exist outside of history. Even as national and global economic forces and political trends tie individual American ghettos together in common historical processes, each black ghetto in America has specific characteristics and histories.

Subsequent generations of historians revised the work of Osofsky and his cohort, but their studies maintained clear focus on how large black urban communities in the United States came into existence during the mid- twentieth century, and how and why those communities suffered so many social problems. Noteworthy historians shifted attention to class dynamics of twentieth-century black urban communities, the tremendous influence of national-level housing policies, and the devastating impact of public policies that combined racial discrimination in housing with the economic restrictions of the post-industrial era.⁵ Sociologists embarked on new ~~VWGLHVRIWKHNEDEQHUFODVVDQKLVWRULDQFRQULEWGHGWRWKRVDHQQOVHVZWKFDVHV~~ that explained how a ~~QK\$PHULFDYWUNGLVDGYDQVDJHGFDPHWRGRPLQWHLWVMEDQ~~ populations during the latter half of the twentieth century. Academic debates about the influences of culture and social structures on the historic origins and social life of ghettos became intense and sometimes seeped into public life and public policy.⁶ A new generation of social scientists and historians complicated debates further. Sociologists asked new questions about black

suburbs and middleclass black urban communities. Historians developed new approaches to African American urban activism and social movements.⁷ Throughout these many scholarly revisions, the black ghetto, as a significant place in American urban life, remained constant. However, if historical circumstances *made* the black ghetto in U.S. cities, than what conditions, practices, and ideas would *unmake* those same ghettos? If black ghettos were made in the past, that is, if they came into existence through specific social, economic, and political processes that unfolded in time and space, then what efforts occurred, what attempts were made to unmake those same ghettos? As the twenty-first century unfolded, and long-standing ghetto communities presented undeniable signs of gentrification and rejuvenation, what histories influenced those changes? Those general questions shaped my research at the Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC) ~~GNLQWKHVPHURIDQWKHJEGHPDSSURDFKWRPFNUHQVERRNSURMHFW8QDNLQ~~ the Ghetto: Community Development in Bedford-Stuyvesant during and beyond the Age of Civil ~~5LJKWVDQ@DFN3RZU~~⁸

The policies and politics that created CDCs and the histories of CDCs such as the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, offer historians a chance to examine how local people, state and federal political figures, and power brokers from corporate and philanthropic sectors attempted to unmake American ghettos from the mid-1960s through the end of the twentieth century. Through a history of Restoration, and in particular through my research in the Ford Foundation P

Outside the Restoration grant reports, the Ford Foundation filed reports on specific community development initiatives in Bedford-Stuyvesant, such as the manufacturing plant that IBM opened in the area in 1968. Two reports, the ~~30L4GIRUG~~ -~~6WXHVDQDQ3%~~

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These are just some of the primary sources with which I plan to write and analyze this history of community development in Brooklyn. In addition to the work of Restoration, the Ford Foundation Papers also had grant reports that pertained to The Society for the Preservation of

ENDNOTES:

¹ Statement by Senator Robert F. Kennedy at the One-Day Conference on Community Development in Bedford-Stuyvesant, December 10, 1966, in Thomas Russell Jones Papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York, New York [this collection was not arranged and described when the author wrote and filed this report with the Rockefeller Archive Center 5\$@6HHDOVR5).ZOOEH2YHU6DWKGD\ Amsterdam News, 'HFHPEHUSDQ5HGHYHORSPHD@IRU Bedford-6WXHVDQ New York Times, December 11, 1966, p.1. On RFK and the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, see also, Edward Schmitt, *President of the Other America: Robert Kennedy and the Politics of Poverty*. Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010, pp. 146-168; Jack Newfeld, *RFK: A Memoir*. New York: Dutton, 1969, pp. 87-109. Kenneth B. Clark, *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power*. IHKUN@USHU5R@DVVLF SUHVH@V@RIWHF@WHRI SRYHUT@G@HYFDUHZVDQ@LYHUDDUJH Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty. New York: Basic Books, 1959, and Oscar Lewis,