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POLICE POWER AND THE POLITICS OF SAFETY

Shannon King

Clarence Taylor, *Fight the Power: African Americans and the Long History of Police Brutality in New York City*. New York: New York Press, 2019. 336 pp. Notes and index. \$35.00.

Max Felker-Kantor, *Policing Los Angeles: Race, Resistance, and the Rise of the LAPD*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018. 392 pp. Maps, graph, table, notes, bibliography, and index. \$34.95.

Simon Balto, *Occupied Territory: Policing Black Chicago from Red Summer to Black Power*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019. xv + 360 pp. Maps, notes, bibliography, and index. \$37.50.

During the 2014 Christmas shopping season in New York City, two unsuspecting police officers, Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu, were fatally shot at point-blank range in the back of their heads by Ismaaiyl Brinsley in Bedford-Stuyvesant. That evening, Patrick Lynch, the President of the Patrolman's Benevolent Association (PBA) of the City of New York, charged "there's blood on many hands tonight—those that incited violence on the street under the guises of protests, that tried to tear down what New York City police officers did every day. [...] That blood on the hands starts on the steps of City Hall, in the office of the mayor."¹ That evening, when Mayor Bill de Blasio went to the hospital to pay his respects to the officers' families, the police officers present turned their back on him in protest. De Blasio received the same treatment at both Ramos's and Liu's funeral services, in spite of Police Commissioner William J. Bratton requesting that officers stop.

Before the tragedy of the killings, Lynch, the PBA, and the New York Police Department (NYPD) had been wary and distrustful of de Blasio. During his campaign for the mayor's office the year before, de Blasio ran on a platform of police reform. In the wake of the Black Lives Matter Movement (BLMM), the anti-police-violence movement that erupted in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's killer George Zimmerman in July 2013 and the litany of killings of black men in the summer of 2014, first Eric Garner by stranglehold by Officer Pantaleo in July in Staten Island, New York and less than a month

later Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, de Blasio had asserted that protestors had the right to demonstrate peacefully. During a press conference, the mayor candidly admitted, to the chagrin of the NYPD, that in order to ensure his biracial son's safety, he urged his son to "take special care" when speaking with the police.²

Lynch and the NYPD's dramatic display of resistance was more than symbolic. Across the nation, the NYPD's and the fallen officers' sympathizers showed their support by posting images of Blue Lives Matter, a countermovement spurred by the belief that the BLMM was antipolice. President Barack Obama condemned the murder of the officers and urged all Americans to respect police officers. Reverend Al Sharpton, representing the Garner family, also condemned the violence, as did the family of Michael Brown, stating unequivocally, "we reject any kind of violence directed towards members of law enforcement." It was expected that Obama would publicly mourn the death of police officers, but why would the Garner and Brown families address this matter when they certainly had nothing to do with it, when their expressed objective was to obtain justice for their slain loved ones? This was a demonstration of police power.

Over the last several years, historians in the burgeoning subfield of carceral studies have produced scholarship that has transformed how we understand the social, political, and economic landscape of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This work has been diverse in topic and historical period, from black women prisoners in late-nineteenth-century Georgia (Talitha L. Le Flouria, *Chained in Silence*, 2014; Sarah Haley, *No Mercy Here*, 2016), prisoners' resistance movements (Dan Berger, *Captive Nation*, 2014; Heather Ann Thompson, *Blood in the Water*, 2016), and federal and state crime policymakers in Washington, DC, California, and New York (Elizabeth Hinton, *From War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 2016; Julilly Kohler-Hausmann, *Getting Tough*, 2017) to U.S deportation trains, detention centers, and prison gangs in the 1960s (Robert T. Chase, *Caging Borders and Carceral States*, 2019). While policing has often appeared in this scholarship, its role in the making of the carceral state and its impact on urban life had until now received little scholarly attention.

The three works under review here by historians Clarence Taylor (*Fight the Power: African Americans and the Long History of Police Brutality in New York City*); Max Felker-Kantor, (*Policing Los Angeles: Race, Resistance, and the Rise of the LAPD*); and Simon Balto (*Occupied Territory: Policing Black Chicago from Red Summer to Black Power*) foreground the roles of police departments in shaping, and in many ways articulating, urban policy. Taylor was inspired to write *Fight the Power* in 2010 when, as a participant in a symposium on Mayor Lindsay and policing, he learned that many of the participants were unaware of the conflicted relationship between African Americans and the police and the ways this long history has shaped the city's politics. *Fight the Power* follows scholarship that has centered organized black resistance

against police brutality as a central component of the black freedom struggle (Martha Biondi, *To Stand and Fight*, 2003; Matthew J. Countryman, *Up South*, 2006; Donna Jean Murch, *Living for the City*, 2010; Jakobi Williams, *From the Bullet to the Ballot*, 2013). *Fight the Power* successfully tells this history of New York City's black resistance to police violence from the 1940s to the Mayor Bill de Blasio administration. Taylor argues that "race was the major reason for police brutality and that false racial narratives were a major impediment to struggles for change" (p. 6). Along with this story of black resistance, Taylor demonstrates how the NYPD used its colossal power to blunt the force and efficacy of black mobilization.

In eleven finely tuned chapters, Taylor covers a spectrum of black political mobilization against police brutality, including the black press, exemplified by Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.'s *The People's Voice* in the 1940s; the activism of the Communist Party during the early Cold War era, particularly black communists like Harlem councilman Ben Davis and leader of the Civil Rights Congress William L. Patterson; the Nation of Islam (NOI) and Malcolm X in the 1950s and 1960s; and various grassroots and national civil rights and protest organizations throughout the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Taylor follows this range of political formations with the ambit of tactics and campaigns these organizations used. For example, in the chapter on the NOI, Taylor introduces us to Malcolm X as pragmatist and negotiator rather than the champion of violence and self-defense; similarly, in the chapter on civil rights and community activists, we are introduced to Edward Jacko, an attorney then working for the NAACP and later the NOI, who sought redress for victims of police brutality through civil suits. In 1959, Jacko won a case for Ben Fields, who was beaten and shot in the stomach by police officer Harold "Davy Crockett" Stewart. The New York State Supreme Court found Stewart guilty of second-degree assault and awarded Fields \$50,000 (p. 91).

Fight the Power's central through line is the decades-long struggle of black and brown folks to create a civilian-controlled police review board (CCRB). Throughout the 1940s, the New York Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and other organizations tried unsuccessfully to pressure the city to empower its citizens with an independent, civilian-controlled review board in 1949. The CCRB was eventually created in 1953, but it was controlled by the NYPD. The Harlem uprising of 1964 and the presidential election of that same year catapulted the issue of police violence and the struggle over the review board to national prominence. The fatal police shooting of James Powell, a ninth-grade student at Robert F. Wagner Junior High School, by police lieutenant Thomas Gilligan inflamed the uprising and rejuvenated the campaign for control over the police review board. The revitalized struggle also opened up the city's anti-police-brutality campaign to national scrutiny and raised the question of whether it was judi-

cious to engage in public demonstrations while a consensus emerged in white America that the civil rights movement had gone too far.

The electoral race between President Lyndon B. Johnson and the Republican nominee, Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater, complicated the local battle. Goldwater's demands for law and order reinforced the city's anti-CCRB campaign voiced most vociferously by John Cassese, the leader of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association. This struggle pitted black national leaders against one another over whether it was prudent to halt protests or continue them in Harlem. James Farmer and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and some grassroots organizations supported the demonstrations, but Goldwater's calls for "law and order" partly dictated decisions by Martin Luther King, Bayard Rustin, and A. Philip Randolph to endorse the moratorium.

The PBA and, more surprisingly, supporters of CORE criticized Farmer's advocacy for demonstrations. One supporter urged Farmer not to "fight demagoguery with emotional outbursts," while another averred that "irresponsible demonstrations and riots" inflamed instead of discouraged "unfortunate behavior." As Taylor notes, "many of those who criticized the actions of Farmer . . . seemed unable to see police brutality as an issue or to link it with the civil rights struggle" (p. 126). This happened often because they took their cues from liberal politicians. In spite of Mayor Robert Wagner's record of supporting civil rights issues, he refused to admit that police brutality was a systemic problem. Instead, he framed it as acts of individual misconduct that were "due to stress and danger" (p. 111). As historian Karen R. Miller and others have shown, northern liberals like Wagner tried to neutralize allegations of racism and segregation by using a "colorblind" language that masked patterns of racial discrimination and inequality (*Managing Inequality*, 2014).

Thus, at the height of the southern civil rights movement, public officials, intellectuals, and the police authored false narratives of black criminality in the liberal North. The mayoral race in 1965 between progressive Republican John Lindsay and William F. Buckley of the Conservative Party and the battle over the CCRB in 1966 is illustrative. Lindsay's support of the CCRB in the spring of 1965 precipitated a torrent of criticism from Cassese and the PBA. The PBA in June 1965 led a demonstration at City Hall opposing placing control of the review board in the hands of civilians. Cassese argued that "the objective of black New Yorkers was to weaken the police so that black criminals would be punished" (p. 135).

Buckley strategically wove this narrative into his own mayoral campaign. Believing that the police were victims, he contended that blacks should stop "berating the police" and support police crime-fighting by "isolate[ing] the criminals in their midst" (p. 138). The PBA's and Buckley's chicanery failed. Lindsay won the mayoral race, but Cassese's and Buckley's fledgling "black-on-black crime" argument articulated the narrative that defeated the campaign

for a citizen-controlled review board in 1966. As Taylor aptly describes, it was “the triumph of a false narrative” (pp. 144–158). The false narrative was generated by a matrix of forces—electoral politics, anti-civil-rights grassroots organization, and media that rearticulated, spread, and reinforced the veracity of this narrative.

Taylor also situates Mayor Rudolph Giuliani within the movement’s long struggle for the CCRB. Giuliani and Police Commissioner William Bratton are notorious for having inaugurated New York City’s “Zero Tolerance” and CompStat, a program that tracks and assesses crimes, then employs that data to inform police action. Bratton modeled Zero Tolerance on the “broken windows” theory, formulated by political scientists George L. Kelling and James Q. Wilson. Giuliani’s Zero Tolerance and the Streets Crime Unit are infamous for its brutality, especially because of the torture of Abner Louima and killing of Amadou Diallo and Patrick Dorismond. Giuliani’s political career and electability initially arose because of his support of the PBA’s protest in the fall of 1992 against David Dinkins, Gotham City’s first and only black mayor.

Although he had only recently increased the police force and initiated a campaign to reduce the crime rate, Dinkins had promised to support an all-civilian police review board. Like Buckley in 1965, Giuliani encouraged the police’s belligerent behavior toward Dinkins. Some police officers carried posters with racist caricatures of the mayor, depicting him with big lips and a large afro. Dinkins, with the help of the city council, passed the legislation for the CCRB, but once Giuliani became mayor, he aggressively used his power of the purse to weaken its effectiveness, reducing its budget by 17 percent, which prevented it from hiring investigators. The fight for the CCRB continues. Since late summer 2012, through the efforts of the Citizens Union, a watchdog advocacy group, and others, the CCRB has secured prosecutorial powers but the police commissioner has the final discretion to determine outcomes even when the board has concluded that wrongdoing has occurred (p. 249).

In addition to centering the CCRB, in the chapter on Mayor Bill de Blasio, *Fight the Power* reveals the influence of police power and the ways that liberals have had to navigate it. Writing that while “no mayor ha[d] done more to help eliminate” police brutality, Taylor notes that de Blasio has unwaveringly and publicly supported broken-windows policing (p. 243). After appearing to support the BLMM, de Blasio received pushback not only from the NYPD but also from media and many white New Yorkers. The *New York Post*’s Michael Goodwin wrote an opinion piece with the headline, “Why de Blasio smears the NYPD.” In a *New York Times* and Siena College poll, the majority of white New Yorkers disapproved of his performance, felt less safe, and that the city was headed in the wrong direction under de Blasio. In June 2015, de Blasio announced he would increase the NYPD’s budget to expand the police force, though only two months before he had explained that there was no need to do

so. Confronted by negative opinion polls and a phalanx of NYPD defenders, de Blasio changed his stand on police reform. Describing this new plan, police commissioner Bratton rejoiced, "I can safely say that I think this is probably one of the best budgets that this department has ever had" (p. 235).

Fight the Power effectively recounts New York City's long history of police brutality and black New Yorkers' resistance to it, unveiling the array of strategies the movement employed to obtain "people power." Because Taylor covers a wide range of organizations within seventy years, there are some historical gaps and themes he might have developed further in the book. For example, *Fight the Power* jumps from Lindsay and the battle over the civilian review board in the mid-1960s to Giuliani in the 1990s. The oppression of black radicals, such as the trial of the Panther 21; youth of color in the controversial Central Park jogger case in 1989; and the police murder of Eleanor Bumpurs in 1984, among others, receive scarce attention here. This is a matter of focus, for Taylor prioritizes the battle over the civilian review board. In the later chapters especially, this battle demonstrates the formidable power of the PBA and its influence on urban politics, yet we only get a sense of that power as a political or literal bludgeon. The growth of New York City's police power, particularly how it came to such political sway is unclear. Historians Max Felker-Kantor's *Policing Los Angeles* and Simon Balto's *Occupied Territory* fill this lacuna left by Taylor.

In *Policing Los Angeles*, Felker-Kantor details how the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) built a police state from the Watts uprising in August 1965 to the responses to Rodney King's beating in 1992. Deeply researched and well-argued from a prodigious evidentiary base, Felker-Kantor untangles the intricate web of policing and crime policy and the LAPD's embeddedness in the city's economic and political life. Building on but departing from recent work on policing (Christopher Lowen Agee, *The Streets of San Francisco*, 2014) and the carceral state (Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 2016), Felker-Kantor treats the police as the central historical actors and engineers in the making of the carceral state.

To do this, he delineates the expansion of police discretionary power under Los Angeles's first black mayor, Tom Bradley, and the gaggle of police chiefs that served his administration. More specifically, Felker-Kantor argues that Bradley's liberal approach, despite its effort to reform the police department—as others scholar have recently demonstrated—contributed to the growth of police influence and reinforced police power (Naomi Murakawa, *The First Civil Right*, 2014; Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 2016). *Policing Los Angeles*, like Taylor's *Fight the Power*, underscores stories of resistance, especially of the various black and brown protest organizations that mobilized individually and collectively against systemic police brutality and campaigned for community control over the police. By foregrounding the

liberal law-and-order politics of Bradley and policing, Felker-Kantor places urban politics, law enforcement, and social movements at the center of the history of the making of the carceral state.

The first three chapters delineate the reign of police chief William Parker, the buildup to the Watts uprising, and its aftermath. Felker-Kantor recasts the insurrection as neither a crime problem nor one of only economic, social, and political inequality but also a problem of police violence. African Americans, therefore, were unsurprised by the city's, the LAPD's, and the state of California's response to the melee. California's governor, Edmund "Pat" Brown appointed John McCone to chair a commission to investigate the uprising. The McCone Commission blamed the participants and criminalized the unrest. Police Chief Tom Reddin, who headed the department after the death of Parker in 1966, used the event, not unlike other politicians and police heads across the nation, as evidence to legitimate calls for more police power. Reddin's rhetoric occurred, as others have written, during a period of seismic transformation in national politics and criminal-justice policy (Elizabeth Hinton, *From War on Poverty to War on Crime*, 2016).

In July 1967, President Johnson assembled the President's National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, known as the Kerner Commission, after its chair Governor Otto Kerner, Jr. of Illinois, to both investigate the cause of the spate of rebellions and recommend solutions.

According to Reddin, who spoke to the Kerner Commission, 1968 was "the year of the Cop. Everything you want to get. And I say I want more, and I should be getting it" (p. 43). The federal government, and the state of California with the gubernatorial victory of Ronald Reagan, obliged. A month after Watts burned, President Lyndon Baines Johnson and Congress voted in the Law Enforcement Assistance Act and later the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, creating the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), which set up the federal infrastructure for the modern carceral state, feeding Los Angeles's bulging "martial infrastructure" (p. 50).

Bradley began his career as a police officer, rising to the rank of lieutenant, and then ran for and was elected to the city council in 1963. It was as a councilman and police veteran, witnessing the corruption of the LAPD and the disregard for black discontent in the McCone commission, that Bradley saw an opportunity to make his mark on the city. In 1969, he entered a mayoral race mired in tensions over racial conflict, rising crime rates, and conservative law-and-order demands, against incumbent Sam Yorty. Bradley lost that race. But four years later, he ran again, this time promoting his law-and-order credentials, while at the same time promising to reform aggressive policing, and won. From the beginning, the Bradley administration was expected to combat juvenile crime. Bradley created the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice Planning (MOCJP) to manage police power and coordinate education, social welfare, and police programs to better handle juvenile crime. Vocal about

its commitment to rehabilitation, the Bradley administration nonetheless contributed to creating a two-tiered juvenile-justice system. Bradley and his MOCJP administrators offered diversionary and rehabilitative programs for at-risk youth yet fortified the punishment of serious offenders. Although law enforcement's integration into other city agencies, such as MOCJP, gave Bradley greater leverage in controlling the police, this move also expanded police discretion into these other areas. For example, one of the juvenile prevention programs, Human Efforts at Revitalizing Youth (HEAVY) created in 1974, was funded by the LEAA and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. Because federal funding was earmarked for criminal justice, 51 percent of the funding had to be directed towards criminal justice (p. 97).

With Bradley's efforts entangled in law enforcement, the efficacy of his rehabilitation programs was always tempered. Indeed, even before Bradley took office, educators and politicians—liberals and conservatives—viewed the rehabilitative programs as inadequate and, in many cases, generative of crime. To Mexican American and African American students' demands for programs that addressed poor housing, inadequate schools, and the lackluster job market, school administrators proffered law enforcement as the singular priority and answer. In 1969, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) adopted a "get tough" policy that expanded police discretion over violent youth. The LAPD, followed by local and national news stories naturalizing the police's perspective, framed violence as a "new type of criminal behavior among African Americans that could be solved only through arrest, punishment, and containment" (pp. 100–101). The Board of Education augmented the district's security, which operated on a budget of \$4.5 million in 1974 and then \$7 million by 1977. Bradley supported these policies and established new security systems in six predominately black schools in South Central Los Angeles (p. 102). The principal of Washington High School, Eugene McAdoo, asserted that "the community rehabilitation program is a farce." McAdoo believed security "not curriculum or new approaches to teaching" was the problem (pp. 102–103).

Policing Los Angeles places these changes in the LAPD within the city's transforming political and economic milieu. Confronted by deindustrialization and dismal federal support for social welfare and urban development, Bradley, like many other metropolitan mayors, invested resources in real estate and the development of downtown Los Angeles to make the city more inviting for international investment. Yet here, Felker-Kantor connects this story of urban crisis to the shift from the war on crime in the late 1960s and 1970s to the war on drugs in the 1980s. With federal funds, the LAPD's militarized police units became even larger and more punitive, especially those directed at black gangs—all of this engineered through Bradley's liberal law-and-order apparatus.

Felker-Kantor's major contribution is his excavation of the depth, density, and scale of the LAPD's police power and LAPD's deployment of that power across, through, and between the gamut of racial spatial arrangements. Along with creating anti-gang police units, the LAPD formed programs to surveil black and brown neighborhoods. Through these programs, the police implanted itself in educational and other public institutions. One program initiated in 1973, the Disposition Data Coordination Project (DDCP), intended to deter juvenile delinquency monitored black children and teenagers. The DDCP created a database, known as the "Alpha File," that targeted black and brown neighborhoods, "reinforc[ing] racialized assumptions of criminality" (p. 103). During the late 1970s, the LAPD expanded its power into the arena of immigration. Using "broken window" policing methods to target immigrants and refugees, especially the activities they engaged in to earn a living, such as vending and day labor, the LAPD cooperated with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for arrest, detention, and deportation. Similarly, in 1970, the LAPD created the Public Disorder Intelligence Division (PDID), a covert action network that monitored and infiltrated radical and progressive movements in the city and beyond Los Angeles (p. 155). The PDID was formed to prevent uprisings and protect law-abiding citizens from "revolutionaries." With the authority to determine what constituted a threat or who was subversive, the PDID shifted its attention from crime to "disorder." The PDID infiltrated the Black Panther Party and the Coalition Against Police Abuse (CAPA). After more than a decade of lawsuits and condemnation from activist organizations, such as the Citizens Commission on Police Repression (CCPR), and even from Bradley himself, the PDID was disbanded in 1983.

The seemingly infinite power that the LAPD held explains why the manifold campaigns and movements against police brutality and for a civilian review board and community control over the police department failed repeatedly. The repression of the Black Panther Party and student activists during the 1968 blowout preceded Bradley's mayoralty. But Bradley's promise to reform the police department nevertheless was unsuccessful. Each time he challenged the LAPD, Bradley strengthened the machinery and legitimacy of police power. On January 3, 1979, two officers—one white and the other black—shot Eula Mae Love, an elderly African American widow and mother of three daughters, over a "business dispute." The killing of Love rekindled the protest movement against police brutality, which sought justice for the Love family and the termination of the LAPD's discriminatory use of the chokehold. Bradley supported the movement, endorsing enhanced human relations training, greater limits on officer discretion, and an investigation by the Board of Police Commissioners. Yet in 1980, Bradley would not support the Campaign for a Civilian Review Board—a coalition of several organizations, including the CAPA, the NAACP, the California Democratic Club Black Caucus, and the Coalition for Economic Democracy (p. 135).

Felker-Kantor's excellent book tells a remarkably troubling story of the LAPD's punitive history, painstakingly tracking the genesis of the LAPD's mammoth discretionary and martial capacity. Felker-Kantor is especially deft at exposing the ways in which police and criminal justice leaders both fashioned political opportunities by taking advantage of the "get tough," anti-liberal political environment while also flourishing within Bradley's liberal law-and-order apparatus. Like Taylor's *Fight the Power, Policing Los Angeles's* chapters on black and brown resistance reveal the LAPD's unfettered might. But Felker-Kantor also sheds some light on African Americans' and Mexican Americans' efforts to stop crime and gang violence in their neighborhoods, offering a broader conceptualization of resistance than Taylor. Police violence harmed black people, but so too did police neglect. Yet, because Felker-Kantor frames these movements generally outside the scope of black and brown community dynamics, his stories are often impressionistic. Balto's *Occupied Territory* delves deeper into this history in his book on policing in Chicago before the wars on crime and drugs that were so central to creating the LAPD's martial infrastructure.

Occupied Territory explores how Chicago, from the early 1910s to the early 1970s, "built an intricate, powerful carceral machinery" (p. 2). Balto's police history of Chicago builds on but complicates scholarship on the carceral state that privileges federal and state legislation and policies as the engine that drove mass incarceration. Rooting this history in a single city, focusing on that place's residents and its policing structures (the Chicago Police Department, or CPD), *Occupied Territory* seeks "to explain why, when the tumorous growth of mass incarceration did begin to metastasize, it developed so suddenly as a full-blown instrument of racial repression." Put differently, Balto argues that the infrastructure of the carceral state was formed at the local level. Balto has produced a well-written and well-argued book, demonstrating that the central components of the modern policing apparatus were "already in evidence, in some form or another, on Chicago's black South and West Sides," well before the late 1960s and the early 1970s (p. 5).

Occupied Territory, organized into seven chapters, opens with the 1919 race riot. It began on July 27 with the death of Eugene Williams, a black teenager who, while swimming in Lake Michigan, crossed an imagined colorline separating black and white areas of the 29th Street Beach. A band of white men hurled stones at Eugene Williams and he drowned. The stoning of Williams but also the refusal of a white police officer to arrest those culpable escalated the conflict between black and white onlookers. Lasting until August 3, the uproar spread to and was concentrated in black areas of the South Side. In the end, 15 whites and 23 blacks lost their lives to the melee. Balto uses this well-known case of white mob violence to draw attention to how Chicago's police officers failed to protect black citizens and, more often than not, wittingly joined the fray on the side of whites. Here, and throughout the book, Balto

interrogates the idea that the work of the police is “to protect and serve.” The CPD’s behavior during the riot was principally a question of police discretion, the individual and collective power of police to choose whom they would protect or neglect or punish. Not much changed during the Prohibition era, when politicians and the police alike aided and abetted the expansion of vice activity in black districts. Police corruption operated as a force of violence in black areas, where the CPD allowed crime to thrive, cementing the already enduring association of crime with black people and black residential areas. These first two chapters established that while police repression was rampant, the CPD and the criminal justice leaders had yet to create police policy that targeted Chicago’s black community. As the chapter on the Great Depression illustrates, the CPD criminalized and brutally punished Chicago’s poorer and more progressive residents, without regard to race or ethnicity.

In the remaining chapters, Balto explains the process of the “punitive turn,” beginning in the late 1940s and 1950s and coalescing in the decade of the 1960s with police commissioner Orlando Wilson. Brought to Chicago as a reformer, Wilson professionalized the CPD, implementing merit-based hiring and promotion, and he even ostensibly committed to improving relations between the police and the black community. In the early 1960s, Wilson inaugurated “aggressive preventive patrol,” a policy that institutionalized police occupation of black neighborhoods. Wilson’s CPD cracked down on black gangs and civil rights activists, which Balto demonstrates in a fascinating section on Martin Luther King, Jr. But under Police Commissioner Jim Conlisk, the CPD unleashed even more vindictive punishment on gangs, progressives, and black radicals, most notably Fred Hampton in 1969. *Occupied Territory’s* last chapter ends with the struggle against police brutality, with an explication of coalition politics, and with a treatment of the unsuccessful battle for community control of the police.

Because Balto’s narrative begins prior to President Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Crime, we learn a great deal about not only the threads of modern policing but also how these threads were strung through the actions of an array of historical actors. In this way, like historians whose work also begins before World War II, Balto depicts a longer arc of carceral power and the criminalization of black communities (Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 2010; Tera Eva Agyepong, *The Criminalization of Black Children*, 2015; Carl Suddler, *Presumed Criminal*, 2019). Between 1945 and 1965, for different reasons, white politicians’, white elites’, and white citizens’ interests converged, and the CPD’s budget, personnel, and discretionary reach expanded exponentially. While the second great migration precipitated white civilian violence, the confluence of urban investment toward the Loop, deindustrialization, white flight and capital flight, and economic retrenchment reoriented crime policy toward black people and black neighborhoods. The punitive turn, Balto then

argues, mirroring the work of Taylor and Felker-Kantor, was not about the lived experiences of black people. Rather, the punitive turn pivoted upon “white fixations on the specter of black crime, especially as black in-migration to the city escalated” (p. 128).

Pressured by the Chicago Commission on Crime’s controversial report on crime activity in the Fifth Police District in the black South Side in 1946, and the fear-mongering news headlines that accompanied it, Police Commissioner Prendergast created three “special squads” to root out crime in that community. Manned by black officers, the squads targeted, searched, and arrested black people. Although the campaign was unsuccessful, law enforcement became the major way that city government responded to black people, including in the area of public health. But it was during the mayoralty of Richard J. Daley, beginning in 1955, when the scale and infrastructure of the CPD began to take form. Prompted by his political opponent Martin Kennelly’s complaints about crime conditions during the 1954 mayoral election, Daley increased the size of the police force and created a new task force modeled after Prendergast’s initial special squads of three, now comprised of twenty squads of eleven men each (p. 146). Less than two decades after World War II, black Chicago was already occupied territory.

Wilson’s call for an augmentation and reorientation of policing neighborhoods in the early 1960s made the punitive turn more evident, consequential, and oppressive. Between 1964–1970, the police force ballooned by 19.89%. In those same years, the CPD’s budget doubled. The appearance of rising crime rates incited a moral panic and aided Wilson’s program of increasing the size of the CPD. Wilson’s goal was to provide “constant surveillance of every corner of the city.” The CPD divided Chicago into smaller beats and policed them with dedicated patrols. High-crime areas were occupied by plainclothes police in unmarked cars, officers walking the beat, and officers on the task force (p. 159). Arrests were the immediate goal, quotas the metric to measure officers’ efficiency, and lobbying for stop and frisk legislation the means to effect Wilson’s aggressive preventive patrol. Despite the failure of his legislative campaign, Wilson nonetheless encouraged his officers to continue to use stop-and-frisk “until the Supreme Court declared it illegal” (p. 162).

Along with the argument about the punitive turn predating the wars on crime and drugs, *Occupied Territory* also explores what might be called the “politics of safety.” Other scholars have centered blacks encounters with crime and anti-crime campaigns for safety as an impetus for the growth of the carceral state (Michael Javen Fortner, *Black Silent Majority*, 2015; James Forman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own*; Kali N. Gross, *Colored Amazons*, 2006; Cheryl D. Hicks, *Talk with You Like a Woman*, 2010; LaShawn Harris, *Sex Workers, Psychics, and Numbers Runners*, 2016). Balto historicizes this too but from a different vantage point, centering black Chicagoans’ quotidian encounters with police. Rather

than viewing campaigns against police brutality and demands for safety from crime as contradictory, black Chicagoans, like African Americans elsewhere, understood their demands for safety as an extension of their “freedom dreams.” In Chapter 3, “Whose Police?” Balto shows how blacks’ efforts to desegregate white neighborhoods and public spaces in the 1940s and 1950s were met with white retaliation, often in the form of violence. Desegregation campaigns in Trumbull Park housing projects, for example, during the 1950s quickly became demands for police protection and eventually calls for self-defense. Although black Chicagoans’ lobbying for police protection from white violence were different from their demands for safety from intracommunity crime in their own neighborhood, in both cases the CPD neglected to protect them, so they had to mobilize themselves for self-protection and safety.

In the Robert Taylor Homes, for example, one of the largest public-housing projects in city, black women formed an informal group known as “Mama’s Mafias” to block gang recruitment (p. 237); the Afro-American Patrolman League, which demanded the diversification of the police force to halt police brutality, also argued that “black people have never been given the service and protection white people receive” (p. 244). Foregrounding black safety instead of centering intraracial black crime, Balto extends his analysis to the problem of police discretion; in this case, the decision to withhold the services of CPD. We learn about policing not only from what police did but also from what they did not do. Taylor and Felker-Kantor describe cases of violence mainly to explain how police brutality precipitated mobilization among protest organizations, politicians, and communities of color against police violence. Rather than serving as the prelude to the story of black resistance, violence is a pivotal historical actor in Balto’s story. We get a deeper understanding of the ways in which the city of Chicago repeatedly created an environment in which it was impossible for black people ever to be fully safe.

Occupied Territory singles out the limits of black electoral politics in arresting CPD’s power, effectively showing that the CPD ignored the demands of black political leadership to check police brutality and deliver police protection to black Chicagoans. While Balto provides episodic instances of black challenges to police brutality, he might have woven a more robust argument about black politics and resistance throughout the book, as Taylor does in *Fight the Power*. Similarly, he might have engaged the question that animates *Policing Los Angeles* but is less clear in Taylor’s: what impact did Chicago’s black public officials (and black leadership in general) have on the development of Chicago’s carceral state and to what degree, if any, were they wittingly or unwittingly complicit in its growth? While Balto’s evidence suggests that it was both, an engagement with this question might in part help to explain not only the limits of black resistance but also explicate how the juggernaut of police power in Chicago came to be.

While reading these important books collectively, I kept returning to Edward J. Escobar's 1999 classic, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican Americans and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900–1945*. All three books, especially Balto's, echo Escobar's concluding thoughts. Published after the 1992 civil insurrection in Los Angeles and in the midst of the War on Drugs, Escobar concluded that race and racism were the pivots upon which modern police departments were built. As Escobar notes, the growth of big-city police departments occurred, in part, through a "preoccupation with minority crime," which helped "develop a constituency for the department's bureaucratic agenda." That constituency, as Balto shows, included white residents in North Lawndale in the 1950s that "lodged their appeals to police not as citizens generally but as white people in particular" (p. 137). Taylor and Felker-Kantor tell complementary stories of white civilians' complicity. Paralleling Thomas Sugrue's argument about the vulnerability of the New Deal coalition from the start (*The Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 1996), Balto's work pushes back the periodization of law and order and the transformation of the Democratic Party. This material helps us better understand the making of the carceral state in postwar America but also arguably why many white Americans outside the South were ready for Goldwater in 1964.

Well before the turbulent era that historian Peter B. Levy has dubbed the "Great Uprising," white citizens were deeply invested in and primed for the punitive turn (*The Great Uprising*, 2018). Despite the long history of resistance these books tell, none end with the anti-police-brutality campaigns being victorious. Part of this had to do with the guile of liberal public officials in the Jim Crow North, as historians Brian Purnell and Jeanne Theoharis have argued (*The Strange Careers of Jim Crow North*, 2019), as well as the political sway of white citizens as voters and sometimes as grassroots activists. Another element that these works take up is the ways policing and other carceral institutions criminalize people of color. With the support of whites, Escobar writes, police departments had become "virtually insulated from criticism emanating from the citizenry and even from public officials" (pp. 286–287). This insight, I think, explicates why Giuliani was able to co-opt the PBA's protests against Dinkins, why liberal law-and-order politicians like Mayor Bradley endorsed procedural justice at the expense of supporting putting meaningful power in the hands of civilians, and why de Blasio yielded to the demands of the PBA in 2015 and augmented New York City's police force.

The dangerous brew of political ambition and the belief that black and brown people are inherently criminal, requiring surveillance and punishment, have unrelentingly kept us whirling in this struggle to bring equity to these communities but also to make real the idea that black and brown lives matter.

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1. CBS News, "NY Police Union Blames Mayor, Protestors after Deaths of NYPD Officers" December 21, 2014, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ny-police-union-blames-mayor-protesters-after-deaths-of-nypd-officers/>

2. Michael M. Grynbaum and Nikita Stewart "De Blasio Reacts as Mayor and a Father" *New York Times*, December 3, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/04/nyregion/de-blasio-reacts-as-mayor-and-a-father-to-chokehold-case-decision.html>.