

# RESIDUAL NEIGHBORS

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JEWISH-AFRICAN AMERICAN INTERACTIONS IN  
CLEVELAND FROM 1900 to 1970

by  
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Residual Neighbors: Jewish-African American Interactions in Cleveland  
from 1900 to 1970

Abstract

by

JOHN BADEN

This master's thesis examines Jewish and African American relations in Cleveland, Ohio from 1900 to 1970. It argues that interactions between Jews and African Americans in the North have been forged by their history of shared urban space which fostered inter-reliance between Jewish entrepreneurs and their black customers. While this African American-Jewish inter-reliance has been explored in the context of civil rights, an examination of street-level interactions in shared urban spaces such as Jewish-run corner-stores, nightclubs, music shops, housing, and even criminal enterprises reveals that relations between African Americans and Jews have been driven as much by entrepreneurship, markets, and patterns of consumption as by their history as two oppressed peoples. Although this study focuses on Cleveland, it also illustrates some of the basic dynamics of demographic change and inter-ethnic activity in urban America during the twentieth century.

## Introduction

This master's thesis examines Jewish and African American relations in Cleveland, Ohio from 1900 to 1970. It argues that interactions between Jews and African Americans in the North have been forged by their history of shared urban space which fostered inter-reliance between Jewish entrepreneurs and their black customers. While this African American-Jewish inter-reliance has been explored in the context of civil rights, an examination of street-level interactions in shared urban spaces such as Jewish-run corner-stores, nightclubs, music shops, housing, and even criminal enterprises reveals that relations between African Americans and Jews have been driven as much by entrepreneurship, markets, and patterns of consumption as by their history as two oppressed peoples. Although this study focuses on Cleveland, it also illustrates some of the basic dynamics of demographic change and inter-ethnic activity in urban America during the twentieth century.

Economic cooperation and antagonism between African Americans and Jews have been critical to the history of U.S. cities. Since discrimination prevented most African Americans from opening their own stores, blacks heavily relied on Jewish-owned enterprises for groceries, housing, credit, leisure, and employment in many cities.<sup>1</sup> Such

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<sup>1</sup> In 1920, 61.90 to 73.01 percent of Central Avenue grocers (the heart of Cleveland's African American population) were Jewish, while Jews constituted about 9-12.5 percent of the city. For methodology on grocers, see footnote #48. This level of uncertainty for Jewish population data is due to the lack of Jewish population numbers for 1920. Instead, a range of 1918 and 1923 were used. There was also ambiguity in the Jewish population report if the numbers referred to Greater Cleveland or Cleveland proper which figured into the range presented Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory* [microfilm], (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications) and The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, "Estimating Cleveland's Jewish Population 1979," (The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, 1980), in North American Jewish Data Bank, [http://www.jewishdatabank.org/Archive/C-OH-Cleveland-1978-Estimating\\_Cleveland's\\_Jewish\\_Population.pdf](http://www.jewishdatabank.org/Archive/C-OH-Cleveland-1978-Estimating_Cleveland's_Jewish_Population.pdf). *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, "Cleveland: A Bicentennial Timeline," *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, <http://ech.cwru.edu/timeline.html>. For other cities, see also Louis Wirth, *The Ghetto* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1997), 151. St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, "The Growth of a 'Negro Market,'" in *Strangers & Neighbors: Relations Between Blacks & Jews in the United States*, ed. Maurianne Adams and John H. Bracey

businesses provided needed services for the under-served urban African American community, and some like Record Rendezvous in Cleveland and the Chess Records in Chicago played a key role in the development and popularization of cultural expressions like jazz, rap, and rock 'n' roll. Other businesses, however, were known to exploit African-American residents, which led to mistrust, boycotts, and property destruction.

Jewish-African American relations in Cleveland began in earnest around 1890 as black migrants from the South and Jewish immigrants from Europe began to share neighborhoods in Cleveland's near-East Side, especially in the section of town known as Central. Both communities came to Cleveland in hopes of economic advancement and to avoid persecution in their former homes. Once there, many Jews opened up stores in the Central neighborhood. After African Americans entered the city en masse during World War I, they became a crucial customer-base for these entrepreneurs. As Jews moved to better neighborhoods during the mid-1920s, they often retained stores in what were becoming largely African American sections of town. Meanwhile, persistent racism and a lack of capital prevented the overwhelming majority of African Americans from opening stores themselves. As a result, they continued to rely on Jewish-owned establishments for decades to come.

By the 1960s, nearly all of Cleveland's Jews had moved into practically all-white suburbs, and the city's black population found themselves abandoned in a city with

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(Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 367. A footnote in this selection notes that 3/4ths of the merchants in the Bronzeville neighborhood of Chicago were Jewish, but also notes that in New Orleans, "Italian merchants predominate." Dominic J. Capeci Jr., "Black-Jewish Relations in Wartime Detroit: The Marsh, Loving, Wolf Surveys and the Race Riot of 1943," in *Strangers & Neighbors: Relations Between Blacks & Jews in the United States*, ed. Maurianne Adams and John H. Bracey (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 384, 393. This article notes that businesses damaged during the 1943 race riot predominately affected Jewish-owned businesses, and the large number of Jewish businesses in the riot area were a result of it previously being a Jewish neighborhood.



fleeting job opportunities and a diminishing tax base. Despite collaboration between African Americans and Jews to combat segregation and prejudice during this era, social and economic disparity ultimately fueled tensions between the two communities.

These tensions reached a boiling point in the late 1960s, and riots broke out in 1966 and 1968. During these riots, white owned businesses, including the dozens of Jewish businesses in African American neighborhoods were soft targets for rioters upset at the lack of social and economic progress in their communities. By the end of the decade, fear of unrest, rising insurance rates, a diminishing customer base, and an aging population of storekeepers caused many if not most of the businesses to close. By the end of the 1970s, hardly any commercial interactions persisted between Jews and African Americans in Cleveland proper.<sup>2</sup>

While this study primarily focuses on street-level interactions between African Americans and Jews, a separate activist relationship has existed between black and Jews since the turn of the twentieth century. Jews have historically played a disproportionate role in both funding and founding organizations like the NAACP, volunteering for black voter registration drives in the South, and providing legal support in landmark Civil Rights cases. The development of this “alliance” between Jews and African Americans and the tensions that it experienced from the late 1960s to the 1990s is the most researched aspect of African American-Jewish relations. There have been far fewer studies of commercial and lay interactions.

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<sup>2</sup> City Directory information shows that over 50 percent of grocery stores on Central Avenue closed between 1960 and 1970. Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory [microfilm]*, (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications).

In 2006, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* ran an article on Gordon’s Cycle Shop that referred to it as Glenville’s last Jewish-owned business. Michael Sangiacomo, “He’s not ready for cycle to end: Glenville bike shop owner continuing family tradition,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, September 26, 2006, in Arnold Berger, “Gordon Cycle & Supply-The Last Jewish - Owned Business in Glenville,” *Cleveland Jewish History*, <http://www.clevelandjewishhistory.net/glenville/gordoncycle.htm>.

Three notable works about activism have been Cheryl Greenberg's *Troubling the Waters*, Jonathan Kaufman's *Broken Alliance*, and Seth Forman's "The Unbearable Whiteness of Being Jewish (which became the basis for his book *Blacks in the Jewish Mind*)." Greenberg wrote that the purpose of her book was to "temper the idealized vision of perfect mutuality by demonstrating that blacks and Jews had different but overlapping goals and interests which converged in a particular historical moment [the 1950s-60s]." <sup>3</sup> Kaufman's work consists of several case studies that demonstrate what the author sees as the downfall of a African American-Jewish alliance. Like Greenberg, Kaufmann wrote that African American-Jewish collaboration was "rooted as much in the hard currency of politics and self-interest as in love and idealism," and fell victim to "sleeping in the same bed, [but] dreaming different dreams." <sup>4</sup> Seth Forman's 1997 article entitled "The Unbearable Whiteness of Being Jewish," took a different approach. Forman argued that "the decision of the major Jewish organizations to pursue civil rights for all constituted a commitment to Jewish 'otherness' through liberalism," and that supporting civil rights more than other whites "was one way of ensuring communal purpose and survival." <sup>5</sup>

Other studies touch upon street-level interactions, but remain primarily focused on civil rights or urban demographic change as is the case with Beryl Satter's *Family Properties* and Wendell Pritchett's *Brownsville, Brooklyn*. Beryl Satter's *Family Properties* addresses commercial relations in much more detail, but focuses on real estate exploitation and the author's father, who was a civil rights activist. Other works like

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<sup>3</sup> Cheryl Lynn Greenberg, *Troubling the Waters: Black-Jewish Relations in the American Century*, Politics and Society in Twentieth-century America (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2006), 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Broken Alliance: The Turbulent Times Between Blacks and Jews in America* (New York: Scribner, 1988), 267- 268.

<sup>5</sup> Seth Forman, "The Unbearable Whiteness of Being Jewish: Desegregation in the South and the Crisis of Jewish Liberalism (1997)," in *Strangers & Neighbors: Relations Between Blacks & Jews in the United States*, ed. Maurianne Adams and John H. Bracey (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 631.

Wendell Pritchett's *Brownsville, Brooklyn* analyzes neighborhood transition, but focuses on demographic change and community activism rather than residual businesses that remain in the neighborhood after it becomes predominantly African American.

One possible reason so many authors have shied away from discussing African American-Jewish relations in the economic sphere is that it is a sensitive topic for both communities. For centuries, Jews have been wrongly stereotyped as obsessed with money. During the 1960s and 70s, some African American activists perceived Jews as influencing too much control over institutions (from SNCC to liquor stores to record labels) that they feel should be controlled by their own community. One possible reason for the absence of more historical examinations of African American-Jewish commercial relations since the 1960s may be due to fears of re-opening these conflicts, and inadvertently adding to stereotypes of Jews as exploiters and blacks as violent. When asked about the role of Jews in rhythm and blues, producer Jerry Wexler (who has been credited with coining the term) responded, "That gets very hairy and I'd rather not get into that," and "it opens up too many questionable areas, and I'm not going to fuck with that."<sup>6</sup> Wexler, had reason to remain silent. As *New York Times* journalist John Leland wrote in his book *Hip: The History*, that Wexler was hung in effigy at a 1968 black music conference, and believed "there was a plot to kill him to protest white control of the music business."<sup>7</sup>

Studies of African American-Jewish relations that have included economics have generally done so for the purposes of providing historical perspective for the various conflicts between the two communities, rather than as something that warrants study in

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<sup>6</sup> John Leland, 208.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 208.

its own right. St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton's 1945 book *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* analyzed the growth of what they called "the negro market," and the trouble black businesses had with competing against white (mostly Jewish) establishments in Chicago. In wake of the 1943 Detroit riots, Wayne State University launched a study headed by sociologists, Donald C. Marsh, Eleanor Wolf, and Alvin Loving to investigate African American-Jewish relations, and determine if the riots that had burned many Jewish businesses were motivated by anti-Semitism. They concluded this was not the case.

Since World War II, discussion of African American-Jewish commercial relations has been sparse. Robert G. Weisbord and Arthur Benjamin Stein's 1970 book, *Bittersweet Encounter*, included an exploration of African American-Jewish street level interactions, but once more dedicated most of its pages to ideological issues and points of tensions. As the book's introduction notes, its purpose was "to provide a study which places contemporary Jewish-Negro relations in historical perspective; and hopefully to shed some light on an area of interracial relations that has already generated much heat and misunderstanding in recent years." In 1985, historian Dominic Capeci re-examined the Marsh, Loving, and Wolf study, and supported its findings.

Jennifer Lee's 2002 book, *Civility in the City: Black, Jews, and Koreans in Urban America* offers a sociological examination of contemporary inner-city retailers, primarily in Philadelphia and New York.<sup>8</sup> Although the book is an excellent work of contemporary sociology, it fixes on one point in time and on cities which have vastly different histories than Cleveland or other Great Lakes industrial cities. In Cleveland, white flight has been

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<sup>8</sup> Jennifer Lee, *Civility in the City: Blacks, Jews, and Koreans in Urban America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

more widespread, few Jewish businesses remain in black neighborhoods, and far fewer immigrant entrepreneurs have opened up inner-city retail businesses. Thus, it is crucial to carefully examine how ethnic relations have changed over time, and to account for regional differences within those changes. While this study focuses on Cleveland, it will explore similarities and differences with other cities across the United States.

There have also been several works written about African American-Jewish relations in the music industry, like Jeffrey Paul Melnick's *A Right to Sing the Blues: African Americans, Jews, and American Popular Song*, a chapter in John Leland's book on hip culture, and several biographies of notable Jewish Americans music entrepreneurs like Alan Freed. These works, however, are highly specialized and are not intended to be a multi-faceted analysis of African American-Jewish relations. One objective of this study is to bring these instances of cultural exchange into a broader context of African American-Jewish relations, examining the role spatial relations played in shaping such interactions, rather than simply studying economic relations between the communities to better understand points of tension.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, this study seeks to complicate Lizabeth Cohen's analysis in *Making a New Deal*. Cohen which states that neighborhoods in early twentieth century industrial cities like Cleveland and Chicago "isolated workers geographically and culturally from other workers in the city."<sup>10</sup> According to Cohen, this communal isolation "illuminate[s]"

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<sup>9</sup> John Leland, *Hip, the History*, 1st ed. (New York: HarperCollins, 2004). John A. Jackson, *Big Beat Heat: Alan Freed and the Early Years of Rock & Roll* (New York City: Schirmer Books, 1995), Louis Armstrong, "The New Orleans Jewish Family (1969)," in *Louis Armstrong, in His Own Words Selected Writings* ed. Thomas Brothers (New York, NY: Oxford U.P, 1999), Jeffrey Paul Melnick, *A Right to Sing the Blues: African Americans, Jews, and American Popular Song* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999).

<sup>10</sup> Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 21.

why the strikes of 1919 in Chicago failed.<sup>11</sup> While this communal isolation was certainly real in many neighborhoods, there were exceptions in what could be called ethnic borderlands. Such borderlands could consist of either residential or commercial space that was shared by ethnic groups. Generally, such borderlands consisted of African Americans who shared urban space with immigrants and other ethnic groups that have been called “middlemen” minorities by some historians and sociologists.<sup>12</sup> Such areas were usually commercial hubs some distance away from factories, and often located near transit hubs.<sup>13</sup> In Cleveland, Italians, Bohemians, Greeks, Jews, and blacks all shared the Central neighborhood’s residential space. Many of the old residential borderlands tended to fade in the Midwest and Northeast (the West Side of Chicago and New York City being exceptions) after the halt of large-scale immigration, although new ones have replaced them. For instance, the suburb of Cleveland Heights can now be considered a racial borderland, due to its racial integration and location between the predominantly black East Side of Cleveland and the predominantly white suburbs. In the western United States, many of the old racial borderlands have persisted because Latino immigrants have inhabited much of the urban space vacated by immigrant whites. Contrary to the model offered by Cohen, neighborhoods like Central were multicultural, integrated, and included dozens of assorted ethnic businesses during the late 1910s. By the time of the great unionization efforts of the 1930s, such neighborhoods were almost entirely African

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> The term middlemen minority is taken from the “Middleman minority theory.” For an overview of this theory, see Pyong Gap Min, *Caught in the Middle: Korean Merchants in America's Multiethnic Cities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 21-22.

<sup>13</sup> Examples of historical racial borderlands in 1940 located near the city’s central train station could be found near the Basin Street Station in New Orleans, Union Station in Kansas City, Union Station in Chicago, 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station in Philadelphia, Exchange Street Station in Buffalo, and Union Station in Los Angeles (especially for Asians). Prior to the opening of Cleveland’s Union Terminal in 1930, Cleveland’s racial borderlands were serviced by a number of street-cars who terminated in nearby Public Square. None of these neighborhoods relied on industry.

American (although residual white businesses did remain) and thus more “communally isolated” than they had been in 1919.

A study of ethnic interactions is also needed for Cleveland because the city’s historiography lacks many studies of cross-racial interaction. While *Identity, Conflict and Cooperation* which is edited by David Hammack, Diane Grabowski, and John Grabowski, examines relationships between Central European immigrants, studies on African Americans and Jews are primarily focused only on the community being studied. Works about Jews in Cleveland, most notably *A History of the Jews of Cleveland* by Lloyd P. Gartner and *Merging Traditions* by Judah Rubinstein and Jane Avner, do not include in any detailed analysis of Jewish relations with African Americans or other ethnic groups. Similarly, works about African Americans like Kenneth Kusmer’s *A Ghetto Takes Shape* and Kimberly Phillips’s *Alabama North* have little discussion of African Americans’ interactions with other ethnic groups like Jews. Todd Michney’s dissertation, “Changing Neighborhoods: Race and Upward Mobility in Southeast Cleveland, 1930-1980” does a remarkable job of including all of Southeast Cleveland’s ethnic communities, but is limited to only one section of town. Furthermore, it focuses on neighborhood change rather than ongoing relations between the ethnic groups. This study will examine the history of shared space between Jews and African Americans throughout Cleveland, and explore the historical and cultural impact of this relationship in the city and throughout the nation.

### Part I – Neighborly Mistrust

The first widespread instances of African American-Jewish interactions in Cleveland occurred around 1890, as black migrants from the South moved into the

heavily Jewish and Italian Central Avenue neighborhood, located just to the east of downtown. Jewish migration to Cleveland stemmed from changes in the European economy and a resurgence of anti-Semitism in the latter half of the nineteenth century which caused millions to leave their homeland for the United States. The industrial revolution forced economic changes which made many traditional Jewish occupations in Europe like the village peddler less sustainable.<sup>14</sup>

According to Hasia Diner in *The Jews of the United States*, more successful Central European Jewish (Germans, Swiss, and Austrians are included as Central Europeans throughout this paper) merchants moved to European cities during this era of transformation, while “the poorest chose America instead.”<sup>15</sup> After inaccurate rumors blamed Jews for the assassination of Czar Alexander II of Russia in 1881, waves of murderous anti-Jewish rioting known as *pogroms* spread across the Russian Empire and persisted for decades. For the next ten years, the Russian government enacted legislation that restricted the residence, occupation, and education of Jews. This wave of anti-Semitism combined with the “pull” of economic opportunity prompted around 2.5 million Jews to leave Eastern Europe for the United States between 1881 and 1924.<sup>16</sup> The rapidly expanding industrial metropolis of Cleveland attracted many of these immigrants along with others who moved to Cleveland from other American cities. As a result, the city’s Jewish population grew from a mere 3,500 people in 1881 to 30,000 in 1905 and then 60,000 in 1910.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Hasia R Diner, *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 82.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 84. Central European throughout this paper will include Germans, Swiss, and Austrians.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>17</sup> Judah Rubinstein and Jane Avner, *Merging traditions: Jewish life in Cleveland* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2004), 29.



During the mid to late nineteenth Century, the Haymarket District was the center of Jewish life in Cleveland. The Haymarket District was located just south of Public Square in the city's downtown, where many Central European-Jewish pioneers worked as merchants. Steadily, the Central European-Jewish population moved east along Woodland Avenue, which became the new center of Jewish life in Cleveland until the mid 1920s.<sup>18</sup> Although Woodland's residents were employed in a wide range of labor-based occupations such as garment making (the neighborhood's most critical), merchants were the most visible members of the community, since their businesses were frequented by the most people. Woodland Avenue was home to numerous bakeries, grocery stores, and other assorted businesses that shared the avenue with hucksters who sold food from horse-drawn wagons and peddlers who went from street to street selling wares, and searching for scraps to sell.<sup>19</sup> According to Lloyd P. Gartner's *History of the Jews of Cleveland*, in 1912, all but two or three of these shopkeepers were Jewish."<sup>20</sup> Lithuanian-born artist William Zorach described Woodland in his autobiography as "a wide street with clanking streetcars...wagons drawn by six galloping horses, smells, kids yelling 'ho, ho, honey dumpers.' Woodland Avenue, once a beautiful, wide, tree-lined street...then a dilapidated slum...a market street where farmers lined their produce up along the sidewalks and cried their wares."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Levy, Donald, *A Report on the Location of Ethnic Groups in Greater Cleveland*, (The Institute of Urban Studies, 1972), 24.

<sup>19</sup> Lloyd P Gartner, *History of the Jews of Cleveland*, (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society and Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1987). Lloyd P Gartner, *History of the Jews of Cleveland*, 2nd ed. (Cleveland: Western Reserve Historical Society in cooperation with the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, 1987). 125-127.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

<sup>21</sup> William Zorach, *Art Is My Life: The Autobiography of William Zorach* (Cleveland: World Pub. Co, 1967). in (Judah Rubinstein, *Merging Traditions: Jewish Life in Cleveland*, Rev. ed. (Kent, [Ohio]: Kent State University Press, 2004).) chapter two insert (un-numbered page).



**Figure 1 A mapquest.com map of Cleveland's Central neighborhood.**

Although most histories of Jews in Cleveland refer to this neighborhood as “Woodland,” it encompassed many surrounding blocks, including Central Avenue which had already become the heart of the city’s black community. This cluster of African Americans known as the “Central” neighborhood also stretched beyond the street as far as Woodland Avenue. Thus, such distinctions between “Central” and “Woodland” are simplistic if not inaccurate, since residents shared many community institutions like transit lines, schools, and stores. Furthermore African Americans and Jews had both lived in around Central and Woodland Avenue. For the purposes of this study, this area will henceforth be referred to as “Central,” the name most frequently used today.

Figure 2 is a 1920 US Census data sheet for a street near Central Avenue. The sheet is a long table with multiple columns for names, birth dates, birthplaces, and occupations. It is divided into sections for 'HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD', 'WIFE', 'DAUGHTERS', 'SONS', 'OTHERS', and 'TOTAL'. The data is color-coded: black residents are highlighted in orange, and those listed as 'mulatto' (mixed) are highlighted in yellow. The sheet is numbered 1-100 on the left margin.

Figure 2 This is 1920 a census data sheet of a street near Central Avenue. Black residents are highlighted in orange and those listed as “mulatto” (mixed) in yellow. Leo Mintz’s (who is credited with coining the term rock ‘n’ roll) family can be found next to the last listed “mulatto” household.<sup>22</sup>

As Jewish immigration to Cleveland skyrocketed from 1890 to 1910, the city’s black population remained small, but steadily climbed from 3,035 to 8,448.<sup>23</sup> During this time, Cleveland was known for its relative tolerance. Schools were integrated, blacks could vote, and most city institutions were open to blacks. Economic discrimination, however, prevented most African Americans from employment in factories and trade unions.<sup>24</sup> By 1910, most of Cleveland’s African Americans had settled in the Central neighborhood. This likely occurred because the neighborhood offered better access to

<sup>22</sup> Ancestry.com, 1920 United States Federal Census [database on-line] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2009).

<sup>23</sup> Kenneth L Kusmer, *A Ghetto Takes Shape: Black Cleveland, 1870-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), 10.

<sup>24</sup> Kenneth Kusmer, “African Americans,” *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, <http://ech.case.edu/ech/cgi/article.pl?id=AA>.



jobs open to African Americans. Since nearly all factory work was off-limits to blacks, African Americans needed access to low-skilled service jobs (such as porters, janitors, and chauffeurs) offered downtown and the near-East Side's markets as well as Cleveland's wealthy and middle class neighborhoods where work could be found as domestic servants. Perhaps most importantly, much of Central's housing had been subdivided into low-cost dwellings.<sup>25</sup> As a result, Jewish immigrants and blacks at this time tended to cluster near one another in commercial districts close to downtown, while other immigrant groups tended to settle near factories. This was a pattern that could also be found throughout the North, in places like Hastings Street in Detroit, the Hill District in Pittsburgh, Harlem in New York City, and the Near-East Side in Buffalo.<sup>26</sup> In Los Angeles, there were far fewer Jews living in the heart of the city's African American community of South Central, although African Americans lived in the traditional Jewish neighborhood of Boyle Heights.<sup>27</sup>

After World War I began in 1914, Northern cities faced worker shortages brought on by limited immigration from Europe and wartime conscription after the United States'

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<sup>25</sup> Rubinstein and Avner, *Merging traditions*, 29.

<sup>26</sup> For Detroit, Jewish Virtual Library, "Detroit," Jewish Virtual Library, [http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud\\_0002\\_0005\\_0\\_05142.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0005_0_05142.html), Lowell Boileau, "The Lost Synagogues of Detroit," <http://shtetlhood.com/>, Vivian Baulch, "Paradise Valley and Black Bottom," *The Detroit News*, August 7, 1996, <http://apps.detnews.com/apps/history/index.php?id=174>, For Pittsburgh, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, "The Hill District," Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, [http://www.carnegielibrary.org/exhibit/neighborhoods/hill/hill\\_n4.html](http://www.carnegielibrary.org/exhibit/neighborhoods/hill/hill_n4.html). JewishGen ShtetLinks, "Pittsburgh," JewishGen ShtetLinks, [http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Pittsburgh/pgh\\_history.html](http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Pittsburgh/pgh_history.html), for New York City, excerpt from Jeffrey S. Gurock, *When Harlem was Jewish, 1870-1930*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979) found on Columbia 250, [http://c250.columbia.edu/c250\\_celebrates/harlem\\_history/jewish\\_excerpt.html](http://c250.columbia.edu/c250_celebrates/harlem_history/jewish_excerpt.html), for Buffalo, Mark Goldman, *High Hopes: The Rise and Decline of Buffalo, New York* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), 212-216, 279 found on Chuck LaChiusa, "Jewish-American History in Buffalo," Buffalo Architecture and History, <http://www.buffaloah.com/h/jews/index.html#Jewish> and <http://www.buffaloah.com/h/af/index.html#overview>.

<sup>27</sup> Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 18., Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 2005), 33.

entry into the war. As the labor pool of white males shrank from military conscription, the war effort increased the demand for labor, leading many manufacturers to hire African Americans. This Great Migration of African Americans from the South to the North increased Cleveland's African American population from 8,448 in 1910 to 34,451 in 1920, most of whom settled in the old Woodland/Central neighborhood.<sup>28</sup>

At this time, African American and Jewish experiences with shared space in neighborhoods, stores, and often schools shaped opinions of one another. By the 1920s, when African Americans were a large portion of the population living in Central, there were at least 39 Jewish owned grocery stores and three pawnshops on Central Avenue alone, although the actual number is certainly larger.<sup>29</sup> The renowned African American writer Langston Hughes recalled that when he attended Cleveland's Central High during the late 1910s, it was "nearly entirely a foreign-born school," and that "we got on very well." His best friend was Polish and he remembered having "lots of Jewish friends" who were "less anti-Negro" than native whites, and even recalled going to the symphony with a Jewish girl.<sup>30</sup> While Jews and Africans Americans shared much of the same residential, educational, and recreational geography in Cleveland, economic disparity led to unequal control of such space.

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<sup>28</sup> Kusmer, 283.

<sup>29</sup> A 1920 city directory of Cleveland indicates that 61.90 to 73.01 percent of grocers of grocery store owners on Central Avenue had Jewish surnames. Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory [microfilm]*, (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications) and Cleveland Public Library, "Cleveland Necrology File," Cleveland Public Library, <http://www.cpl.org/necrology>. See footnote #48 for methodology. For Jewish and Cleveland population numbers, The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, "Estimating Cleveland's Jewish Population 1979," (The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, 1980), in North American Jewish Data Bank, [http://www.jewishdatabank.org/Archive/C-OH-Cleveland-1978-Estimating\\_Cleveland's\\_Jewish\\_Population.pdf](http://www.jewishdatabank.org/Archive/C-OH-Cleveland-1978-Estimating_Cleveland's_Jewish_Population.pdf).

<sup>30</sup> Langston Hughes (Introduction by Joseph McLaren), *Autobiography: The Big Sea* (University of Missouri Press, 2002), 49.

Most African Americans came from vastly different backgrounds than Jews, which significantly influenced the economic fortunes of both communities. Since the days of slavery, the vast majority of African Americans at this time earned their subsistence through labor (especially in agriculture) or unskilled service jobs like domestic servants.<sup>31</sup> Education was forbidden to slaves, limited available after emancipation, and for the most part, centered around vocational training in the North. Although some African Americans had lived in Southern cities before migrating north, many families came as agricultural workers or domestic servants. Once in Cleveland, higher paying labor jobs as well as union membership were generally off limits to blacks.<sup>32</sup> The non-union jobs available to African Americans offered little hope of social mobility, and prevented African Americans from accumulating capital that could be used for community interests.

The opposite was true for Jewish-Americans. European discrimination barred most Jews from agricultural work, so many (but certainly not all) developed skills in small-scale production like needlework and minor entrepreneurial ventures such as peddling. Although not all European Jews came from cities, most had at least lived in small towns, and developed skills applicable to an urban environment. Furthermore, medieval European usury laws which forbade Christians from lending money with interest allowed some Jews to become successful in banking. While most Jews worked in occupations far less profitable than banking, Jewish lenders were able to benefit their

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<sup>31</sup> Thomas N. Maloney, "African Americans in the Twentieth Century," Economic History Association, <http://eh.net/encyclopedia/article/maloney.african.american>.

<sup>32</sup> Kusmer, 66-67.

community through financing benevolent causes and floating low or zero percent loans to other Jews through agencies like the Hebrew Free Loan Society.<sup>33</sup>

In her book, *The Jews of the United States*, Hasia Diner describes the progression of economic mobility for many Jewish peddlers in the nineteenth century. The process began when immigrant peddlers purchased supplies from Jewish wholesalers in major cities, and then carried the goods to remote parts of the country where they sold their wares to farmers, miners, and others in the frontier. The peddlers often worked with family members to cover more territory and to save enough money to set up a shop, which could be subsidized by zero interest loans from other Jews. Once a storefront was established, the store owner could hire more family members to help. The store could then be used by new peddlers to obtain supplies and carry them further into the frontier. Even after the old frontier towns like Cleveland turned into large cities, peddlers in the form of pushcart salesmen and horse cart “hucksters” were still prominent.

Other industries which had a significant Jewish presence like garment-making, similarly relied on family and small-scale community production where individuals sewed or repaired clothes in the backrooms of stores, and then sold them in the front of the building. Although large factories became common in later years, it was still easier for someone in the garment industry to begin as a worker and rise to an employer, because of its low start up costs.<sup>34</sup> This ability to start up businesses, access capital, and benefit from the wealthiest of the community’s charity all contributed to a relationship in

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<sup>33</sup> Diner, *Jews of the United States*, 135-138.

<sup>34</sup>(Diner, *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000.*, 102-107)

which African Americans generally patronized Jewish businesses rather than the reverse.<sup>35</sup>

When African Americans moved into Central, the neighborhood already had dozens of Jewish-owned stores, and blacks frequented them as did many other ethnic groups in the same area. The presence of Jewish retailers gave African American consumers more locations to shop, but also made it more difficult for blacks to start up their own businesses, since dozens of businesses already serviced their community from the day they moved into the neighborhood. Since banks frequently discriminated against African Americans, Jewish-owned pawnshops somewhat filled this void by offering small-scale loans.

As a result, Jewish entrepreneurs and African Americans developed a strong commercial relationship. Two vastly different histories shaped the nature of this relationship. Jewish migrants to Cleveland did not generally become more economically successful because of any inherent ability or superior planning by their leadership. Although both Jews in Europe and blacks in the United States faced threats of violence, economic discrimination was far more intense against blacks, and as a consequence forged two very different occupational paths. Of course some African Americans owned stores and many Jews were laborers, but the significantly larger number of proprietors and level of capital in the Jewish community was an advantage the black community never had. As a result of this economic disparity, African Americans controlled little of Central's residential or commercial space. Poor wages forced many blacks to rent housing, and a lack of capital prevented the overwhelming majority from operating retail

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<sup>35</sup> Garment workers, unlike most black industrial workers, were able to form and join unions. As early as 1911, 5,000-6,000 Cleveland garment workers went on strike. Both the employers and strikers have been cited as almost entirely Jewish. Ibid., 109-110. and Rubinstein and Avner, 29-30.



establishments. As a result, control of neighborhood space allowed many whites, including Jews, to profit off the land by renting housing to blacks and managing grocery stores. Such circumstances would continue even after white families no longer resided in Central.<sup>36</sup>

### New Space, Old Patterns

From 1917 to 1925, most of Central's Jewish population had moved out of the neighborhood, while its African American population continued to increase.<sup>37</sup> This was largely due to a drop in European immigration and a subsequent rise in Southern African American migration to the North after World War I. The war had simultaneously increased demand for production and decreased the labor supply because of obligatory military service and limited immigration. As a result, many Cleveland employers turned to African Americans as a source of cheap labor.

Many ethnic and foreign born whites in Central had improved their economic standing, and began to move to better neighborhoods. In previous years, their vacated homes in Central would have been replaced by the next wave of poor immigrants. Since large-scale European immigration to Cleveland had halted by 1921, African Americans primarily filled their spots from that time on.

Jewish movement out of Central during this era was exceptionally expeditious. At first, this move was generally confined to the area around East 55<sup>th</sup> and Woodland, just to the east of the heart of the old Jewish community. By the mid-1920s, however, most had moved on to the far-eastern neighborhoods of Glenville and Mt. Pleasant that

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<sup>36</sup> Cuyahoga County Auditor Book, 103- Page 30-31, Cuyahoga County Auditor's Office, Cleveland, OH.

<sup>37</sup> Levy, 24-26.

were non-contiguous with Central.<sup>38</sup> Reasons for moving varied. Many Jews had improved their economic standing and wished to move to less crowded and more prestigious neighborhoods. Others likely left because the composition of the neighborhood became decidedly less Jewish after their neighbors began to leave and were replaced with African American families. After many in the old neighborhoods left, Jewish congregations moved their synagogue to the new neighborhoods. Many Orthodox Jews were compelled to follow the synagogue after it moved in order to fulfill Sabbath obligations like refraining from travel and driving a car. This motivated many Orthodox Jews to move near the new synagogue, since they are expected to walk to services. Finally, the ability of white property owners (including Jews') in Central to sell or rent their old dwellings to African Americans for high prices aided the pace of relocation.

Langston Hughes recalled this in his autobiography, *The Big Sea*.

“We always lived, during my high school years, either in an attic or a basement, and paid quite a lot for such inconvenient quarters. White people on the East Side of the city were moving out of their frame houses and renting them to Negroes at double and triple the rents they could receive from others. An eight-room house with one bath could be cut up into apartment renting for what the whole house had rented for before.”<sup>39</sup>

While most of these landlords were white, (given the demographics of the area many of these whites were Jewish), black real estate dealers who were members of the Cleveland Realty, Housing, and Investment Company took part in the same exploitative practices.<sup>40</sup>

Adding to this housing shortage was the proliferation of restrictive housing covenants and similar unofficial agreements that prohibited the sale of homes to African

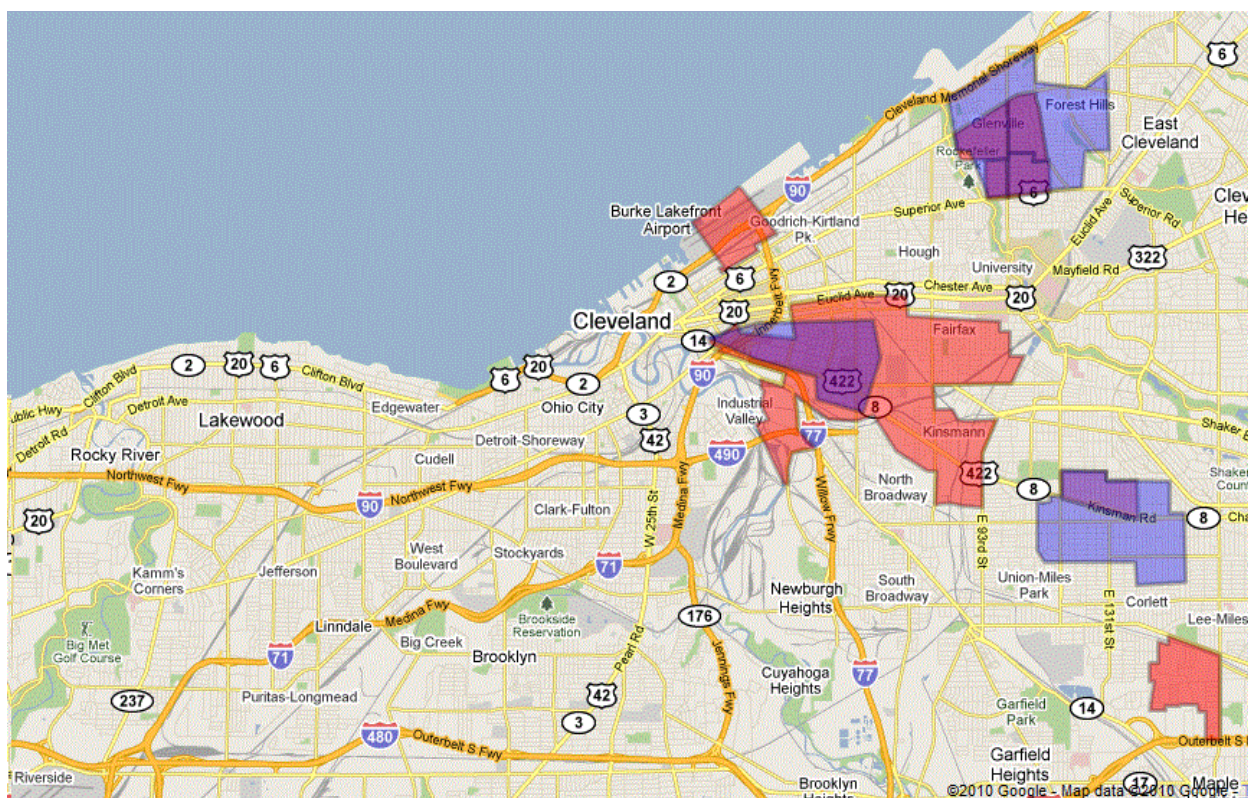
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<sup>38</sup> Levy, 23-26.

<sup>39</sup> Hughes, 47.

<sup>40</sup> Kusmer, 192-193.

Americans as well as Jews.<sup>41</sup> This severely limited which neighborhoods both could live in and often confined them to the same spaces. As a result, African Americans who moved out of Central in latter decades primarily moved to neighborhoods that had a large Jewish presence, including Kinsman/Mt. Pleasant in southeast Cleveland, and Glenville on Cleveland's northeast periphery.<sup>42</sup> One exception to this was a small neighborhood of blacks that settled in Lee-Miles by 1940 where there was no significant Jewish presence.



**Figure 3** Previously Jewish neighborhoods are shaded in blue, and compared to African American neighborhoods in 1950.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> For the usage of covenants during and immediately following the Great Migration, Kusmer 46, 167 For housing discrimination against Jews, Kusmer 170.

<sup>42</sup> If Jews lived in them, and blacks were a presence in this neighborhood as early as the 1930s, it is unlikely racially restrict covenants existed.

<sup>43</sup> Donald Levy, 24., Howard Whipple Green, *Jewish Families in Greater Cleveland* (Cleveland: Cleveland Health Council, 1939) and Sociaexplorer, "1950 County and Census Tract," Sociaexplorer, <http://www.sociaexplorer.com/pub/maps/map3.aspx?&g=0>.

While Cleveland's Jewish population moved eastward, many retained their businesses in Central. Many of these stores were run by individuals who grew up in Central, but had since moved. For example, Russian-born Hyman Koslen was a Jewish businessman who owned a grocery store at 7106 Central Ave in 1930. At this time, he lived on 10128 North Boulevard in Glenville, but had been raised at 2643 East 53<sup>rd</sup> in Central. Another Jewish businessman, Polish-born Aaron Zinamon, ran a store on 2917 Central in 1930. Ten years earlier, he had rented a home on 2921 Central Ave. By 1930, he moved to 3394 East 117<sup>th</sup> with three other families who shared a home in the Kinsman area, a neighborhood in Southeast Cleveland consisting primarily of Jews, Italians, and African Americans.<sup>44</sup> These examples demonstrate that Jewish businesses were in African American neighborhoods because of a history of spatial interactions that continued even after Jewish residents had moved on to a different neighborhood, which attests to the profitability of such inner-city stores. In 1945, scholars St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton commented on the phenomenon of Jewish Americans in Chicago, who were "increasingly conscious[ness] of the purchasing power of several hundred thousand solidly massed in one compact community," had created a so-called "Negro market" where many Jewish Americans competed with African Americans for business.<sup>45</sup>

Evidence for the importance of this history of shared space can be found by contrasting the number of Jewish grocers in Cleveland's largest black neighborhood, Central, with the number in Los Angeles's South Central neighborhood, the heart of the city's African American population. Although some Jews in Los Angeles did reside and

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<sup>44</sup> Ancestry.com, *1910-1930 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT:Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2009).

<sup>45</sup> St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, "The Growth of a 'Negro Market,'" in *Strangers & Neighbors: Relations Between Blacks & Jews in the United States*, ed. Maurianne Adams and John H. Bracey (Amherst:University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 355.

work in South Central, their largest community was across the Los Angeles River, in Boyle Heights.<sup>46</sup> As a result, Jews and African Americans had a much weaker geographic relationship with one another in Los Angeles than most northern cities.

In 1929, 13 to 33 percent of grocers between 3300 and 5326 South Central Avenue, the heart of Los Angeles's African American community, were Jewish.<sup>47</sup> Numbers for the following decade were similar. Like many proprietors of the era, the two Jewish grocers and at least two of the three grocers of unknown origins in 1929 lived in the neighborhood they operated their stores in. This demonstrates that like Northern cities like Cleveland, Jewish Americans who operated businesses in African American neighborhoods in Los Angeles did so because they lived nearby, or had lived nearby at one time. Since Jews were a minority in the neighborhood, they constituted a minority of South Central Avenue's grocers.

Cleveland's Central, however, had once been the historical center of the city's Jewish community. In 1920, when the area was still the center of Jewish life in Cleveland, 61.90 to 73.01 percent of grocers on Central Avenue were Jewish. One decade later, after most Jews had moved to other neighborhoods, 46.5 to 58.1 percent of Central

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<sup>46</sup> Wild, *Street Meeting*.

<sup>47</sup> Ten out of fifteen grocers (67 percent) in the community did not have Jewish surnames. Two grocers were confirmed by census records to be Jewish, and three were unknown (of these unknown, two were of Polish or Russian origins, and one was named Herman Brown). Thus, 13 percent to 33 percent were Jewish. These numbers were determined using ancestry.com's "Learn about the family history of your surname," to look up the surname origins of listed proprietors. I then looked up individuals whose ethnicity could not be determined on ancestry.com. After this process three individuals' ethnicity still could not be determined.

Ancestry.com, "Learn about the family history of your surname," Ancestry.com, <http://www.ancestry.com/learn/facts/default.aspx>

Los Angeles Directory Co. (1931), *Los Angeles City Directory* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Directory Co., 1931) and Los Angeles Directory Co. (1941), *Los Angeles City Directory* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Directory Co., 1942).

Avenue grocers were still Jewish.<sup>48</sup> This demonstrates that the stronger the historical connections to a given neighborhood, the more Jewish stores were in that community.

After Jews moved out of a neighborhood, the percentage of Jewish businesses decreased, but retained a significant presence in the area.

The pattern of pawnshop locations in Cleveland presents another striking example of this commercial relationship between Jews and African Americans. Throughout the twentieth century, Jewish-Americans have owned most of the pawnshops in Cleveland.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> 1930 numbers were determined through searches on the Cleveland Public Library's online Necrology File to see if an individual was buried in a Jewish cemetery. If an individual could not be found, but was mentioned in the obituary of a family member buried in a Jewish cemetery or interned at a Jewish funeral home, they were tallied as Jewish. If an individual was not mentioned in any obituaries, but people by the same surname were overwhelming interned in Jewish funeral homes or buried in Jewish cemeteries, they were also tallied.

1920 numbers were determined using ancestry.com's "Learn about the family history of your surname" feature to look up the surname origins of listed proprietors. I then looked up individuals whose ethnicity could not be determined on the Cleveland Public Library's Necrology online file, and used the above methodology. If no information could be found, I then used ancestry.com's "search all records," for historical data (mainly census information that lists if they or their parents were Yiddish speakers) on the individual.

Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory [microfilm]*, (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications). Ancestry.com, "Search All Records," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com/search/>, Ancestry.com, "Learn about the family history of your surname," Ancestry.com, <http://www.ancestry.com/learn/facts/default.aspx>, Cleveland Public Library, "Cleveland Necrology File," Cleveland Public Library, <http://www.cpl.org/necrology>. Ancestry.com, "Search All Records," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com/search/>, Ancestry.com. Eileen Beal, "Funeral Homes and Funeral Practices," Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, <http://ech.cwru.edu/ech-cgi/article.pl?id=FHAFF>, Jewish Genealogy Society of Cleveland, "Cleveland Jewish Cemeteries," Jewish Genealogy Society of Cleveland, <http://www.clevelandjgs.org/cem/cemetery-list.htm>.

<sup>49</sup> The 1899-1900 City Directory indicates that at least 69 percent of pawnshop owners listed had common Jewish surnames. Only those names which are primarily Jewish/Ashkenazic were tallied as "commonly Jewish." 1899-1900 numbers were determined by using ancestry.com's surname origin website. One ambiguous name, Gutentag, was then entered into the Cleveland Public Library's necrology search, which revealed that nearly with that surname in Cleveland used Jewish funeral services. One listing was for Henry Harris, which was a common name for both Jews and gentiles. I located him through ancestry.com, and revealed that he lived on Woodland Court and came from Poland. This likely means he was Jewish for Christian Poles did not have a significant presence in this neighborhood. Another listing for Harris, which did not have a first name was not tallied as being Jewish because it was impossible to determine.

1941 numbers were determined by using a necrology search for 1941 pawnshop proprietors using the same necrology methodology as footnote #48. This revealed at least 69 percent to 94 percent of listed pawnshop owners were Jewish. Of the names that could be determined, 92 percent were Jewish. Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory [microfilm]*, (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications). Ancestry.com, "Search All Records," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com/search/>, Ancestry.com, "Learn about the family history of your surname," Ancestry.com, <http://www.ancestry.com/learn/facts/default.aspx>, Cleveland Public Library, "Cleveland Necrology File," Cleveland Public Library,

From the 1920s to the 1970s, these businesses increasingly relied on African Americans customers.<sup>50</sup> From at least 1879 to 1910, most of Cleveland's pawnshops were located north of downtown on Ontario and Superior Avenues. By 1920, this had changed, likely because of the city's beautification efforts to "improve" downtown which pushed many small businesses out of the district and depopulated the district. Three out of eight pawnshops were now located on Central Avenue. Another four were now located on Prospect Avenue, a district which had a large number of Jewish businesses since its days as the Haymarket District and a large number of African American customers because streetcar lines that connected Central and Mt. Pleasant to downtown terminated there.<sup>51</sup> By 1930, fourteen out of nineteen pawnshops were located in African American neighborhoods. This predominance subsided over the decade as more pawnshops opened on Prospect Avenue, a commercial district located in a racial borderland downtown that also had many African American customers.<sup>52</sup> The increasing concentration of pawnshops in Central (and to some degree Prospect) is significant because it demonstrates that Jewish-Americans who opened up businesses in Central were deliberately locating their businesses in African American districts. This was likely due to pawnshop proprietors' recognition that African Americans often lacked access to credit, and were more likely to purchase second-hand pawned products.

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<http://www.cpl.org/necrology>. Ancestry.com, "Search All Records," Ancestry.com, <http://search.ancestry.com/search/>, Ancestry.com. Eileen Beal, "Funeral Homes and Funeral Practices," Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, <http://ech.cwru.edu/ech-cgi/article.pl?id=FHAFP>., Jewish Genealogy Society of Cleveland, "Cleveland Jewish Cemeteries," Jewish Genealogy Society of Cleveland, <http://www.clevelandjgs.org/cem/cemetery-list.htm>.

<sup>50</sup> The extraordinarily high number of pawnshops in African American neighborhoods suggests that pawnshops tended to rely on African American customers.

<sup>51</sup> James A. Toman & James R. Spangler, *Cleveland and Its Streetcars* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 23.

<sup>52</sup> See more on Prospect Avenue in section on Record Rendezvous page 51.



The knowledge of this market, though, was likely gained from pawnbrokers' experience in the neighborhood. Pawnbrokers who grew up in Central were aware the neighborhood was a prime location for their trade. They could also likely take advantage of acquaintances they had met, who also owned businesses and other institutions in the neighborhood.

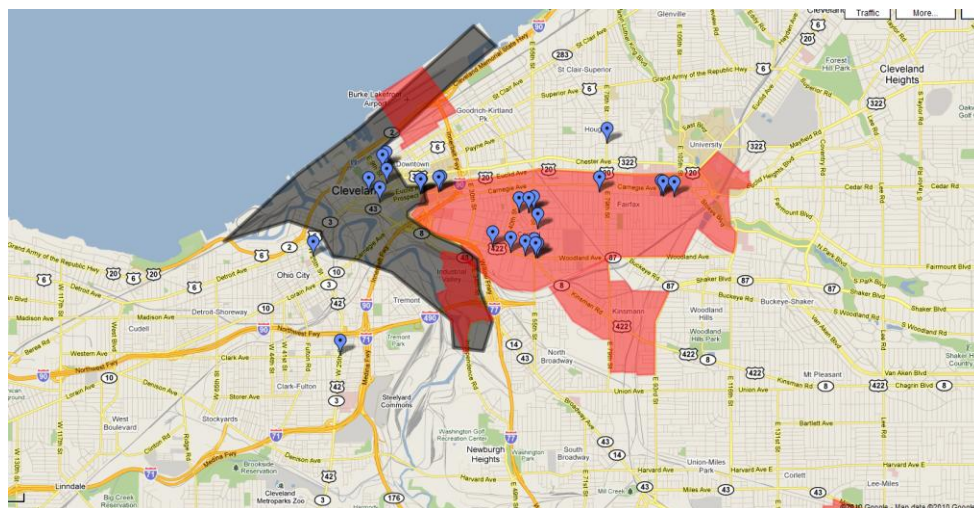
The quantity of pawnshops in African American neighborhoods in other non-Southern cities seemed to be influenced by two major factors. One was the historical precedence of Jews in a particular neighborhood and the other was the population of downtown. For instance, Cleveland had an abnormally low number of residents living downtown, so pawnbrokers instead often opted for locations in black neighborhoods. In Detroit, 75 percent of pawnbrokers located their businesses downtown where there were more residents than in Cleveland's, and still near the African American Paradise Valley and Black Bottom districts. Seven out of the eight pawnshops remaining were located in African American neighborhoods, primarily on Hastings Street, the heart of the black community and formerly the center of Jewish life in the city.<sup>53</sup> By contrast, Los Angeles did not have a strong history of shared neighborhoods between African Americans and Jews, but a large downtown population. As a result, 77 percent of the city's pawnshops were located between 100 and 700 South Main Street in 1941 (the census tract for this area in 1940 was only 1.2 percent African American). In total, thirty-four out of thirty-three pawnshops were located downtown. The one store located outside of

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<sup>53</sup> R.L. Polk and Company, *Polk's Detroit City Directory (1941)*, 2932 and Socialexplorer, "1940 County and Census Tract," Socialexplorer, <http://www.socialexplorer.com/pub/maps/map3.aspx?&g=0>.



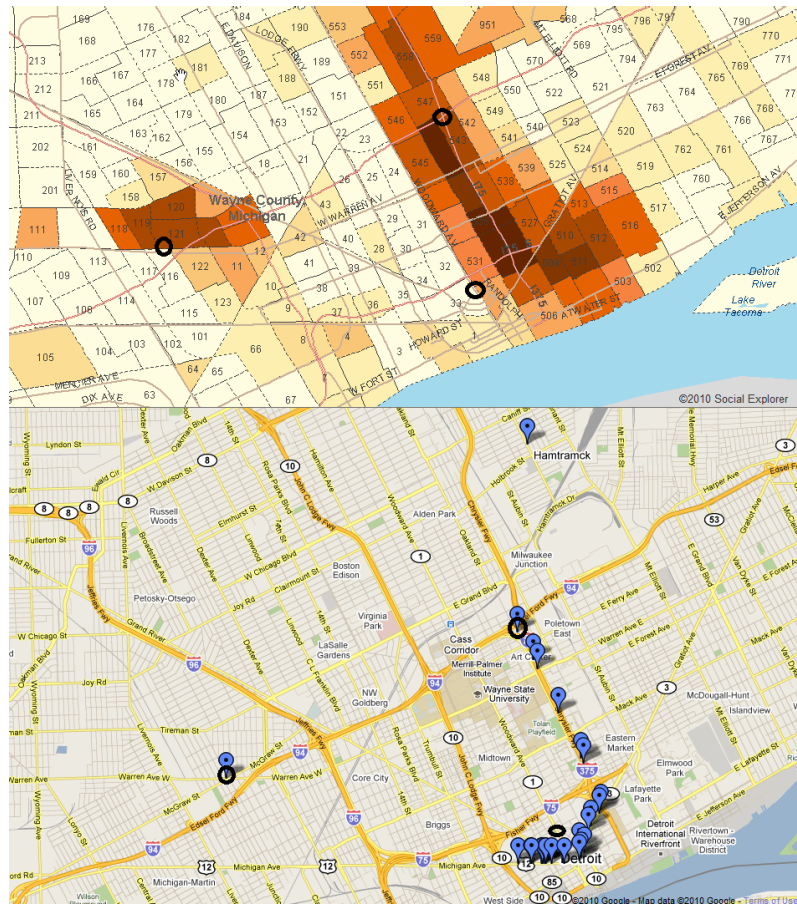
downtown, however, was in a black neighborhood.<sup>54</sup> It is also notable that no pawnshops existed in Boyle Heights, the traditional heart of Los Angeles's Jewish community, thus demonstrating that Jews did not automatically open businesses in their old community.



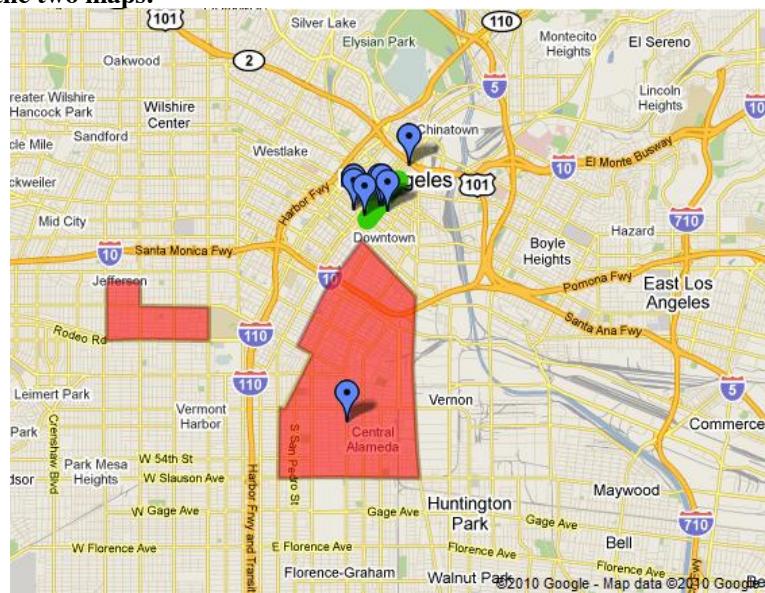
**Figure 4 Location of pawnshops in Cleveland in 1941. Note that nearly all are located in African American neighborhoods marked in red, or downtown where hardly anyone lived at the time. Locations with multiple shops have shadows.<sup>55</sup> Generally uninhabited areas in downtown and the Industrial Valley are marked in black.**

<sup>54</sup> Socialexplorer, "1940 County and Census Tract," Socialexplorer, <http://www.socialexplorer.com/pub/maps/map3.aspx?&g=0>. Los Angeles Directory Co. (1941), *Los Angeles City Directory* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Directory Co., 1942), 213-4.

<sup>55</sup> Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory [microfilm]*, (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications), Socialexplorer, "1940 County and Census Tract," Socialexplorer, <http://www.socialexplorer.com/pub/maps/map3.aspx?&g=0>.



**Figure 5** A socialexplorer.com map of Detroit's black population in 1940 compared with a map of pawnshop locations in 1936. Pawnshop locations below. Circles are drawn for reference points to better compare the two maps.



**Figure 6** The locations of pawnshops in Los Angeles. The green line indicates where 28 out of the city's 36 pawnshops (77%) were located in 1941. The rest of the pawnshops are marked by blue thumbtacks. The city's major African American neighborhoods are marked in red. One African

**American neighborhood existed south of this map. Note that the weak geographic relationship between African Americans and Jews in Los Angeles, is reflected in the location of pawnshops.**

The identification of Jews as neighborhood entrepreneurs could lead to both positive and negative sentiments. Jews provided much needed services and jobs for Cleveland's African Americans and some were able to win the support of their customers and the black press. When the African American Future Outlook League urged blacks to patronize stores that employed African Americans, many if not most were Jewish-owned.<sup>56</sup> Sociologists St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton documented in their 1945 book, *The Black Metropolis* that many African Americans actually preferred shopping at Jewish owned stores in Chicago over black-owned businesses because of the accessibility to credit. One frustrated African American grocer told the authors that because of Jewish businesses' ability to offer credit, "our people would just rather trade with the Jew."<sup>57</sup> Yet other Jewish businessmen, who were perceived as exploiters, severely damaged relations between the two communities. The accomplished essayist and novelist James Baldwin captured this resentment in his 1967 article, "Negroes Are Anti-Semitic Because They're Anti-White."

"When we were growing up in Harlem our demoralizing series of landlords were Jewish, and we hated them...the grocer was a Jew and being in debt to him was very much like being in debt to the company store...the butcher was a Jew...we bought our clothes from a Jew...and the pawnbroker was a Jew- perhaps we hated him most of all."<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> *The Voice of the League*, March 2, 1946 and January 27, 1940. For more discussion see pages 33-34.

<sup>57</sup> St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, "The Growth of a 'Negro Market,'" in *Strangers & Neighbors: Relations Between Blacks & Jews in the United States*, ed. Maurianne Adams and John H. Bracey (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 358-60.

<sup>58</sup> James Baldwin, "Negroes are Anti-Semitic Because They're Anti-White (1967)." in Paul Berman, *Blacks and Jews: Alliances and Arguments* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1994), 31-33.

Baldwin, however, blamed Christians, not Jews for this situation and concluded his essay by writing that “I refuse to hate Jews...because I know how it feels to be hated. I learned this from Christians, and I ceased to practice what the Christians practiced.”<sup>59</sup>

Perhaps what was most frustrating of all to African Americans was the feeling that they continued to lack control over their urban territory. Even though Central was predominantly African American, they still lacked anything near to proportionate control over policing, property, and commerce.<sup>60</sup> This meant rent prices, decisions on building repairs, hiring practices of local stores, grocery prices, food quality, and interest rates were all set by white outsiders. As Baldwin’s essay points out, many blacks perceived Jewish entrepreneurs to be in control of a number of institutions controlling these issues. While Cayton and Drake’s research demonstrates that Jewish owned stores were perceived as more likely to offer credit than competing black establishments, their presence became symbols of uneven power dynamics in the city to many blacks. This sentiment can be found in a 1936 *Call & Post* article that bemoaned the fact that African Americans tended to patronize white businesses, “particularly...when the white man happens to be a member of the Jewish race.” The columnist continued,

“...almost everyone of ‘our’ night clubs have Jewish men owning them even though most of them have colored man fronting for them...I have nothing against the Jews as they are more fair for the Negro than any other white nationality because they know what persecution is...But did you ever hear of a Jew that would patronize a Negro when he could get the same thing from a member of his own race?”

The columnist then finished with the blunt message, “Patronize your own.”<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> (Ibid, 40-41.)

<sup>60</sup> For predominately African American, Socialexplorer, “1940 County and Census Tract,” Socialexplorer, <http://www.socialexplorer.com/pub/maps/map3.aspx?&g=0>. For numbers on African American police officers and store keepers 1890-1930, Kusmer, 285. For homeownership, Kusmer, 211.

<sup>61</sup> "ON THE AVENUE:WITH TDS NITECLUB LULLABY," *Cleveland Call and Post*, April 30, 1936, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

From 1890 to 1940, the ethnic succession of neighborhoods throughout the urban North significantly shaped relations between African Americans and Jews. Since Jewish Americans had owned property in neighborhoods that became predominately African American, many already owned property in the area, taught at its schools, and operated shops in its commercial districts. Such a relationship likely was amplified by the misconception that all inner-city retailers were Jewish. For instance, *Boston Globe* journalist Jonathan Kaufman wrote in his book *Broken Alliance* that prominent Civil Rights activist and lead organizer of the March on Washington, Bayard Rustin noted during the 1960s that, “of the five people that a black meets in the course of the day- the storekeeper, the landlord, the school-teacher, the social worker, and the police officer- four were Jewish and one, the police officer was Irish.”<sup>62</sup> Such misconceptions could be problematic because if one had been gouged by rent, he or she might assume the landlord was Jewish, even if they weren’t. As professors Robert G. Weisbord and Arthur Stein wrote,

“A popular misconception in some urban ghettos where rent gouging was a constant irritant was that *all* white landlords and shopkeepers were Jews. In certain cities Jews constituted a majority in those categories. Undoubtedly, they were present out of proportion to their numbers in the overall population...particularly...in cities where the black ghettos were previously Jewish neighborhoods.”<sup>63</sup>

This analysis is backed by city directory and city auditor data in Cleveland that reveals a disproportionately Jewish, but diverse mixture of ethnic property owners and shopkeepers in Central from the 1920s onward.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Kaufman, 272.

<sup>63</sup> Robert G. Weisbord and Arthur Stein, “Negro Perceptions of Jews between the Word Wars (1969),” in *Strangers & Neighbors: Relations Between Blacks & Jews in the United States*, ed. Maurianne Adams and John H. Bracey (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 410.

<sup>64</sup> See Appendix.

### “A Poor Time to Discriminate Against Negroes”

By the mid-1930s, significant tensions surfaced between Jews and African Americans in Cleveland and throughout the North. Much of this conflict arose in African American neighborhoods where whites, including Jews, still controlled much of the area's commercial space and economic power. In 1935, riots broke out in Harlem which destroyed 200 businesses after a white/Jewish shopkeeper got into a scuffle with a Puerto Rican shoplifter. According to Hasia R. Diner's *In the Almost Promised Land*, Yiddish newspapers often called the riots a “pogrom” since a majority of the affected shopkeepers were Jewish, but most of the storekeepers interpreted the actions to be a riot against white businesses, rather than an attack on Jews specifically.<sup>65</sup>

Campaigns also sprang up across the nation that urged blacks, “don't shop where you can't work” aimed at increasing employment opportunities for blacks. Since so many businesses in black communities were owned by Jewish Americans, such establishments were often the targets of protest.

In New York City, ethnic tensions between the Jewish community and the African American jobs campaign were particularly pronounced. The leader of New York jobs campaign, Sufi El Hamid (born Eugene Brown) was taken to court for “disorderly conduct” in 1934 for allegedly saying that he was “the Black Hitler,” and the “only one fit to carry on the war against the Jews.”<sup>66</sup> El Hamid denied saying this and frequently maintained he was not anti-Semitic.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Hasia R. Diner, *In the Almost Promised Land: American Jews and Blacks, 1915-1935*, 1st ed. (Westport, CT: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 80.

<sup>66</sup> Winston McDowell, “Race and Ethnicity During the Harlem Jobs Campaign, 1932-1935,” *The Journal of Negro History* 69, no. 3/4 (Summer - Autumn 1984): 134-146.

<sup>67</sup> Winston C. McDowell, “Keeping Them ‘In the Same Boat Together?: Sufi Abdul Hamid, African Americans, Jews, and the Harlem Jobs Boycotts,” in Vincent P. Franklin, *African Americans and Jews in the Twentieth Century: Studies in Convergence and Conflict* (University of Missouri Press, 1998), 228.

While African Americans were justified in demanding more jobs, some Jewish shopkeepers believed that hiring their own did not constitute a bigoted or unfair practice.

As historian Hasia Diner wrote of the situation,

“These efforts [the jobs campaign] targeted many small Jewish mom-and-pop stores that had long relied on the labor of family members. Particularly during the Depression, those who held on to such stores tried to help out unemployed relatives first. But in the eyes of Sufi El Hamid, the organizer of the campaign in Harlem, this made the Jews evil exploiters of black people...”<sup>68</sup>

In Cleveland, the Future Outlook League, headed by John Holly and *The Cleveland Call & Post* (Cleveland’s black newspaper) editor William O. Walker, led the local “don’t buy where you can’t work” efforts. The Future Outlook League took active steps to prevent the organization from being perceived as anti-Semitic. This can be seen in the organization’s newspaper, *The Voice of the League*. In a July 16, 1938 an article stated, “Don’t spend your money where you can’t work. And don’t let your boycott against local merchants lead you into an anti-Semitic campaign. Do not curry favor with anyone by showing them how much you hate the Jews or anyone else.”<sup>69</sup>

Furthermore, the Cleveland movement did not solely rely on boycotts, but also encouraged people to shop in stores that did employ blacks. In the same issue of *The Voice* that urged readers to reject anti-Semitism, another article recalled the successful boycott of a Woodland Avenue pawnbroker who “received almost one hundred percent patronage from Negroes,” but did not hire any black clerks. Adding to these tensions was the fact that the owner with a surname of unknown origins (Levenger) had earlier been exonerated for allegedly shooting a black man (no more details about this case were provided) in his store earlier in the year. After only a week of protesting the pawnshop’s hiring practices, however, the owner hired a full time African American clerk and

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<sup>68</sup> Diner, *The Jews of the United States*, 211.

<sup>69</sup> J.M. Dowden, “Boycotts,” *The Voice of the League*, July 16, 1938.



promised to hire another African American later in the year.<sup>70</sup> Although the Future Outlook league is best remembered for boycotts, it also promoted businesses who hired African Americans. One article from the fore mentioned issue of *The Voice of the League* urged readers to “pay Stall No. 32 [at the Woodland E. 5th St. Market] a visit when you do your shopping this Saturday,” because its owners, “Mr. Baumeister and Mr. Schmiedl” kept a black butcher on the job with full pay after he broke an arm.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, advertisers in the *Voice of the League* like Rosenberg’s Drug Store, Hoicowitz Dept. Store, Cohen’s Southern Food Store, and Kritzer Bros Bakery broadcasted their business’ hiring practices.<sup>72</sup> Such advocacy of Jewish businesses demonstrates there was never a targeted effort against Jews as a people by the jobs campaign in Cleveland. Instead, the Future Outlook League was largely concerned with African Americans’ ability to reap some of the profits being their made off their community’s purchases and space.

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<sup>70</sup> "Woodland Ave. Pawn Broker was Brought to Terms with Future Outlook League Employees Union," *The Voice of the League*, July 16, 1938.

<sup>71</sup> "untitled article," *The Voice of the League*, July 16, 1938.

<sup>72</sup> *The Voice of the League*, March 2, 1946 and January 27, 1940.





Figure 7 Some common advertisements found in the *Voice of the League*. Many advertisements tell readers that they hire blacks from March 2, 1946. These advertisements appeared on the same pages, but were spliced together for the benefit of the reader<sup>73</sup>

Still, friction existed between some Jewish businesses in African American neighborhoods and their customers in Cleveland. In 1934, an altercation at a Jewish-owned Quincy Cut Rate Grocery store nearly escalated into an all out riot.<sup>74</sup> On July 13th, a scuffle between the store's staff and an African American woman named Irene Holland broke out regarding a salad she had bought which was missing dressing. Locals from the black neighborhood then demonstrated outside the store after being told that Holland was physically assaulted. Before long, some demonstrators vandalized the store, and cries of "lynch him" were reported by the *Cleveland Call & Post*.<sup>75</sup> Later that night, a crowd of about 1,500 people again gathered around the store, and pelted it with bricks.

<sup>73</sup> (Ibid)

<sup>74</sup> Throughout this paper, I will use the term "riot" over other terms like "rebellion" or "uprising" in the hopes of applying neutral language. Although "riot" can have negative connotations, it is meant to simply refer to a noisy usage of force that includes public disorder, and does not imply it was unjust. Whereas if I were to use the term "rebellion" and "uprising" it would imply my siding with those causing the disorder.

<sup>75</sup> "Jacob Blumensohn Nearly Lynched By Infuriated Men And Women." *Cleveland Call and Post* (1934-1962), July 21, 1934, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed March 9, 2010).

Police arrested nine African Americans for “noisy assemblage” and three for malicious destruction of property. One was fined an additional \$25 for hitting the store owner with a brick. A warrant was initially issued against the store’s owner for battery against Holland, but then refused by Police Prosecutor Michael Picciano. On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the usually restrained *Call and Post* wrote in an article entitled “TOLERANCE ENDS,” declaring that “the men who wrecked the Quincy Market Cut Rate Market in retaliation...deserve the praise of every Negro in Cleveland,” and that those who were arrested “are entitled to the support of the entire race.”<sup>76</sup> Another article in the *Call and Post* claimed that the fines against two of the men were out of proportion to fines levied against unions who engaged in similar crimes, and that the penalties were influenced by the fact that both the store owner and the judge issuing the fines were Jewish.<sup>77</sup>

The crowd’s actions reflect the frustrations many in Central had about the lack of control in their own neighborhood. Institutionally induced poverty (slavery, white-only unions, job discrimination, educational under-funding and bank discrimination) had prevented most African Americans from opening stores of their own, and forced most to rely on white businesses that many in the black community saw as taking advantage of them. Furthermore, when Irene Holland claimed that she had been struck by the store’s owner, most in the community did not expect the police to believe her. The community’s assessment proved to be accurate, given that the police arrested several black men and never followed through with the warrant issued against the store owner. Thus, if police would not offer protection to African Americans, many felt they had to demonstrate a

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<sup>76</sup> “TOLERANCE ENDS,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, July 21, 1934, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>77</sup> “JUDGE STACEL,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, July 21, 1934, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

measure of power in their neighborhood to prevent future abuses. This was summed up in a *Call & Post* article that stated, the store owner thought he could “forever get away with roughing and bluffing the Negro customers on whose trade he had waxed fat and rich,” but had “made the mistake of roughing one customer too many.”<sup>78</sup>

While this incident somewhat resembles future urban riots that ravaged retail establishments in black neighborhoods during the 1960s, it has significant differences that should be noted. One difference is that the anger of the crowd was directed at an individual, and did not spread to other businesses. Furthermore, the police did not respond to the demonstrations with violence, as they would do during the 1960s. Most importantly, calm was restored in the following days, and businesses stayed put. In fact, only one month later, a new Jewish-owned business opened up at the same location, interestingly named the “Lincoln Square Deal Market.”

Five years later, a similar incident occurred (but had a strikingly different outcome) when a Jewish-owned café was forced to pay a customer \$300 for pouring salt into a black woman’s food to maintain a white-only clientele. The judge who ruled on the case, Louis Drucker (who was Jewish), noted the irony of such an offense on the eve of Hitler’s invasion of Europe by telling the operators of the café that it was, “a poor time to discriminate against Negroes.”<sup>79</sup>

Further evidence of spatially-based economic tensions between African Americans are found in *The Cleveland Call and Post* during this era. In 1934, the paper

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<sup>78</sup> “TOLERANCE ENDS.” *Cleveland Call and Post* (1934-1962), July 21, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed March 9, 2010).

<sup>79</sup> “JUDGE SCORES JEWISH FIRM FOR DISCRIMINATION AGAINST NEGRO DINERS IN LUNCH ROOM :Cafe Employees 'Salt' Food to Discourage Patronage of Negroes-Judge Awards Mrs. Washington \$300.00,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, June 15, 1939, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

harshly criticized Rabbi Barnett Brickner of the Euclid Avenue Temple for allegedly calling on African Americans to “return to the farm.” The article concluded by saying that, “Rabbi Brickner should consult some of the Jewish businesses who conduct business in Negro neighborhoods and see how anxious they are for the return of Negroes to the farms...the collections in the Euclid Avenue Temple would be greatly reduced and the Rabbi would not have an affluent congregation over which to preside.”<sup>80</sup> The article also sarcastically noted that, “If Jewry in Europe were not being harassed, we could understand how Rabbi Brickner would have so much time to devote [to] solving the Negro’s problem,” and that “it is a gross inconsistency for any Jew in America to join the race prejudice brigade in persecuting the Negro.”<sup>81</sup> A 1935 article reported that Hitler had deflected criticism of his persecution of the Jews by telling Americans to “tend to your own lynchings of Negroes.”<sup>82</sup> It ended by reminding readers that the United States had still failed to pass an anti-lynching bill, and that “America has a lot of housecleaning to do before she can start finding fault with other nations.”<sup>83</sup>

Another article appeared in the December 8<sup>th</sup> *Cleveland Call & Post* weekly column, “Mose of the Roaring Third” which offered opinions from a fictional street-talking African American. The column stated that “he [Mose] feels sorry for de way dey [Jews] is being treated an segregated by Hitler” and that “Mose cin weep rell teer fer de Jews what am being depressed, robbed, and stolen from,” but that “Mose could feel sorrier and could cry louder and longer if’n he hadn’t experienced der same treatment

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<sup>80</sup> “BRAYINGS FROM DR. BRICKNIER,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, January 20, 1934, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> “THE NAZIS POKE FUN AT AMERICA,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, August 22, 1935, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>83</sup> (Ibid.)

from der same Jewish race.”<sup>84</sup> The article goes on to note segregation and racist hiring practices that occurred in Jewish owned businesses like the upscale Halle Brothers department store in downtown Cleveland.

A *Call and Post* article from 1936 notes that an Italian and Jewish entrepreneur had opened up a nightclub at a location that was denied to black businessmen. The author encouraged blacks to stop patronizing the business and instead visit the Silver Leaf Club which employed blacks in “all departments.”<sup>85</sup> In 1937, the weekly *Call and Post* “On the Avenue” column bemoaned the fact that the lack of black businesses in Cleveland ensured that their community would benefit little from the upcoming national Elks Lodge convention, and that much of the money would instead go to Jews. According to the columnist, “the Jew...in his typical way will foresee the coming of the Elk money and start planning for them...while the colored man will sit by watching him.” The closing paragraph called on blacks to “open up a decent colored night club where we and the Elks can go so we can stop patronizing the Jew who in reality want us but only our money so that he can build himself a fine home on the heights and then not permit you to live next to him but only work in the kitchen.”<sup>86</sup> Subsequently, the author offered an apology in the following week’s “On the Avenue.” The columnist acknowledged that many people had “rightly” been offended over his words and that he should have used the word “white”

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<sup>84</sup> “MOSE of the ROARING THIRD: MOSE WEEPS.” *Cleveland Call and Post*, December 8, 1938, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed March 15, 2010).

<sup>85</sup> Ed Brown, “Says Race Must Support Its Own Business Men,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, May 21, 1936, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>86</sup> T.D.S., “ON THE AVENUE:DAMON TURNS SPEED DEMON,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, April 8, 1937, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

rather than “Jew” which “singled out the race that is closer and more able to understand the Negro.”<sup>87</sup>

By 1938, however, events in Europe changed the way in which many black newspapers covered their relationship with the Jewish community. In November of that year, German authorities systematically forced some 25-30,000 Jews into concentration camps, destroyed thousands of businesses, and burned over two-hundred synagogues in what is now known as Kristallnacht. While the *Call & Post* had always condemned racism of any kind, the events appear to have demonstrated the urgency of the situation of Jews in Europe.<sup>88</sup> Now, rather than note the irony of America’s condemnation of anti-Semitism while supporting racism against blacks, the *Call & Post* regularly ran stories decrying the situation in Europe and called on Jews and blacks to unite against racism. The week after Kristallnacht, the *Cleveland Call & Post* ran a story entitled, “When Man Turns to Beast,” which declared that “the sins of Germany are bound to catch up with her, for no nation can sow the wind of oppression, without reaping the whirlwind of retribution.” Another article in that issue entitled, “The Negro and the Jew, Partners in Distress,” spoke of both the need for cooperation and inequalities between blacks and Jews. The article reads,

“This partnership [Jews and blacks] in distress inevitably brings about a fellow feeling between these two persecuted races. The Negro is persecuted because of his alleged ineptness for civilized ways, while the Jew is persecuted because he matches and masters his persecutors in various features of civilization. By virtue of this partnership, the Jew will become the leader of the backward Negro in commerce and business,”

then continues by saying,

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<sup>87</sup> T.D.S., “ON THE AVENUE: MY APOLOGIES,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, April 15, 1937, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>88</sup> ““Crucify Him,” Still Rings In The World Today.” *Cleveland Call and Post* (1934-1962), March 25, 1937, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed March 15, 2010).

“The Negro is in a large measure the beneficiary of Hebrew persecution. The vial of wrath which was poured out upon the head of the Negro alone, is now spread out so as to cover the Jews as well.”<sup>89</sup>

The article concludes by saying that their partnership will triumph over evil, and Christianity and democracy over irreligion and dictatorship. While this article expresses a sincere regret for the persecution of Jews and hope for a joint front against racism, the author makes a serious gaffe in heralding the inevitable triumph of Christianity (given that the writer is calling for increased cooperation between blacks and Jews). Later that year, articles entitled, “Anti-Semitism, A Weapon of the Lynch Lords,” “Racial Persecution is Contagious,” “The Plight of the Jews,” “Negroes are Not Opposing Haven for German Jews,” filled the *Call & Post*. One poem from the column, “Editorial and Rhyme” contained the lines, “The Negro, ground beneath the heel, of racial cruelty, sends his heartfelt sympathy, to the Jews in Germany.”<sup>90</sup>

## Part II-Cooperation and Flight

African American-Jewish relations from 1939 to 1966 were marked by a paradox of organizational cooperation and white flight from the inner city. Across the nation, activists from both communities worked together on numerous efforts to combat racism, enforce fair hiring practices, and advocate open housing. While this time period has been called “the golden age” of African American-Jewish relations by many historians, it was also an era of Jewish flight from Cleveland’s city limits. As a result of the historical spatial relationship between African Americans and Jews in Cleveland, however, dozens of Jewish owned businesses still relied on African American customers. Thus, street-level

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<sup>89</sup> Kelly Miller, “The Negro And The Jew, Partners in Distress,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, November 17, 1938, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed March 21, 2010).

<sup>90</sup> Chas Loeb, “Editorial In Rhyme: PASSED UP,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, December 1, 1938, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

interactions between the two communities during this era became increasingly characterized by commercial exchange.

After the start of World War II in Europe in 1939, Jewish and African American organizations worked together to combat racism and foster better relations between their communities. This cooperation included advocating for the integration of the military and monitoring the enforcement of the Fair Employment Practices Commission (that had a mandate to eliminate discrimination in the defense industry). A number of meetings between black and Jewish newspaper editors also took place.<sup>91</sup> After the war ended in 1945, the level of cooperation between organizations increased once more. Most blacks found the “democracy” they fought for overseas to be elusive at home and discrimination as rampant as ever. Simultaneously, Jewish intellectuals who had now become aware of the full extent of Hitler’s atrocities were galvanized to fight even harder against bigotry and prejudice. Throughout the next decade, African American and Jewish civil rights organizations fought together against racist restrictive housing-covenants, immigration limits, and dozens of other laws that upheld discrimination.<sup>92</sup> According to Jonathan Kaufman’s book on African American-Jewish relations, *Broken Alliance*, “Jews made up more than half the white lawyers who went south to defend civil rights protesters,” and “half to three-quarters of the contributors to civil rights organizations.”<sup>93</sup> Jews also made up much of the white volunteers for organizations like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) who sponsored the 1964 Freedom Summer project to register African Americans in

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<sup>91</sup> Cheryl Greenberg, “Negotiating Coalition: Black and Jewish Civil Rights Agencies in the Twentieth Century (1997),” in *Strangers & Neighbors: Relations Between Blacks & Jews in the United States*, ed. Maurianne Adams and John H. Bracey (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 480.

<sup>92</sup> (Ibid. 484-487)

<sup>93</sup> Jonathan Kaufman, 86.



Mississippi. That year, three volunteers for Freedom Summer, James Chaney who was black and Jewish-American activists Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were murdered for registering African Americans to vote in Mississippi.

In Cleveland, numerous local outreach programs were launched to foster better relations and cooperation between the two communities. The local chapter of National Conference of Christians and Jews led some of the most notable these efforts which included putting on workshops for teachers to promote tolerance in the schools and dispel stereotypes. In 1955, the national organization ousted the local organization's leader, James D. Noble for these actions, because they were deemed outside of the organization's mission. In response, members of the Cleveland chapter formed their own organization, the Council on Human Relations later that year. In 1949, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver of the Temple-Tilfereth Israel attended the Methodist Ministers Union at St. John's AME Church to build support for Zionism in the black community.

The enormous level of organizational and activist cooperation between blacks and Jews during this era did not translate to improved relations on the streets or an increased willingness to share residential space with one another. In fact, residential separation between blacks and Jews drastically increased, and tensions remained between Jewish storekeepers in black communities and its residents.

By World War II, defense jobs had attracted tens of thousands of southern blacks to northern cities like Cleveland and the city's African American population nearly doubled from just under 85,000 in 1940 to 148,000 in 1950.<sup>94</sup> Meanwhile, money earned from wartime manufacturing jobs along with housing subsidies like the G.I. Bill allowed

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<sup>94</sup> Thomas F. Campbell, "Public Housing (last modified November, 2009)," *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, <http://ech.cwru.edu/ech-cgi/article.pl?id=PH.3>.

many of the city's white residents to move eastward to the suburbs, while most African Americans remained cramped in their pre-war neighborhoods. From 1940 to 1950, the racial boundaries of Cleveland's Central and Mt. Pleasant neighborhoods remained nearly the same.<sup>95</sup>

Glenville, however, transitioned from a predominately Jewish neighborhood (over 70 percent Jewish in 1936) that was over 90 percent white in 1940, to one that was nearly 50 percent African American in 1950.<sup>96</sup> County auditor information shows that block by block, dozens of homes in Glenville switched from owners with common Jewish surnames (such as Hertzberg, Hurwitz, Soloman, and Schwartz) during the 1940s to owners with English names commonly held by African Americans (like Walker, Blount, and Moore).<sup>97</sup>

In the fall of 1950, a *Call & Post* team headed by writer Marty Richardson surveyed Glenville for a story on its changing demographics. While there were signs all around of African Americans escaping the overcrowded Central neighborhood for homes in the desirable Glenville neighborhood, Richardson detected ominous signs of abandonment by whites. White churches, whose parishioners had fled the neighborhood, faced closure. A survey of the area between Ashbury and Parkwood to St. Clair and East 99<sup>th</sup> found over twenty churches that "have either recently been sold to Negro congregations, are reportedly or actually for sale," and a building on Kimberly Avenue "that would cost more than a half-million dollars to build...is reportedly on sale for

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<sup>95</sup> Socialexplorer, "1940 County and Census Tract," and "1950 County and Census Tract," Socialexplorer, <http://www.socialexplorer.com/pub/maps/map3.aspx?&g=0>.

<sup>96</sup> Rubinstein and Avner, 111. Marty Richardson, "Sweeping Population Shift Hits Glenville Churches Hard: Falling Congregations Close Up Many Institutions; Values Drop," *Cleveland Call and Post*, September 2, 1950, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>97</sup> See Appendix A. Given the demographics of Glenville at this time, those with German and Eastern European surnames were almost certainly Jewish and those with English names were almost certainly African American.

\$75,000.”<sup>98</sup> Richardson also felt that the situation, as reflected in the turnover of synagogues, was “a disaster,” and ended the article by observing that one synagogue on East 105<sup>th</sup> was, “now surrounded by stores, two night clubs, restaurants and bars, predominantly colored, and another [synagogue] on E. 105<sup>th</sup> st. which closed its doors and the ‘owner’ has gone to Florida.”<sup>99</sup>



**Figure 8 Corey United Methodist Church in Glenville. Note the Hebrew writing from its days as the Jewish Center (photo by author).**

Unfortunately, money could be made in the region by encouraging whites to leave a neighborhood in order to bring down housing prices and then sell or lease the homes to African Americans at inflated prices, a technique known as blockbusting. Real estate agents often accomplished this by calling home-owners and declaring that their neighborhood was about to become all-black and that it was their last chance to sell

<sup>98</sup> (Marty Richardson, September 2, 1950)

<sup>99</sup> (Ibid)

before their home value crashed.<sup>100</sup> The *Call & Post* reported one instance where the residents of an apartment complex operated by a Jewish owner in Glenville were allegedly told to “vacate by Oct. 1 to make room for Negro tenants or their rents would automatically be increased to as high as \$20 a month (a 25 percent increase).”<sup>101</sup> Ironically, *The Call & Post* article noted that the owner even belonged to the same lodges as many of the people he was “evicting.”<sup>102</sup> While such practices were exploitative, property owners in Glenville were only able to take advantage of African Americans because most of the city’s neighborhoods forbade blacks from purchasing houses. Thus, the case of Glenville evidences prejudice and white flight, but also demonstrates that at a time when residents in many white neighborhoods still refused to sell or rent to blacks, Jews in Glenville did so by the thousands.<sup>103</sup>

The process of Jewish flight from Mt. Pleasant was less sudden and likely less racially motivated than Glenville. The area had an African American presence since the turn of the century, and the racial boundaries of the neighborhood remained limited to the same census tract in 1950 as it was in 1940. Moreover, the black population of the census tracts south of Kinsman Avenue, where most Jews lived changed only modestly.<sup>104</sup> Thus, it is likely that most in Mt. Pleasant left because they had improved their economic situation in the war-time economy, and could afford to move out of the cramped

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<sup>100</sup> Jonathan Kaufman, *Broken Alliance*. 165-195. and Norris Vitcheck (pseudo.) and Alfred Balk, “Confessions of a Blockbuster (1962),” in *Major Problems in American Urban and Suburban History: Documents and Essays*, edited by Howard P. Chudacoff and Peter C. Baldwin (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2005).

<sup>101</sup> Charles Price, “Whites Evicted, Rent Goes Up For Negroes,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, September 22, 1956, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>102</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>103</sup> From the 1940s to 1960, Glenville turned into a predominately Jewish to overwhelmingly African American neighborhood. For the data of one block in Glenville, see Appendix A.

<sup>104</sup> Socialexplorer, “1940 County and Census Tract,” and “1950 County and Census Tract,” Socialexplorer, <http://www.socialexplorer.com/pub/maps/map3.aspx?&g=0>.

working-class neighborhood and into the suburbs. By contrast, Glenville was already a largely middle-class and desirable neighborhood. Mt. Pleasant was also likely deemed “hazardous” by the government’s Home Owners’ Loan Corporation during the 1930s because of its integration, which may have made it difficult for home-owners to receive federal subsidies. Furthermore, private enterprises often used such government classifications for their own red-lining efforts.<sup>105</sup>

The Council Educational Alliance and Jewish Community Center’s Mt. Pleasant Advisory Committee decision to sell their facility in 1949 in favor of a new one in Shaker Heights despite increased usage of the Mt. Pleasant facility, made conditions even less favorable for Jews to stay in Mt. Pleasant. Afterwards, remaining Jewish residents had to meet at members’ homes for services that were previously provided by the center.<sup>106</sup> While demographic transformation occurred slower in Mt. Pleasant than Glenville by the mid-1950s, most Jews had left the area and by the 1970s it was almost an entirely African American neighborhood.<sup>107</sup> This influx of African Americans into Jewish neighborhoods once more led to a plethora of Jewish businesses being located in areas now predominantly occupied by African Americans.

While these instances of white flight were widespread, other Jews played a role in trying to halt white flight and promote integration. For instance a number of Jews played key roles in the Ludlow Community and Lomond Associations, which helped stabilize the integration of the formerly WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) suburb of Shaker

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<sup>105</sup>(Thomas J Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, Princeton studies in American politics (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1996). 43-44)

<sup>106</sup>Todd Michael Michney, “Changing neighborhoods : race and upward mobility in southeast Cleveland, 1930-1980,” (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2004), 233.

<sup>107</sup> Rubinstein and Avner, 164.

Heights.<sup>108</sup> Furthermore, African Americans who were able to move out of the city generally migrated to suburbs that had a significant Jewish population.<sup>109</sup>

Although very few Jews resided in Cleveland's neighborhoods, business presence remained strong in the Glenville, Kinsman, Central neighborhoods and along Prospect Avenue. In 1962, the Association for Jewish Communal Relations' president, Sidney Vincent, commented on the situation in a chapter entitled, "Cleveland, City Without Jews" for the book *A Tale of Ten Cities*. Vincent wrote that once Jewish neighborhoods "have been left, they have been totally abandoned, to the point where today, perhaps uniquely among American cities, Cleveland proper is almost literally a city without Jews."<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, Vincent noted that relations between blacks and Jews were complicated by economic inequality. Every morning, Vincent wrote, scores of African American women traveled to suburban households that were often Jewish where they worked as domestic servants, while at the same time dozens of Jewish businessmen passed by these workers on their way from suburbs to their jobs in the inner-city.<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, a "substantial share of housing in the Negro area-with all the attendant irritation-is owned by Jews, partly because the neighborhoods are largely formerly Jewish," and observed that when blacks did move to suburbs, "in almost every case, it has been a leap into a Jewish neighborhood."<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Charles Bromley, Interview by author, Cleveland, OH, July 2009.

<sup>109</sup> This was determined by examining the demographics of Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights, Beachwood, and University Heights, and comparing them with Mayfield, Mayfield Heights, Lyndhurst, and Euclid. Euclid is one exception of a suburb with a large African American population without a significant Jewish population.

<sup>110</sup> Eugene J Lipman, *A Tale of Ten Cities; the Triple Ghetto in American Religious Life* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1962). 1962, 47.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 58.

This demonstrates that while Jewish civil rights organizations in Cleveland like B'nai B'rith and the National Conference of Christians and Jews labored together for “brotherhood,” street-level interactions were severely compromised by wide-spread flight from the city and economic inequality. As more Jews left integrated neighborhoods, street-level relations between African Americans and Jews became increasingly centered on commerce at Jewish owned businesses. Many of these were run by individuals who had grown up in the neighborhood and continued to work in the area after they moved. In 1930, a time when hardly any Jews remained in the neighborhood, 46.5 to 58.1 percent of grocers on Central Avenue were Jewish, while the number on nearby Woodland Avenue (since it was the traditional heart of the Jewish community) was probably higher.<sup>113</sup> While this can partially be attributed to the disproportionate number of Jews who worked in retail, few if any stores on Clark Avenue on the West Side of Cleveland were owned by Jews. This demonstrates that historical ties to the neighborhood were more important than ethnic occupational tendencies. In 1941, nearly all of Cleveland’s pawnshops were located in areas frequented by blacks, like Central and Prospect Avenue, and 69 percent to 94 percent of listed pawnshop owners were Jewish.<sup>114</sup> This undoubtedly caused some black residents to resent fleeing Jewish residents who appeared to believe they were too good to live with blacks, but still operated businesses in the area.<sup>115</sup> The noted African American writer James Baldwin summed these feelings up when we wrote that,

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<sup>113</sup> This estimation is based off entering the names of grocers listed on Central Avenue in the 1930 Cleveland City Directory into a necrology search on the Cleveland Public Library to determine where they were buried. Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory [microfilm]*, (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications). Cleveland Public Library, “Cleveland Necrology File,” Cleveland Public Library, <http://www.cpl.org/necrology>.

<sup>114</sup> See footnote #49.

<sup>115</sup> Determined by entering names of grocers in Central from 1930 into a search of Ancestry.com, *1910-1930 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2009).

“It is bitter to watch the Jewish storekeeper locking up his store for the night...with *your* money in his pocket, to a clean neighborhood, miles from you, which you will not be allowed to enter. Nor can it help the relations between most Negroes and most Jews when part of this money is donated to civil rights...this money can be looked on as conscience money merely, as money given to keep the Negro happy in his place, and out of white neighborhoods.”<sup>116</sup>

Such sentiments demonstrate African American-Jewish relations were not entirely shaped by civil rights activism, and underlying tensions in the streets could severely undermine organizational cooperation. Furthermore, it reveals perceived exploitation by whites was particularly infuriating when it occurred in black neighborhoods because it pointed out the lack of control African Americans had over their lives and urban space.<sup>117</sup>

While it may be true that some Jewish supporters of civil rights feared sharing their neighborhood's space with African Americans, it is simplistic and insensitive to attribute the sacrifices of Jewish civil rights activists to self-interest. Street-level relations were usually divorced from civil rights activism. Slain Jewish activist Andrew Goodman was not motivated by a desire to keep blacks happy in their neighborhood. Nor can activists' efforts be attributed to a high level contact with African Americans. Many prominent Jews who participated in civil rights efforts, like Jack Greenberg (Director Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund), Joel Spingarn (an NAACP president), Michael Schwerner (slain CORE volunteer), and Julius Rosenwald (philanthropist to African American causes) were from middle class or wealthy backgrounds far removed from black neighborhoods. Thus, Jewish-black relations were often driven by two crucial, but practically divorced forces. One of shared activism and another of shared space.

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<sup>116</sup> Baldwin, 34.

<sup>117</sup> For more on charges of exploitation, see 65-66



### The Post-war Entertainment Business in Cleveland

While relations between Jewish businesses and African American customers were often marked by tension, they could also be a source of immense creativity and cultural importance. One such example of this was the music store Record Rendezvous, whose owner, along with Alan Freed coined the term “rock ‘n’ roll.”<sup>118</sup> Record Rendezvous was owned by Leo Mintz who had grown up in Central and Mt. Pleasant, but by 1936 lived in the suburbs. During the 1930s, he worked as an assistant manager at a pawnshop, before opening up his record store in 1939.

Mintz’s Record Rendezvous was located on Prospect Avenue, a critical downtown commercial district that catered to an inter-racial and largely working-class clientele. Dating back to its days as part of the Haymarket District, Prospect was home to many Jewish-owned businesses like cigar stores, shoe retail and repair outlets, small restaurants, bakeries, and jewelers, as well as the Central Market that housed a variety of ethnic vendors. The avenue was also an important shopping district for black Clevelanders because of its proximity to Central and because nearly all streetcar routes used by African Americans (except for those in Glenville and the #33 bus route during the 1950s) destined for downtown terminated on Prospect, near Record Rendezvous.<sup>119</sup>

As a result of the store’s location, it enjoyed a diverse cliental of whites and blacks of all ages who were allowed to preview the music they were interested in before purchasing it, a unique business innovation for the time. By 1951, Mintz detected an interest in rhythm & blues music by both his black and white customers. Convinced of its

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<sup>118</sup> John A Jackson, *Big Beat Heat: Alan Freed And the Early Years of Rock & Roll* (New York: Schirmer Trade Books, 1991), 82. The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, “Leo Mintz,” *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, <http://ech.cwru.edu/ech-cgi/article.pl?id=ML2>.

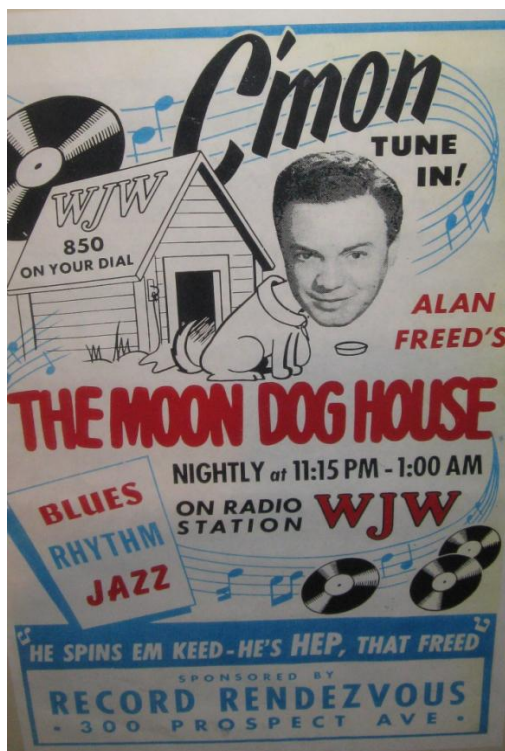
<sup>119</sup> James R Spangler and James A. Toman, 23.

marketability, he invited his friend, a Jewish classical disc jockey named Alan Freed to his store in order to convince him to switch his radio format to rhythm and blues. The trip made an impression on Freed who recalled, “I spoke to some of the kids buying records at the shop. It became apparent that they were not only from the immediate neighborhood but from all parts of town.”<sup>120</sup> Since nearly all of Cleveland’s African Americans were confined to the adjacent Central Avenue neighborhood and with a few exceptions to nearby areas on the East Side, Freed appears to be saying that whites as well as blacks were among those listening to rhythm and blues albums that day. Freed followed Mintz’s advice and began a regularly scheduled one hour rhythm and blues segment following his classical program on WJW in July of 1951. In a likely plan to broaden the appeal of the music for whites, Mintz and Freed came up with the idea to name the music “rock ‘n’ roll” (and sometimes blues & rhythm) rather than the accepted terms of the era, “rhythm & blues” or race music.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Alan Freed, “Alan Freed Says: ‘I Told You So...,’” *Downbeat*, September, 19 1956, 44.

<sup>121</sup> Jackson, 82.



**Figure 9 & 10** On the left is an advertisement for Alan Freed's radio show found at the Cleveland Broadcast Museum. Note the banner for Record Rendezvous on the bottom. On the right is a contemporary shot of Prospect Avenue. The arrow points to the building where Record Rendezvous was located. Street-cars originating from the city's outskirts would pass through African American neighborhoods like Central, before terminating at this point and looping around, thus ensuring a racially mixed shopping district (photos by author).

On March 21, 1952, Mintz, Freed, and local promoter Lew Platt, hosted what has somewhat erroneously been labeled the world's "first" rock 'n' roll concert, the Moondog Coronation Ball at the Cleveland Arena. While it may have not been the first, it was certainly the largest of its time.<sup>122</sup> In fact, the concert sold more tickets than the arena could hold. When the show began, fights broke out in the Cleveland Arena over seats and fire marshals cancelled the concert after only one song. While the show was a fiasco, it caught the attention of the city's press and some professionals in the national media who

<sup>122</sup> All of these artists had played previous concerts. So by definition, the Moondog Coronation Ball can't be said to have been the first if the same songs were played at previous gigs.

were astounded by both the concert's fights and size of the crowd, which was nearly all black.

Cleveland's African American newspaper, the *Call & Post* believed Freed and his partners were exploiters of young African Americans who foolishly worshipped the white disc jockey. An article in the *Call & Post* declared that "it is appalling to think that Moondog with his late-hour radio show on WJW would appeal to so many Negro teenagers...that their parents would tolerate their actual addiction to a show of 'gut bucket blues and lowdown rhythms.'" <sup>123</sup> In an interesting series of events that pitted generations against each other across racial lines, many blacks wrote back to the *Call & Post* defending Freed. The next week, *Call & Post* writer Marty Richardson acknowledged that "never in recent history of the Call and Post has there been such an avalanche of letters been received" and "never before have a group of fine youngsters made a more brilliant defense of one of their idols." Nevertheless, Richardson went on to lambast Freed and the music industry for exploiting the black community and tarnishing the community's image with "suggestive," "gut-bucket rhythms." <sup>124</sup> Richardson declared that "race music" "is quite likely a filthy, suggestive, unwholesome thing," and a "jim-crow record" that is forced upon "composers of trash" (black R&B musicians) by "merchants of filth." Richardson finished his diatribe by "thanking" young fans for their letters, but informing them that they were "grossly misled." He called on them to ask record promoters and disc jockeys "if their Irish or Hungarian or Jewish records are like 'Race'

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<sup>123</sup> Valena Minor Williams, "Moon Doggers 'Break it Up,'" *Cleveland Call and Post*, March 19, 1952. Three-A.

<sup>124</sup> Marty Richardson, "Today's Youngsters: Teen-Agers or Moon-Doggers?," *Cleveland Call and Post*, April 26, 1952, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

records: so dirty that they wouldn't pass a deaf, dumb and blind board of censors."<sup>125</sup>

Despite these attacks, Alan Freed's show became a national sensation, and placed the term "rock 'n' roll" in the American lexicon forever. Mintz and Freed's efforts were eventually immortalized with the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame's opening in Cleveland in 1995.

*The Cleveland Call & Post's* objections demonstrate the ambiguous sentiments of appreciation and mistrust many blacks had for Jewish businessmen who relied on African American customers. Many middle-class African Americans like Richardson were extremely distrustful of white promoters who seemed to be exploiting black youth with "gut-bucket rhythms," even though Cleveland's first black disc jockey, Bill Hawkins played much of the same music. On the other hand, Freed was a white man many young African Americans felt "understood them" and professed his adoration for his listeners night after night in his broadcasts. Freed and Mintz were people who opened the doors for black artists and listeners into the city's biggest venues. Of course there was truth to both sentiments. For instance, Alan Freed later took song-writing credits for Chuck Berry's song, "Maybellene" and thus a portion of the song's royalties even though he did not write it. Also, because of factors which included race, Freed became a national legend while Hawkins fell into obscurity.<sup>126</sup>

In the next issue of the *Call & Post* following Richardson's editorial, the newspaper published letters from readers. While some letters applauded Richardson's critical stance, most of the featured letters written by young people were upset with the journalist's diatribe. One letter signed by a "group of Disgusted Teen-Agers (sic)," wrote

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<sup>125</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>126</sup> Hawkins was also an independent disc jockey with infrequent show airings, which made it more difficult for him to attract the same following as Freed.

that Richardson's article "downing our favorite disc jockey" was "disgusting" and rhetorically asked if the journalist must "make such a big fool of himself?" One reader, Leola Adams, wrote that "I went to the Moon-Dog ball and I agree a lot of damage was done...I hope Allan Freed keeps the good work up." Another letter written by a reader named Dorothy Stokes wrote that she was "writing on behalf of a group of teen-agers on the East Side..." and "would like to prove that all teen-agers are NOT turning into Moon-Doggers." The letter continued by saying that "We feel we have sense enough to know what is good about his program, and what is wrong."<sup>127</sup>

To many African American youths, it seemed that Freed had treated his listeners with respect and deference to their tastes. At the same time, Mintz's Record Rendezvous booths and Hawkins's and Freed's radio shows allowed many whites to anonymously listen to a forbidden art while not threatening the physical color line, thus unwittingly allying black and white youth into a separate but equal rebellion against their elders. Record Rendezvous demonstrates that by no means were all Jewish businessmen disliked by the African American community, and their reliance on black customers can be attributed to ethnic spatial relations rather than a plot to exploit a vulnerable community. Freed's success as a disc jockey became legendary, and is now an integral aspect of Cleveland's identity as a "rock 'n' roll capital."

Although Mintz and Freed played a significant role in introducing "race music" to white Americans in ethnic borderlands like Prospect Avenue and radio programs in the privacy of the home, attempts to physically integrate Cleveland's night club scene were much more contested. As in the case of previously mentioned businesses, Jewish

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<sup>127</sup> "Today's Youngsters: Teen-Agers or Moon-Doogers?" *Cleveland Call and Post* (1934-1962), May 3, 1952, <http://www.proquest.com/>.

American nightclub owners were more likely than others to welcome black customers into their businesses. As was the case with other Jewish businessmen who relied on black customers, many of the nightclub owners had grown up in racially mixed neighborhoods. One such club was the Towne Casino, located near Euclid and East 105th street and owned by Jack Rogoff and Edward Helstein. Rogoff, like Leo Mintz, had grown up in a racially mixed block in Central, before moving to Glenville.<sup>128</sup> By 1951, he had moved to University Heights and opened the Towne Casino (originally China Casino) along with Helstein. Since advertisements appear in the *Cleveland Call & Post* from its opening, it is safe to assume that its owners hoped to attract African Americans to their club in the all-white University Circle area.

On a late Monday morning in March of 1953, music enthusiasts packed into the integrated Towne Casino to witness the most beloved jazz musician of all time, Louis Armstrong. Patrons danced and listened to tunes like “Blue Berry Hill,” before retiring back to their homes after the concert. As Monday night drifted into Tuesday morning, the club’s porter, Fowler Williams answered a loud knock on the door. After watching two men run into the distance, a blast ripped across the Towne Casino, shattering windows, and throwing Williams to the floor. Afterward, one of the club’s owners told the *Call & Post* that he knew of “no trouble” or motivation to bomb his establishment. His statements were only half true. The club had challenged white segregation along Cleveland’s famed Euclid Avenue and fears of inter-racial dating and miscegenation were mounting.<sup>129</sup> Two months later, the liquor board cited the nearby integrated Play

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<sup>128</sup> 1930; Census Place: *Cleveland, Cuyahoga, Ohio*; Roll 1773; Page: 8A; Enumeration District: 445; Image: 503.0. from Ancestry.com. *1930 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2002).

<sup>129</sup> Howard Drechsler, interview by author, notes, Beachwood, OH, August 2009.

Bar for a “lewd act” involving “barely clad” dancers engaging in what the liquor agent described as “bumps and grinds.”<sup>130</sup> The Play Bar, like Record Rendezvous and the Towne Casino, had a Jewish owner who had been raised in a racially-mixed neighborhood in Central. The *Call & Post* reported that the same show had been given to all black crowds in the past without disturbance, and that the Play Bar’s patrons firmly believed they were trying to be driven out for having an integrated club.<sup>131</sup> In June, a bomb was tossed on the roof of the Play Bar club during business hours. Later, the bar was given a ninety day suspension for the “lewd act.”<sup>132</sup> The Play Bar disappeared from the headlines from that point on.

The fate of the Towne Casino was not much brighter. On May 28<sup>th</sup>, a bomb once again damaged the Towne Casino during operating hours. In July, yet another bomb placed in the upper floor of the building blasted a hole in the ceiling and damaged offices above the Town Casino. The next month, the Towne Casino closed, and someone left a note on the club reading, “Don’t bomb us; we quit.”<sup>133</sup>

The examples of the Towne Casino and Play Bar illustrate that while introduction of “race” music (rock ‘n’ roll music) and integration of musical preferences are fondly remembered instances of Cleveland racial relations, its scope was limited. Most whites were introduced to the music through listening to the radio in the privacy of one’s house, or in Record Rendezvous, neither which challenged the city’s racial geography. Attempts to physically integrate the city’s music scene on Euclid Avenue near University Circle

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<sup>130</sup> "RAIDED! Black and Tan Club Charges Persecution," *Cleveland Call and Post*, May 16, 1953, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>131</sup> Ibid..

<sup>132</sup> John Fuster, "Tips FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN:ENTERTAINMENT," *Cleveland Call and Post*, August 15, 1953, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>133</sup> "Bombings Force Towne Casino to Close," *Cleveland Call and Post*, August 8, 1953, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).



(and just north of Glenville) were met with violent resistance. Furthermore, the fact that Alan Freed, Leo Mintz, and the owners of both the Play House and Towne Casino were all Jewish is no surprise, since Jewish-Americans had long established ties in Cleveland's black community. Thus, their entrepreneurship in the black community was not an attempt at integration or to tap into a new market, as much as a residual spatial relationship between the two communities that survived the era of white flight.

Encroachments on the racial geography of residential neighborhoods were as violently contested as entertainment space. As previously mentioned, Cleveland's Jews were more likely to sell to African Americans than other whites. As a result, many whites feared Jews in their neighborhood could upset the area's racial geography. In *A Tale of Ten Cities*, the president of the Association for Jewish Communal Relations, Sidney Vincent recalled a letter by a man who claimed that neighborhoods ran deteriorated because,

“In the first instance the Negro follows the Jews in housing; no Jews, no Negroes to follow....The Jew is too greedy when it comes to the almighty dollar. You will think this man is prejudiced and biased who is writing this letter, but I am not! These are the facts: it is food for thought.”<sup>134</sup>

One week after the second bombing of the Towne Casino, a Jewish businessman sold his house (in the Lee-Harvard neighborhood) to an African American mortician, Wendell Stewart, allegedly out of contempt towards his former neighbors.<sup>135</sup> Many white neighbors became irate over the prospect of having a black neighbor and protested at the previous home-owner's store. In a report for the Jewish Community Federation, Sidney

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<sup>134</sup>Sidney Z. Vincent in Eugene J Lipman, *A Tale of Ten Cities; the Triple Ghetto in American Religious Life*, 72.

<sup>135</sup>Sidney Z. Vincent, “MEMORANDUM ON HOUSING SITUATION, LEE-HARVARD AREA,” in *Remembering: Cleveland's Jewish Voices*, ed. Sally Wertheim & Alan Bennett (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2011 (citation taken from manuscript copy).

Vincent recorded that some Jewish neighbors “felt extremely threatened by the growing restlessness, since such great resentment was expressed against ‘Jews who pulled this dirty trick on us [white residents] by selling to Negroes.’”<sup>136</sup> Upon learning of the brewing tensions, prominent black organizations including the Future Outlook League and Antioch Baptist Church, along with two city councilmen offered their support to Stewart and his wife. A police detail guarded the home twenty-four hours a day. After more negotiations and raucous neighborhood meetings, Mayor Thomas A. Burke decided to address the angry residents of Lee-Harvard at Gracemont School. One speaker for the neighbors said that Wendell Stewart moving in was a “well laid out Communist plot, carefully worked out to invade our neighborhood and take away our rights.” After the Mayor asked the disgruntled neighbors “how discrimination against Negroes differ from discrimination against your people – Jews, Hungarians, Italians,” a speaker for the neighbors responded “We’re all white.”<sup>137</sup>

#### African American-Jewish Relations in Crime

The spatial relationship between residual Jewish businesses in Central and their black customers extended to the underground economy. During the 1930s, the Jewish criminal syndicate and the Italian mafia, who were often allied, branched out to loan-sharking, prostitution, gambling, labor unions, and “protection” fees to protect their profits in a post-prohibition Cleveland.<sup>138</sup> The Cleveland mafia also attempted to break into the African American policy market, an illegal lottery at the time, and offered “protection” (usually from themselves, but also from police harassment) to black

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Daniel R Kerr, “The Reign of Wickedness’: The Changing Structures of Prostitution, Gambling and Political Protection in Cleveland from the Progressive Era to the Great Depression,” 1998, (M.A. Thesis, Case Western Reserve University, 1998), 45.

racketeers in exchange for a forty percent take in gambling operations and three dollars a week from each prostitute.<sup>139</sup> African American vice operators who did not cooperate were often beaten or shot. By June 1932, the Jewish-Italian organized crime operation finally secured protection money from African American policy operators, and police raids did in fact halt.<sup>140</sup> Two whites who grew up in Central were particularly critical in securing this arrangement between the mafia and black policy operators. One was Italian-American Angelo Lonardo (who grew up in Central) of the Mayfield Mob.<sup>141</sup> Another was Jewish gangster Alex “Shondor” Birns(stein), who had been raised at the Jewish Orphan Asylum on Woodland Avenue, and was used by Lonardo as muscle to violently enforce their agreement and keep racketeers in line.<sup>142</sup> While this agreement stifled mob violence for some time, Shondor Birns later waged war on black operators who attempted to break away from his patronage.

In the years following World War II, the relationship between blacks and whites in the Cleveland criminal underworld became increasingly contentious. In 1953, a bomb rocked the house of black numbers racketeer, Ernst Render, and police immediately questioned Birns.<sup>143</sup> Although Birns was never brought to a trial for this bombing, he was tried twice for bombing the house of another black policy operator, Joe Allen, who refused to pay Birns for protection. Birns was acquitted, and then unsuccessfully accused of jury tampering.

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<sup>139</sup> (Kerr 1998, 45-47) Services were paid for “protection” from authorities, but often meant protection from their gang attacking the numbers operators.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>141</sup> Ancestry.com, *1920 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2010).

<sup>142</sup> Lonardo’s role is found in Kerr, 47.

<sup>143</sup> Marty Richardson. "FEDS ROUND UP COUNTERFEIT GANG: BOMBING IGNITES RACKET WAR Racketeers Hauled In For Questioning." *Cleveland Call and Post* (1934-1962), September 5, 1953, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed July 21, 2010).

In 1957, a bomb blasted the front porch and living room of yet another black policy racketeer, the future boxing promoter, Don King. At the time, King was one of five numbers racketeers who had been paying Shondor Birns 200 dollars a week for “protection” as well as to ensure that competitors would not offer five-hundred to one paid odds to customers.<sup>144</sup> Earlier that year, King stopped paying Birns, insisting that he had left the numbers racket. Police arrested Birns and two other suspects less than three hours after the bombing.<sup>145</sup> Birns was charged with blackmail, with King scheduled to testify as the star witness. More intimidation followed. One October morning, an assassin waited outside the King household with a gun, while King, two friends, and his wife played bridge. According to King’s account, he walked outside to his car to bring in theater tickets, when the gunman took aim. The police theorized that the gunman planned to shoot King inside his car after he pulled out of his house, but was surprised when he exited the car and headed back inside. Unwilling to wait for another opportunity to get King, the assassin open fired from about twenty-five feet away, spraying him with birdshot before fleeing. King was rushed to St. Luke Hospital where his head wounds were said not to be life threatening.<sup>146</sup> Birns was later tried for attempting to murder King, but Birns’s defense managed to force a hung jury.

The gang wars between black numbers racketeers and their Jewish “patron” were not over after this incident. Two years later, Birns escaped an assassination attempt. Not long afterwards, a car approached an African American suspect in the shooting named Sunny Coleman, and its occupants fired on him. According to the *Call & Post*, Coleman,

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<sup>144</sup> Fred McGunagle, “Cleveland’s Killer Celebrities, Part 1,” truTV, [http://www.trutv.com/library/crime/gangsters\\_outlaws/mob\\_bosses/birns\\_greene/9.html](http://www.trutv.com/library/crime/gangsters_outlaws/mob_bosses/birns_greene/9.html).

<sup>145</sup> “Birns is Jailed in Bombing; Charge 1000-aWeek-Plot,” *Cleveland Press*, May 20, 1957.

<sup>146</sup> “Birns Tipster Shot, Lucky to be Alive; Gunman’s Plans Upset, Police Believe,” *Cleveland Press*, October 5, 1957.

who had been wounded, dove through a plate-glass window for shelter and called the police. After initially telling the police that he was a burglar who had just been shot by a woman, Coleman then said that he had been shot by an unidentified black man, firing from a car driven by Shondor Birns.<sup>147</sup> In reporting the incident, the *Call & Post* asked if the shooting “mark[ed] the fade-out of the formerly invincible control of Alex (Shondor) Birns over the destinies of Cleveland’s Negro numbers operators.” The article then declared,

“Some fact are clear. Not since the days of the notorious Mayfield Road gang have Negro numbers operators in Cleveland been thoroughly under the control of their white puppet masters. Nobody has successfully proved it, but Birns is the man credited by both numbers hustlers and the police with controlling the strings.”<sup>148</sup>

Coleman, however, changed his story and told a judge at a Common Pleas Court that his allegations against Birns were false and that he couldn’t remember what happened that night.<sup>149</sup> The police then arrested Coleman as a material witness, and he agreed to testify against Birns. His waffling testimony, combined with a neighbor’s testimony who backed Birns’s alibi convinced the jury to reach a verdict of not guilty, and once again Birns walked.<sup>150</sup> Coleman was later sentenced to one to three years in prison for carrying a concealed gun into a courtroom.<sup>151</sup>

Birns carried on his operations until 1975 when he was killed by a car bomb near the Flats. The case of Shondor Birns demonstrates that the historic spatial relationship

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<sup>147</sup>“Shootings Seen Prelude to Battle for Control :Wounded Hood Fingers Birns,” *Cleveland Call and Post* (1934-1962), April 18, 1959, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Bob Williams, "Refuses to Finger Birns Under Oath: Can't Explain Who Shot Him, Faces Perjury," *Cleveland Call and Post*, June 20, 1959, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

<sup>150</sup> Fred McGunagle, “Cleveland’s Killer Celebrities, Part 1,” truTV, [http://www.trutv.com/library/crime/gangsters\\_outlaws/mob\\_bosses/birns\\_greene/9.html](http://www.trutv.com/library/crime/gangsters_outlaws/mob_bosses/birns_greene/9.html).

<sup>151</sup> *Cleveland Call and Post* "Sunny Coleman Gets 3-Years," *Cleveland Call and Post*, December 5, 1959, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 18, 2009).

between Jewish and African Americans that led to residual Jewish entrepreneurship in black neighborhoods also existed in the black market. In both the illicit and mainstream economy, prejudice, lack of capital, and competition with established white enterprises often led blacks to becoming the clients of Jewish entrepreneurs or other whites who came from their neighborhood. Furthermore, the example of Shondor Birns demonstrates that relations between the two communities were not always driven by sympathy between mutually oppressed peoples, but from space and markets. As was the case in the mainstream market, white underground entrepreneurs from the Italian and Jewish-American communities who grew up in Central dominated business in their old neighborhood long after it had become predominantly African American. Since Central had once been home to thousands of Jewish and Italian-Americans, many of these entrepreneurs were from these heritages.

### Flight and Separation

By the 1960s, interactions between Jewish family businesses and African Americans began to wane. Large chain-stores drove many smaller Jewish retail establishments out of business and fewer Jews had any ties to Central. In 1930, there were forty-three grocery stores on Central Avenue, the heart of Cleveland's African American community, but by 1960 there were only twenty-four.<sup>152</sup> Still, such Jewish-owned businesses played a crucial role in African American-Jewish relations during this era because of the lack of residential interaction between the two communities in the city. Determining the ethnicity of the proprietors after the 1950s is extremely difficult because city directories did not list the store owners' name. According to a supplemental study for

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<sup>152</sup> Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory [microfilm]*, (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications), (Cleveland: Cleveland Public Library, Preservation Office, 1990).

the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 39 percent of their sample of “ghetto merchants” (52 percent of white merchants) in fifteen non-Southern cities were Jewish.<sup>153</sup> Since African Americans in Cleveland still remained especially confined to formerly Jewish neighborhoods like Central and Glenville, the city probably had a larger percent of Jewish entrepreneurs than other cities like Detroit where this was no longer the case.<sup>154</sup>

Relations between merchants and customers during this period were ambiguous. According to the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, inner-city retailers generally charged more than others, but much of this could be attributed to the higher costs and the level of risk associated with operating a business that relied on impoverished residents who had to purchase goods through installment plans or on credit. Unfortunately, such customers were more likely than most to be unable to pay off the installments.<sup>155</sup> The practice of contract purchases also harmed merchant-customer relations because customers who entered such contracts could have their goods repossessed if they were unable to make the payments without a refund. In about 40 percent of states, garnishments could be taken out of a buyer’s paycheck for failure to make payments, even after a good was repossessed.<sup>156</sup>

Perceived disrespect by storekeepers could also lead to resentment or confrontations, although it appears such instances were infrequent. One former Cleveland

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<sup>153</sup> Peter H. Rossi, Richard A. Berk, David P. Boesel, Bettye K. Eidson, and W. Eugene Groves, “Between black and white; the faces of American Institutions in the Ghetto (1968),” in *Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968), 126-127.

<sup>154</sup> Socialexplorer, “1960 County and Census Tract,” Socialexplorer, <http://www.socialexplorer.com/pub/maps/map3.aspx?&g=0>.

<sup>155</sup> National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*, New York Times ed. (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), 275-276.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

resident, W. Allen Taylor, who worked at both an Italian and Jewish-owned grocery store in the mainly middle-class Lee-Harvard area, recalled that

“There was some tension, especially during the mid to late sixties as black folks became more vocal about their demands for respect. I do remember seeing black folks, for instance, getting in the face of the Jewish man who owned one of the grocery stores that I worked in as a teen. This would happen from time to time if they perceived him to be disrespectful to them in any way (usually over attitude more than event). For the most part, however, the Jewish retailers who maintained a presence in my mostly black neighborhood, understood how to relate to black folks with a minimum of tension, so it was fairly peaceful.”<sup>157</sup>

The findings of a supplemental study prepared for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders entitled, “Racial Attitudes in Fifteen American Cities,” supports this observation. According to the study, only 3 percent of African American respondents reported that they were “often” treated disrespectfully in nearby stores, but 25 percent stated that this occurred sometimes or rarely. Similarly, only 24 percent respondents responded that they were “often” overcharged for goods, but 46 percent had reported that they had experienced it sometimes or rarely.<sup>158</sup> This demonstrates that the majority of African Americans did not view most inner-city merchants as rude or exploitative, but did believe that some were. Businesses that were considered hostile towards their customers often became targets during the wave of inner-city disorders during the 1960s.

In Cleveland, the first such disorder broke out in the Hough neighborhood in 1966. The disturbances began when a group of whites attacked two young blacks in the Sowinski area of Hough on June 22, 1966.<sup>159</sup> When the police refused to pursue the incident, a crowd began throwing rocks and bottles. Later that night, a white motorist shot a black ten year old after his car was hit by a rock. The disturbances then escalated

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<sup>157</sup> W. Allen Taylor interview, interview by author, email, March 2010.

<sup>158</sup> Angus Campbell and Howard Schuman, “Racial Attitudes in Fifteen American Cities (1968),” in *Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968), 45.

<sup>159</sup> Marc E. Lakritz, “The Hough Riots of 1966,” (senior thesis, Princeton University, 1968), 44.



into a riot which left a supermarket on Superior Avenue in flames and others damaged in what became a precursor to the much larger riot in the area the following month. After several days, the violence subsided, but *The Cleveland Call & Post* ran an editorial predicting that because of the deplorable conditions in African American neighborhoods like Hough, “time was running out” to avoid a riot.<sup>160</sup> The editorial was prophetic.

That July, a heat wave hit the Great Lakes region. On July 12<sup>th</sup>, riots broke out in Chicago after African American youths who had no access to swimming pools were ordered to stop using fire hydrants to cool themselves. On July 18<sup>th</sup>, in Cleveland, an African American woman who was reportedly a prostitute walked into the Seventy-Niner’s Café in the Hough neighborhood, owned by Jewish Americans Abe and Dave Feigenbaum, and asked patrons to donate money for the children of a deceased prostitute. After the owners told the woman to leave, Dave Feigenbaum and the woman exchanged curses. Soon afterwards, a young black man ordered a bottle of wine and asked for a pitcher of ice water. Feigenbaum refused to serve water since his order was a takeout, and according to a man at the bar at the time, told a waitress not to serve water to “niggers.”<sup>161</sup> After the man left, someone placed a sign which read “no water for niggers” on the bar’s window. After a crowd gathered outside the bar, the owners called the police and then went outside, one armed with a pistol and another with a rifle. When the police arrived, the crowd threw a volley of rocks and bricks at them, and before long, neighbors looted and burned stores in the neighborhood.<sup>162</sup> During the night, the looting became worse and shots rang out through the dark streets. As in the case of other riots, the words

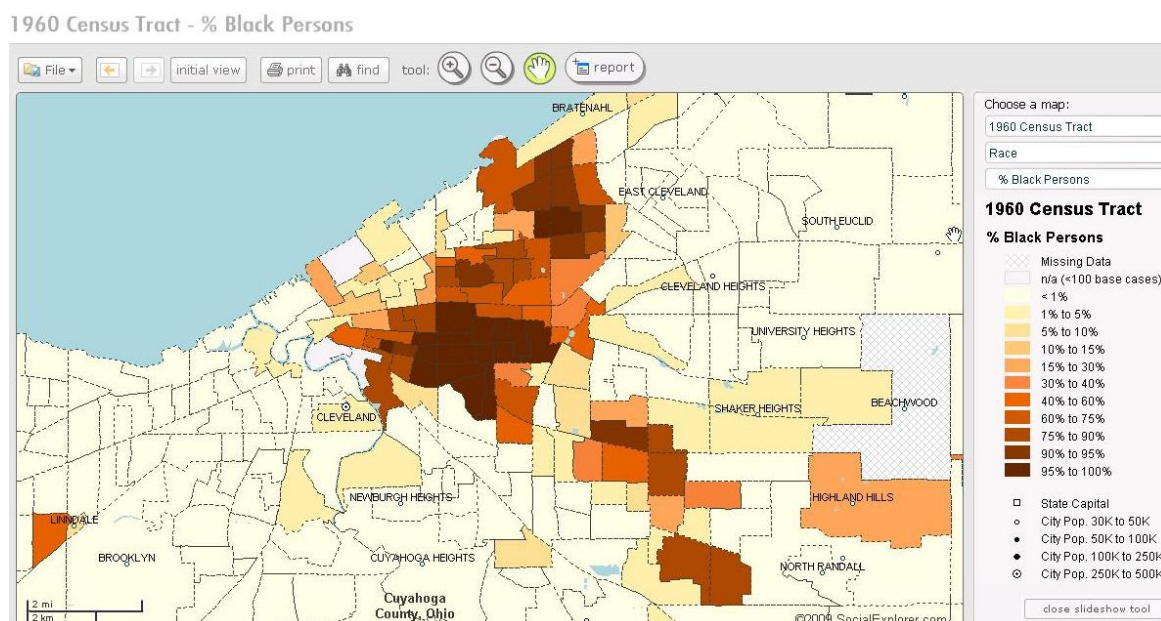
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<sup>160</sup> William O. Walker, “Time is Running Out,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, July 2, 1966, <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed February 6, 2010).

<sup>161</sup> (Marc E. Lakritz, 7)

<sup>162</sup> (Ibid., 7)

“soul brother” or “black owner” were painted on property owned by African Americans, leaving property owned by Jews and other whites vulnerable to arson and looting. On July 20<sup>th</sup> the National Guard arrived, but the rioting continued until July 23<sup>rd</sup>. By that time, four African Americans had been killed, about 240 fires reported, and around 300 people arrested.<sup>163</sup> Although far greater in scale, the Hough Riots bore a striking resemblance to the disorder outside the Quincy Market in 1934. Both events occurred at nearly the same time of year, at a Jewish-owned business, and arose over an altercation about service. Damage in 1934, however, was limited to the store in question and businesses continued to operate, as opposed to 1966, when vandalism was widespread.



**Figure 11** Socialexplorer.com’s map of Cleveland’s black population

<sup>163</sup> The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, “The Hough Riots,” *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, <http://ech.cwru.edu/ech-cgi/article.pl?id=HR3>, and Marc E. Lakritz, 7.



Similar disorders occurred throughout the nation. It is hard to determine whether or not businesses were damaged or looted because they happened to be caught in the crossfire of urban unrest, or if they were specifically targeted because of exploitative practices or bigoted attitudes. In fact, merchants were divided over the issue themselves. According to a supplemental study for The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (NACCD), “merchants whose stores were not touched claimed good community relations as the reason, but those whose stores were damaged felt that the damage was not directed particularly at their stores but rather against stores in general.”<sup>165</sup> While participants of the disorders were not interviewed, another supplemental study for the NACCD cited, “discrimination, unfair treatment” as the most numerous cause (48-49 percent) cited by African Americans who participated in the poll.<sup>166</sup>

Regardless of the motivations behind the disorders, relations between African Americans and white merchants in African American neighborhoods appear to have reached a particularly low point across the nation.<sup>167</sup> Many merchants had experienced severe damages during riots, and others were afraid that future disorders could spell the end of their own livelihoods.<sup>168</sup> On top of this, an inner-city merchant was more likely than most in the mainstream economy to be the victim of theft or armed robbery. Although such crimes are uncommon and perpetrated by an extremely small handful of

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<sup>165</sup> Peter H. Rossi, Richard A. Berk, David P. Boesel, Bettye K. Eidson, and W. Eugene Groves, 75.

<sup>166</sup> Angus Campbell and Howard Schuman, 48.

<sup>167</sup> According to a supplemental study for The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, “merchants in our sample [of fifteen non-Southern cities, 39 percent of which were Jewish] were among the most unsympathetic to the plight of the ghetto Negro of any occupation group in the study,” and that “the merchants endorsed attitudes about Negroes that would lead us to believe that they are apt to treat Negro customers considerably less well than white customers.” Peter H. Rossi, Richard A. Berk, David P. Boesel, Bettye K. Eidson, and W. Eugene Groves, 131.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.

people, they were a very real threat to inner-city merchants who heard first-hand accounts of crimes committed against fellow merchants in the neighborhood. Thus, it is understandable that many inner-city merchants became disenchanted with their livelihood during this era, and their children often desired to find other professions. Such conditions greatly contributed to end of Jewish predominance in inner-city Cleveland retail businesses.

### The Stokes Era

The 1960s was a disastrous decade for Cleveland. The city endured urban unrest, job loss from de-industrialization, and a lack of confidence in its future. For perhaps the first time, city leaders recognized that the city's success depended on calming racial tension. Many in the business community believed the election of black mayoral candidate Carl Stokes could quell some of this turmoil. Stokes had been narrowly defeated by fewer than four thousand votes as an independent with little institutional support in the 1965 mayoral election. In 1967, Stokes believed he could muster enough business and institutional support to seal a victory as the Democratic candidate. Jewish-American Kenneth G. Weinberg (who was from the Cleveland area) captured the hope that many white intellectuals and businessmen held for a Stokes mayoralty in the preface of his 1968 book, *Black Victory*.

“The significance of the election of a Carl Stokes lies elsewhere. He has, for the time being at least, demonstrated that black political activity can provide a viable alternative to violence in our cities... ‘The Fire Next Time’ has become a prophecy fulfilled, and the mind reels under shrill cries of separatism, nationalism, Malcom Xism, and a sad prediction by the President of the United States that our cities will almost surely experience several more summers of violence.”<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Kenneth G Weinberg, *Black Victory; Carl Stokes and the Winning of Cleveland* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968), 8.

Whether for these or other motives, many Jewish Americans like Weinberg and Marvin Chernoff, a key volunteer organizer on the campaign who helped put together Stokes' impressive grassroots network, played an integral role in the campaign. Despite the presence of several key Jewish supporters, a detailed or accurate examination of Jewish support or opposition to Stokes is nearly impossible. No precincts in Cleveland were predominantly Jewish at this time, which denies the researcher the ability to determine vote totals, the most important indicator of support. Thus, it is impossible to tell what percentage of the Jewish community supported Stokes.

After Stokes's election, it seemed for a time that the presence of a black mayor could help resolve many of the city's problems. While many U.S. cities experienced rioting after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Stokes was given great credit for keeping Cleveland peaceful. Stokes channeled this enthusiasm for his administration by working with Cleveland businesses to fund his Cleveland Now! Program which sought to raise 1.5 billion dollars over ten years for social service efforts and neighborhood improvements. The enthusiasm for Cleveland Now! and Carl Stokes, however, dissipated after the events of July 23, 1968.

On that day, black militants under the leadership of Fred "Ahmed" Evans engaged in a shootout against law enforcement officials in Glenville. The shootout began after Cleveland authorities had received reports that Evans was stocking weapons and planning violence.<sup>170</sup> Frustrated by what Evans and his followers perceived as police harassment, a militant from Evans's group shot an unarmed tow-truck driver he mistook for a

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<sup>170</sup> Sergeant Bosie Mack, "Statement by Bosie Mack (1971)," in Carl Stokes, *Promises of Power: Then and Now* ( Friends of Carl B. Stokes, 1989), 207-209.

policeman.<sup>171</sup> The police responded in force, and the ensuing shootout claimed the lives of three policemen, three suspects, and one civilian.<sup>172</sup> Violence spread throughout the Glenville area as angry crowds looted and burned numerous businesses in and around the East 105<sup>th</sup> and Superior Avenue intersection.<sup>173</sup> The shootout ended all hopes that Stokes could avert violence, and accelerated business flight from the neighborhood. Prior to the shootout, East 105<sup>th</sup>, which is the main commercial artery of Glenville had lost 24 percent of its grocery stores from 1960-1966.<sup>174</sup> After the shootout, the main commercial artery of Glenville went from having twenty-two grocery stores in 1966, to fourteen in 1971, a 37 percent loss. Many storekeepers had been ruined and many more no longer felt welcomed in black neighborhoods throughout the city.

Determining the extent of Jewish business flight is difficult. Most stores at this time had ambiguous names like “Corner Grocery” which do not reveal the ethnic origin of the owner. Janice Eatman-Williams, who grew up in Glenville during the 1960s recalls that at the time, there was a mixture of African Americans, Jews, and Italians running stores. She notes that most grocery stores were run by Jewish-Americans or other white ethnics, while personal care services like salons, and medical care were provided by African Americans. By this time, most white retailers had a racially mixed staff.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> A comprehensive examination can be found in Louis H. Masotti and Jerome R. Corsi’s *Shoot-Out in Cleveland: Black Militants and the Police*. The violence was not one-sided and misunderstanding was rife on both sides. The details and motivations of the shootout, however, are out of the scope of this study. Louis H. Masotti and Jerome R. Corsi, *Shoot-Out In Cleveland: Black Militants and the Police, July 23, 1968*, 1st ed. (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969).

<sup>172</sup> The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History, “Glenville Shootout,” *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, <http://ech.cwru.edu/ech-cgi/article.pl?id=GS1>.

<sup>173</sup> Louis H. Masotti and Jerome R. Corsi, *Shoot-Out In Cleveland: Black Militants and the Police, July 23, 1968*, 1st ed. (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969), 61.

<sup>174</sup> Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory [microfilm]*, (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications).

<sup>175</sup> Janice Eatman-Williams, interview by author, tape-recorder and notes, February 2010.

Furthermore, determining the cause of the absence of businesses is complicated. The city's population shrank by at least eleven percent (60,000 people) per decade from 1970 to 1990. It had lost nearly 180,000 residents during the 1960s alone. Many small stores could not handle the population loss, and others were forced out of business because of competition from national chains. What is apparent is that businesses departed from black neighborhoods at alarming rates. Hough Avenue, which had fifteen grocery stores in 1960, had only eight in 1970. Central Avenue, which experienced little or no rioting, went from twenty-four grocery stores in 1960 to twelve in 1970. Both of these cases represent approximately 50 percent losses in a decade. This number greatly contrasts to Lorain Avenue on the predominantly white West Side which went from twenty grocery stores in 1960 to fifteen in 1970, only a 25 percent loss.<sup>176</sup> Pawnshops in Cleveland, which had historically been run by Jewish proprietors declined from twenty-two in 1966 to only eight in 1970, a nearly 64 percent closure rate in only a half-decade.<sup>177</sup> The reasons for this are complex. Some stores, of course, were burned, and many store owners feared the same fate awaited them if they stayed.<sup>178</sup> Also, crime in nearly every category increased during the 1960s. National robbery rates more than tripled from 1960 to 1970, and continued to rise for the next two decades.<sup>179</sup> This increased crime also made operating businesses in impoverished inner-city neighborhoods increasingly difficult. This, however, is only part of the picture. The era of family-run Jewish grocers was also fading across Cleveland. Many Jewish grocers who

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<sup>176</sup> Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory [microfilm]*, (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications).

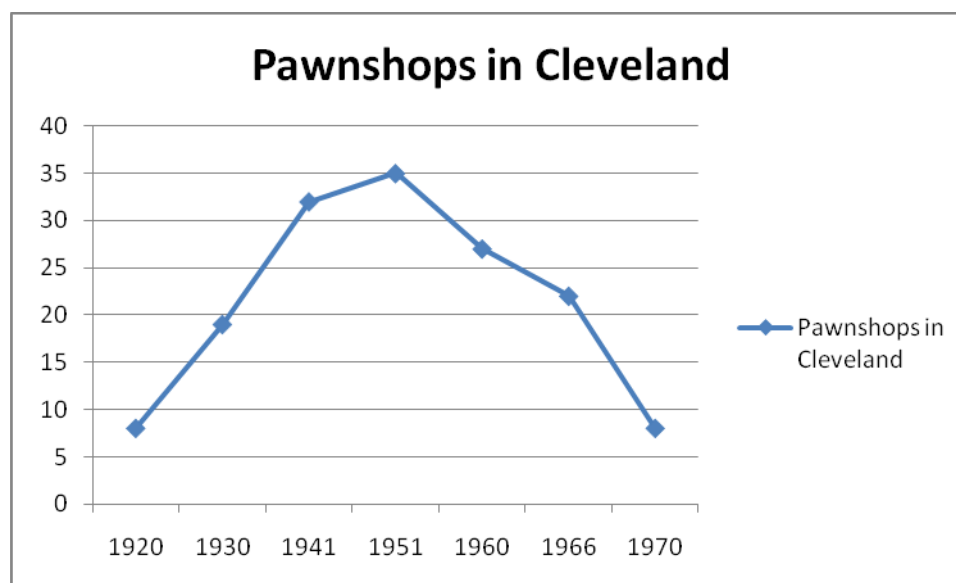
<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*.

<sup>178</sup> Peter H. Rossi, Richard A. Berk, David P. Boesel, Bettye K. Eidson, and W. Eugene Groves, 130.

<sup>179</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "Crimes and Crime Rates by Type of Offense: 1960 to 2002," U.S. Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov/statab/hist/HS-23.pdf>.



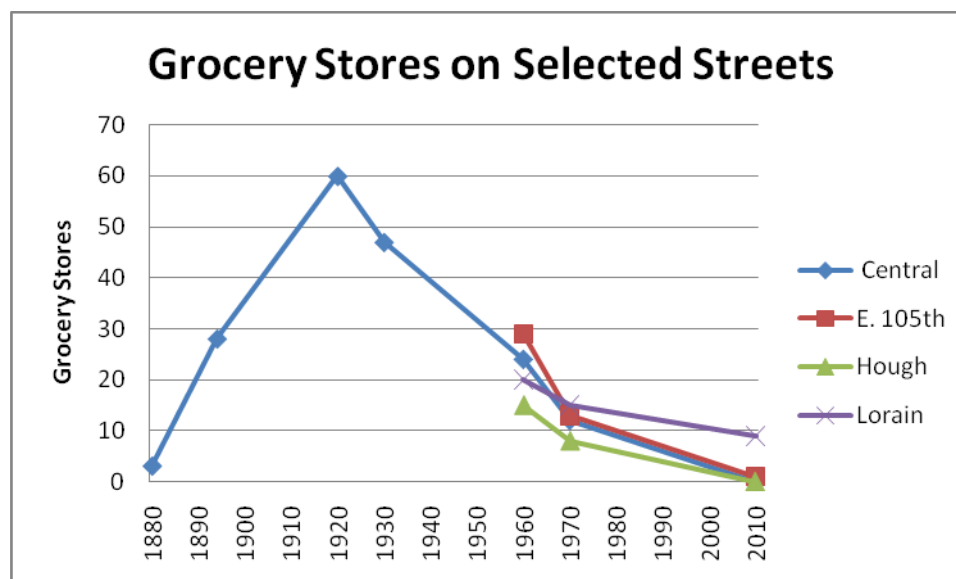
grew up in Glenville during the 1930s and 40s were retiring. Their children were often raised in more affluent households than their parents, and preferred to go into other vocations or to work in other neighborhoods.<sup>180</sup> Furthermore, one large chain store could encompass the services of many small independent grocery stores. Decisions on where to operate such businesses, however, were made by a corporation often located outside of town, and not the individual store manager. Given the riots in America during the 1960s, out-of-town corporations were reluctant to open new businesses in black neighborhoods which generally had lower incomes, could experience riots again, and had much higher insurance rates than the suburbs. Furthermore, chains could order successful stores to close if they decided to pull out of a region, as was the case of the Tops Grocery store in Glenville.<sup>181</sup> This changing businesses environment helped end a multi-generation commercial relationship between Jews and African Americans in Cleveland proper.



<sup>180</sup> Bill Rogoff, interview by author, notes, phone-call, March 2010.

<sup>181</sup> (Williams interview, 2010)., TOPS Friendly Markets, "TOPS MARKETS ANNOUNCES DECEMBER CLOSING OF NORTHEAST OHIO STORES," TOPS Friendly Markets, [http://www.topsmarkets.com/shareddev/tops\\_press/company\\_press\\_article.cfm?press\\_id=233](http://www.topsmarkets.com/shareddev/tops_press/company_press_article.cfm?press_id=233).

**Table 1** Although the number of pawnshops was already decreasing during the 1960s, nearly 64% closed between the Hough Riots and 1970.<sup>182</sup>



**Table 2** Note the disappearance of grocery stores in African American neighborhoods after the riots, while, the number remains stable on Lorain, which is an historically white street on the West Side. 2010 Yellow Book information does not appear to include most convenience stores as grocers.<sup>183</sup>

As of 2009, only a handful of Jewish businesses still operated in Cleveland's African American neighborhoods. Determining the exact number is difficult because hardly any stores feature the owner's surname anymore and contemporary businesses directories do not list the proprietor. In 2006, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* ran an article on Gordon's Cycle Shop that referred to it as Glenville's last Jewish-owned business.<sup>184</sup> Local Jewish-owned chains like Dave's Supermarket have branches in African American neighborhoods. Such retailers, however, are unlikely to affect African Americans' perceptions of Jews since most customers do not know who runs the business, and because employees they come in contact with now come from the neighborhood. Given

<sup>182</sup> Cleveland Directory Co., *Cleveland City Directory [microfilm]*, (Woodbridge, CT: Research Publications).

<sup>183</sup> Ibid. For 2010, Yellowbook, Cleveland: Greater Cuyahoga County Area (Yellow Book Sales Distribution Company, Inc., 2010). Note that Yellow Book does not appear to include most convenience stores as grocers.

<sup>184</sup> Michael Sangiacomo, "He's not ready for cycle to end: Glenville bike shop owner continuing family tradition," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, September 26, 2006, <http://www.clevelandjewishhistory.net/glenville/gordoncycle.htm/> (accessed March 13, 2010).

this lack of direct contact, such businesses cannot be said to form an integral element of African American-Jewish relations.

Political, commercial, and entertainment relations between African Americans and Jews, however, continue throughout the nation and in the Cleveland suburbs. To end this narrative in 1968 is not to support false notions that a historical coalition has ended or that relationships have deteriorated. The date, however, effectively marks a terminal point in the relationships between African Americans and independent Jewish entrepreneurs in Cleveland proper. Since hardly any Jews lived in Cleveland, the end of this economic relationship spelled the end of the historical spatial relationship between blacks and Jews in Cleveland proper.

Although nearly all of Cleveland's Jewish institutions and residents have left the city, it is not unusual in the early 2000s to see blacks and Jews living side by side in suburbs like Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights. African Americans continue to shop in traditionally Jewish commercial districts such as along Taylor Road and Coventry. In many regards, the spatial relationship between blacks and Jews has grown stronger in the suburbs in the post-1980 era than it has been in the Cleveland metropolitan area since the Great Migration. Addressing this suburban history, however, requires new research that cannot be accomplished in the confines of this study. While contemporary historians like Andrew Wiese are beginning to explore African American suburban history, there is a scarcity of historical studies on inter-racial relations in the suburbs, especially in the economic realm.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Andrew Wiese, *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2004).

The historical spatial relationship in the city of Cleveland, however, remains dormant. From the turn of the twentieth century until the 1970s, Cleveland's blacks and Jews shared urban space, which had bred close relationships between the communities. From 1900 to the 1920s, both communities clustered in the Central/Woodland neighborhood in Cleveland. From the 1930s to 1950s, Jew and Africans shared the neighborhoods of Glenville and Mt. Pleasant, although integration there was never as strong there as in Central. By the 1950s, most Jews lived in the suburbs, while blacks were confined to Central and Glenville. The experience of shared space, however, continued to influence Jewish-African Americans relations for many decades to come. Jews still operated a disproportionate number of the businesses in neighborhoods that had once been Jewish, and had transitioned to African American. Many Jews had established businesses in their old neighborhoods that had come to rely on African Americans customers. As a result, Jewish entrepreneurs like Leo Mintz played key roles in disseminating African American art forms and styles to the American mainstream. By the 1960s, however, most Jews who had grown up near African Americans were reaching retirement age and any kind of "special" spatial relationship between the two communities had been severely weakened. When black neighborhoods experienced rioting throughout the nation during the 1960s, many of the businesses targeted were Jewish-owned.<sup>186</sup> Competition from chain stores, inner-city abandonment, and urban rioting further accelerated the disappearance of Jewish owned businesses from Cleveland's inner-city.

## Conclusion

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<sup>186</sup> Lee, 28. Min, 70, Diner, *Jews of the United States*, 338.

This study has examined how a history of common space fostered street-level interactions between African Americans and Jews in Cleveland, Ohio. After Jews moved out of neighborhoods in which they shared space with African Americans, interactions did not cease. Many Jewish merchants retained their businesses in the area, and others opened new ones in their old neighborhood. Such institutions played a key role in shaping each community's perceptions of one another from 1930 to 1970. At times, interactions between these proprietors and their customers were a source creativity and at other times, rife with suspicion and resentment.

While historians tend to focus on a community's exceptionally articulate and proliferate individuals, ordinary people often act independently from organizations and leaders that are supposed to represent them. Thus, it has been this study's intent to focus on interactions between laymen in urban space that have been crucial to each community's understanding of one another. This was accomplished by a combination of conventional and novel methodologies. Thanks to demographic studies provided by Howard Whipple Green, Donald Levy, and the website [socialexplorer.com](http://socialexplorer.com), it was possible to examine patterns of ethnic succession in neighborhoods. This revealed that from 1890 to 1970, African Americans generally lived in the same neighborhoods that Jews once inhabited. Rather than simply focus on the process of ethnic succession as most urban community studies have done, this study explored residual street-level interactions that occurred between African Americans and Jews in the years following ethnic succession. Keyword searches of the *Cleveland Call & Post* revealed a high level of commercial interactions between Jews and African Americans these years. To further examine commercial relations, some novel methodological approaches were needed. To

determine the extent of these interactions, necrology searches were used to detect the ethnicity of neighborhood grocers listed in the city directory. This revealed a disproportionate, but not monopolizing number of Jewish grocers who operated in African American neighborhoods. Ancestry.com searches of some of these proprietors showed that many of these had grown up in the neighborhood that they did business in, even if they later lived on the city's periphery. Oral interviews were also conducted to obtain a better understanding of relations between inner-city merchants and their customers. While this particular study focuses on Cleveland, similar patterns existed in metropolitan regions throughout the Midwest and Northeast. Websites dedicated to local ethnic history in other cities revealed a pattern of shared neighborhoods in Chicago, Harlem, Boston, Detroit, and Buffalo.

Interactions between African Americans and Jews, whether in a schoolhouse, a picket-line, a neighborhood uprising, or nightclub are fundamental to some of the most issues in the formation of perceptions of other communities. While migration and ethnicity have become central components of historical study since the 1960s, most examinations remain confined to a single group. Cross-ethnic interactions, however, occurred throughout the country, especially in the nation's borderland communities that were characterized by lax racial restrictions. Thus, historians must engage in similar inter-ethnic studies in cities throughout the nation to better understand how communities viewed one another and interpreted race.

Examining the role geography and residual ethnic businesses played in this relationship steers us away from stereotypical "essentialist" explanations that have plagued the popular image of African American-Jewish relations through the last century.

Jews were not from a culture or genetic stock obsessed with money that led them to open stores in African American neighborhoods. African Americans did not shop at their stores because they were intellectually incapable of running their own. Instead this relationship was created by structural issues like access to capital, differences in discrimination, migration patterns, and occupational histories. The examination of such structural inequalities adds dimension to our understanding of the construction of race in the United States.

## Appendix

|     |                                 |                                       |                                      |
|-----|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 33  | 9-5-41 Mary L. Goldman          | 4-20-50 David E. Hattie & Sims        |                                      |
| 34  | 10-11-44 Joe H. & L. M. Bell    | 3-21-52 Julius Hoskin 1/2 int.        |                                      |
| 35  | 11-10-41 Ed L. Bloomfield       | 8-22-51 Esther Bloomfield 1/2 int.    |                                      |
| 36  | 11-20-37 Joe Fuizzotti          | 9-16-54 The Mittelman Co., Inc.       |                                      |
| 37  | 1-5-41 Frances Russo            | 9-5-51 Jennie Fuizzotti               | 9-21-51 James Fuizzotti              |
| 38  | 4-20-39 Vincenzo Barone         | 9-11-54 Charles & C. Russo 1/2 int.   | 9-16-58 Joseph Russo                 |
| 39  | 8-11-41 Citizens Rty Mgt Co     | 3-11-47 Nicholas Barone               | 1-16-46 Lywood & Clara Adam          |
| 40  | 6-16-28 Sylvia Meyers           |                                       |                                      |
| 41  | 2-14-45 Louis Gordon            | 9-22-55 Shirley Blonder               | 9-16-55 B.F.S. Bly. Corp.            |
| 42  | 2-2-43 Ben Frankel              | 5-13-47 Vera Frankel                  | 10-4-51 Robert Walker                |
| 43  | 1-5-43 Ben & Anna Orlofsky      | 9-16-53 F. & B. Inc.                  |                                      |
| 44  | 2-28-35 Bessie Sherman          | 2-26-47 Abe Stern                     |                                      |
| 45  | 6-16-32 The 2469 Overlook Co    | 7-19-46 Ed Sherman                    | 1-3-49 Abeg. Shurley Stern           |
| 46  | 4-10-44 Joe H. Bell             | 4-8-53 Universal Int. Co.             | 1-7-55 Robert & Ned Brown, Ex. 10-11 |
| 47  | 7-14-37 Arline Rosenfeld        | 12-26-57 The Shaker-Rosehill Co.      |                                      |
| 48  | 3-7-41 Ida R. & I. Frankel      | 2-26-54 Jan R. Hy. Co.                | 7-17-58 Arline Rosenfeld             |
| 49  | 7-14-43 Abraham & S. Silberberg | 5-21-47 Angela De Carlo et al.        |                                      |
| 50  | 6-7-44 Vera Davis               |                                       |                                      |
| 51  | 1-19-44 Herbert & D. D. Harris  |                                       |                                      |
| 52  | 8-14-91 Yuda Simon              |                                       |                                      |
| 53  | 7-26-34 Mutual Bldg. Inv. Co    | 1-31-53 inh. 1/2 int.                 |                                      |
| 54  | 5-26-37 Anton Skurnko           | 6-11-58 Sarah Hippel et al.           | 9-22-50 Samuel & Z. B. Burks         |
| 55  | 5-28-40 Emil Sroubek            |                                       | 8-26-50 Central E. Bldg. Co. Inc.    |
| 56  | 1-3-42 Menda H. Raab            | 2-5-45 David Systems                  | 2-4-59 Joseph Dandell                |
| 57  | 10-17-35 Anne Sullivan          | 8-10-46 Jas. Risman                   | 2-13-54 Joseph Dandell               |
| 58  | 4-23-42 Samuel Peptman Tr       | 8-27-46 Estelle E. & Diane R. Eckman  | 3-17-47 Berthel Eisenberg            |
| 59  | 9-27-26 Joane Scarpiño          |                                       | 2-29-60 Arthur Byrd et al.           |
| 60  | 7-10-40 Hazel T. Gomez          | 11-1-50 Rosie Smith                   |                                      |
| 61  | 3-16-18 Mike & Lora Gurnek      | 8-20-52 Vincent G. Lisuzzo            |                                      |
| 62  | 10-3-44 Ethelbert L. Ismael     | 11-24-52 Unique Holding Co.           |                                      |
| 63  | 12-2-22 Frank & Mary Ricco      |                                       |                                      |
| 64  | 4-24-23 Biagio Algeri           | 8-1-50 Lorraine Lindley               | 2-10-56 Jessie Lindley               |
| 65  | 9-1-39 Joe Pantaleo et al.      | 4-5-46 Max H. Vonn & Mary Yearby      | 9-19-46 Wilhelmina Vonn              |
| 66  | 4-20-39 Joe Pantaleo et al.     | 4-5-46 Max H. Vonn & Mary Yearby      | 9-19-46 Wilhelmina Vonn              |
| 67  | 3-24-44 Lunday Lewis            |                                       |                                      |
| 68  | 3-24-44 Lunday Lewis            |                                       |                                      |
| 69  | 6-20-36 Clayborn W. Jackson     | 7-10-47 Jas. Robbins & Abe Robbins    | 6-2-50 Samuel P. H. Jenkins          |
| 70  | 6-20-36 Clayborn W. Jackson     | 7-10-47 Jas. Robbins & Abe Robbins    | 6-2-50 Thomas & A. Mitchell          |
| 71  | 4-28-38 Cipporah E. M. Callahan |                                       |                                      |
| 72  | 6-2-44 Joe Thomas               | 12-2-55 Southern Baptist Church, Inc. |                                      |
| 73  | 11-30-39 Inez C. Parker         | 11-14-45 Alex. Harris                 | 4-14-51 Rose Harris                  |
| 74  | 5-18-33 Vincenzo Orlando        | 8-17-45 John L. Grier                 | 9-10-58 William Grier 1/2 int.       |
| 75  | Nettie Edwards, Mrs.            | 3-26-46 Augusta Paris                 |                                      |
| 76  | 12-9-33 Nettie Pierson et al.   | 10-5-52 Carrie Murray                 |                                      |
| 77  | 7-22-24 Joe W. & Ida Stegall    | 6-12-48 Magnolia Stegall              |                                      |
| 78  | 4-2-14 Louis Cohen              | 5-10-50 Bettie Nelson                 |                                      |
| 79  | 9-5-40 Bettie Nelson            |                                       |                                      |
| 80  | 1-25-36 Cleveland Trust Co      | 7-29-52 Albert A. Levin               |                                      |
| 81  | 11-13-43 Etta Epstein           | 3-14-46 Daniel Bender                 |                                      |
| 82  | 11-13-43 Etta Epstein           | 3-14-46 Daniel Bender                 |                                      |
| 83  | 12-19-41 Evelyn Segkin          | 3-2-45 Max Justin                     |                                      |
| 84  | 9-9-25 George Rice              | 2-21-58 Julia Hayton Rice             |                                      |
| 85  | City of Cleveland               |                                       |                                      |
| 86  | 9-23-44 Sam Gold                | 10-24-45 Doris Kosten                 | 12-7-59 Lincoln Property Management  |
| 87  | 7-28-43 Frank J. & Gladys Hoge  |                                       |                                      |
| 88  | 3-19-26 Sadie Colman            | 4-15-55 Henry Coleman                 |                                      |
| 89  | 4-24-44 Harry M. Goldwasser     | 2-15-46 Norman S. Katz                | 8-20-58 RENEE S. KATZ                |
| 90  | 11-21-39 Robt. & E. Brown       | 2-18-46 Norman S. Katz                | 8-20-58 RENEE S. KATZ                |
| 91  | 4-24-44 Harry M. Goldwasser     | 2-18-46 Norman S. Katz                | 8-20-58 RENEE S. KATZ                |
| 92  | 8-23-43 Irving R. Zwick         | 2-18-46 Norman S. Katz                | 8-20-58 RENEE S. KATZ                |
| 93  | 2-3-44 Joe Delmond              | 6-10-49 Norman S. Katz                | 8-20-58 RENEE S. KATZ                |
| 94  | 2-21-41 Paramount Realty Co     | 7-1-48 Berkeley Estates Inc.          | 7-16-51 Willie & Hannah Johnson      |
| 95  | 2-9-44 David Levine             | 2-24-51 Phil Levine et al.            | 2-3-56 Max & Minnie D. Manitz        |
| 96  | 2-9-44 David Levine             | 2-24-51 Phil Levine et al.            |                                      |
| 97  | 2-9-44 David Levine             | 2-24-51 Phil Levine et al.            |                                      |
| 98  | 2-9-44 David Levine             | 2-24-51 Phil Levine et al.            |                                      |
| 99  | 2-9-44 David Levine             | 2-24-51 Phil Levine et al.            |                                      |
| 100 | 2-9-44 David Levine             | 2-24-51 Phil Levine et al.            |                                      |

Figure 13

Note that people with Jewish surnames retain property in Central past the 1920s. After this decade few Jews lived in the neighborhood.







|    |          |                                    |          |   |  |
|----|----------|------------------------------------|----------|---|--|
| 31 | 6-29-41  | Roy & Thelma Blount                |          |   |  |
| 32 | 11-6-40  | Wm & Mary Maerling                 | 226-46   | Chas. J. Jimmie L. Billingslea            |  |
| 33 | 8-17-44  | Josephine J. Lee                   |          |   |  |
| 34 | 6-17-40  | Leola Singer                       | 310-47   | Willie B. & Lila M. Nance                 | 1-6-56 Charles E. Cook Kint                            |
| 35 | 1-24-41  | Oliver B. & Mae Ward               | 2-3-55   | Street Ward                               | 1-9-55   |
| 36 | 2-3-44   | Alma A. Hurwitz                    | 7-17-47  | Orpha N. Carr                             |  |
| 37 | 2-28-44  | Wm & Christine Cheeks              |          |   |  |
| 38 | 10-15-36 | Rosa Hertzberg                     | 1-4-47   | Julius Blount                             | 12-13-55 Clayborne George                              |
| 39 | 7-22-41  | Lilly Keller                       | 1-7-49   | Levy & Ruth Childs                        | 12-3-57 Herman Elrad                                   |
| 40 | 4-27-38  | Arthur & Etta Katcher              | 12-31-45 | Henry & Mattie Mays                       |  |
| 41 | 5-1-40   | Adelbert A. Schmitz                | 4-10-44  | Nathaniel & Mattie Mays                   |  |
| 42 | 12-27-43 | Alma A. Hurwitz                    | 7-24-47  | Theresa Brown                             |  |
| 43 | 11-19-41 | Margina Solomon                    | 4-24-50  | Pharmas L. & A. M. Walker et al.          |  |
| 44 | 11-18-18 | Wm & Millie Zander                 |          |   |  |
| 45 | 6-18-36  | Rebecca Brasher                    | 4-11-50  | Annie Goldstock                           | 5-15-53 Samuel B. Pressman                             |
| 46 | 1-8-43   | Julius & Melvin Schwartz           | 12-31    | Herman F. Layne                           | 1-30-53 Jenkins & S. Moore                             |
| 47 | 6-8-43   | Frank & Clara Brown                |          |   |  |
| 48 | 8-26-44  | Sarah Braver                       | 3-27-52  | Leavy & Ruth Childs                       | 11-21-58 Fairhill Realty Co.                           |
| 49 | 8-29-06  | Joseph Morgan                      | 1-16-54  | Emma Lutton                               |  |
| 50 | 1-22-45  | Arthur Bergeman                    | 7-24-45  | Sylvester & Mary Cole                     | 6-7-51 Sam & B. Fannenbaum                             |
| 51 | 11-15-40 | Max & Axelrod                      | 10-20-45 | Harlan M. Foster                          | 10-11-51 The Allegheny Conference Assn. of Seven       |
| 52 | 10-1-24  | Jessie A. Eden                     | 10-24-45 | The Glenville Baptist Church              | 10-11-51 The Allegheny Conference Assn. of Seventh-Day |
| 53 | 8-26-22  | Clare Baptist Assn                 | 10-24-45 | The Glenville Baptist Church              | 10-11-51 The Allegheny Conference Assn. of Seventh-Day |
| 54 | 1-31-40  | Magdalena Trun                     | 5-17-50  | Ruth & H. A. Blount                       | 12-1-50 Jean Weisen                                    |
| 55 | 6-29-43  | Benjamin & Barney Savransky        | 2-10-50  | Savransky Rty. Co.                        | 4-13-55 Jesse & Annie Winbush                          |
| 56 | 6-13-35  | William D. Gans                    | 1-2-41   | James & Mary E. Gans                      |  |
| 57 | 8-18-11  | Glen Presbyterian Church           | 7-20-40  | Ed of Trustees of the Presbytery of Cleve |  |
| 58 | 6-1-17   | First Disciple of Christian Church | 1-28-54  | Central Christian Church                  |  |

PAGE NO. 25 PARCEL IDENTIFICATION TAXING DISTRICT

Figure 15 This is one block in Glenville pulled from the County Auditor's office. Note that during the 1940s-50s Jewish surnames like owner names like Hertzberg, Hurwitz, Soloman, and Schwartz are replaced by African American ones like Walker, Blount, and Moore.

|    |          |  |          |                                       |                                |
|----|----------|--|----------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 28 | 12-5-46  | Florence A. Hughes                                       |          |                                       |                                |
| 29 | 4-11-41  | Henry W. Krapohl Jr                                      | 10-4-46  | W. H. Krapohl & M. H. Krapohl         |                                |
| 30 | 3-7-47   | Eddie & Myrtle Jones                                     |          |                                       |                                |
| 31 | 5-29-41  | Roy & Thelma Blount                                      |          |                                       |                                |
| 32 | 2-26-46  | Chas J. & Jimmie L. Billingslea                          |          |                                       |                                |
| 33 | 8-17-44  | Josephine J. Lee   |          |                                       |                                |
| 34 | 3-10-47  | Willie B. & Lila M. Nance                                |          |                                       |                                |
| 35 | 1-20-58  | Alex Rubins  | 6-20-63  | Weststone Mortgage Corp               | 5-13-65 Bennie & A. Tappin     |
| 36 | 7-17-47  | Orpha N. Carr  | 9-5-61   | Garold E. Zoller                      |                                |
| 37 | 2-28-44  | Wm & Christine Cheeks                                    |          |                                       |                                |
| 38 | 8-4-47   | Julius Blount  |          |                                       |                                |
| 39 | 12-19-55 | Clayborne George   | 11-29-65 | Zelma George                          |                                |
| 40 | 12-3-57  | Herman Elrad   | 9-18-61  | Unio V. Jones                         |                                |
| 41 | 5-1-40   | Adelbert A. Schmitz                                      | 4-10-44  | Nathaniel & Mattie Mays               |                                |
| 42 | 7-26-47  | Houston & Mippie Bowers                                  | 5-11-60  | QC 2-5-60 Will                        |                                |
| 43 | 4-24-56  | Anna M. Walker   | 10-20-51 | Inh 2-14-69 LUTHERIA & B. DUNCAN      |                                |
| 44 | 11-18-18 | Willie Zander  | 5-24-63  | Marion H. Boudan                      | 7-24-64 Liberty Mortgage Corp. |
| 45 | 5-15-59  | Samuel R. Pressman                                       |          |                                       |                                |
| 46 | 1-30-53  | Jenkins & S. Moore                                       |          |                                       |                                |
| 47 | 6-8-43   | Theora Brown   |          |                                       |                                |
| 48 | 3-27-52  | Leavy & Ruth Childs                                      |          |                                       |                                |
| 49 | 11-21-58 | Fairhill Realty Co.                                      |          |                                       |                                |
| 50 | 7-24-45  | Sylvester & Mary Cole et al.                             |          |                                       |                                |
| 51 | 10-19-55 | Sky Rty Co.  |          |                                       |                                |
| 52 | 10-11-51 | The Allegheny Conference Assn. of Seventh-Day Adventists | 2-19-69  | ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE SEVENTH-DAY |                                |

PAGE NO. 25 PARCEL IDENTIFICATION TAXING DISTRICT MAP NO. 108

Figure 16 Ethnic turnover continues in the same neighborhood until it is almost entirely African American. Note that this predated flight from nearly all other neighborhoods not contiguous with Central, meaning that early African American home owners wishing to move out of "the ghetto," disproportionately bought from Jewish Americans.

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