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Nancy C. Carnevale

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Italian American and African American Encounters in the City and in the Suburb

Nancy C. Carnevale[1]

Abstract
Italian American and African American relations have generally been characterized as hostile. The two groups are most often seen as encountering each other in urban centers of the Northeast. This article explores the sources of Italian American hostility against African Americans in the pre- and postwar era cities to better understand the underpinnings of racial conflict. At the same time, it highlights the complex relationship between the two groups that could include positive interaction as well as conflict and take place within the suburbs as well as within the cities. The article presents a preliminary case study of suburban Montclair, New Jersey, where from the early 1900s well into the postwar era, African Americans and Italian Americans shared neighborhoods, schools, and, to differing degrees, an outsider status that contributed to generally harmonious relations. The findings suggest that local studies that reveal specific sources of tension or peaceful coexistence can lead to a fuller understanding of relations between these two groups and interethnic/interracial relations in general.

Keywords
interracial relations, interethnic relations, African Americans, Italian Americans, Italian immigrants, suburbs, cities, Montclair, NJ

In recalling relations between African Americans and Italian Americans when he was growing up in suburban Montclair, New Jersey, Michael Sarageno, eighty-three years old at the time of the 2005 interview, said: "The good thing was there was no division between the races Blacks and Italians . . . the poor people in Montclair, the Blacks and the Italians they didn't . . . have a chance. It was tuff [*sic*]. It was really tuff!"[1]

Mr. Sarageno's assessment runs contrary to the narrative of consistent hostility on the part of Italian Americans against African Americans that has been reflected in and reinforced by events such as the 1989 murder of Yusef Hawkins in Bensonhurst, and the 1986 attack on three African Americans in Howard Beach that led to the death of one of the victims. Going further back into the twentieth century, it is not difficult to find incidents of racial violence by Italian Americans. Although other white Catholics participated in such violence, Italian Americans have long been considered the vanguard of white racism.[2]

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Corresponding Author:
Nancy C. Carnevale, Department of History, Montclair State University, DI 418, Montclair, NJ 07043, USA.
Email: carnevalen@mail.montclair.edu

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Much of the scholarship, however, all but erases ethnicity from the story of interracial conflict in the postwar era, arguing instead that the hostility Italian Americans and other white Catholic ethnics expressed toward blacks was rooted in their identities as whites. Surprisingly few historical works look at relations between immigrants or ethnics and blacks either in the pre- or postwar eras outside of the realm of whiteness studies with its focus on the construction of white racial identities through antiblack violence.[3] But, as the quote above suggests, relations between African Americans and Italian American immigrants/ethnics have not always been contentious, nor have they been limited to the cities, both of which point to the need to look closely at local contexts to understand interethnic/interracial relations.[4] The point is not to deny or minimize Italian American racism, but to account for it rather than merely "catalog"[5] it so as to better understand why hostility was pronounced in some contexts but not in others. Variation in the response of Italian Americans to African Americans suggests the explanatory limits of the whiteness paradigm or, indeed, any single model.

The first part of this article synthesizes and expands upon current understandings of Italian American enmity toward African Americans in pre- and postwar urban contexts,[6] highlighting the degree to which at least some conflicts in the postwar era arose over access to political, social, and/or economic power. While racial politics are an important aspect of these clashes, attention to local contexts suggests that more was at stake than defending Italian American whiteness. I then go on to consider suburban Montclair, where Italian Americans and African Americans enjoyed generally positive relations from the early 1900s well into the postwar era. Montclair provides a counterexample to the familiar narrative of hostility between the two groups within urban settings. The relative lack of hostilities in Montclair reflected the degree to which both groups, largely relegated to the same area, shared a marginalized status in the community to different extents, even as they both moved on a trajectory of upward mobility.

Both the hostility that Italian Americans have sometimes demonstrated toward African Americans and the perception that relations between the two groups have been uniformly negative fundamentally derive from their proximity to each other. Italian Americans remained in urban centers longer than most other white ethnics. As late as the 1970s, 92 percent of Italian Americans lived in urban areas compared to 73 percent of all Americans.[7] As urban dwellers, they have been more likely to encounter African Americans than many other white ethnics, heightening the possibilities for conflict.

A confluence of structural as well as cultural forces that are not always easily teased apart assured the continued presence of Italian Americans in urban centers of the Northeast and Midwest. Well into the postwar era, Italian Americans exhibited lower rates of social mobility than other white ethnics. Indeed, a 1983 *New York Times Magazine* article claimed that Italian Americans had only recently joined the middle class *en masse*.[8] The origins of low rates of social mobility can be found in the impoverished southern regions from which most Italian migrants to the United States hailed as well as the American context they entered.[9] The reverberations of this pre- and early migration history would be felt into the second generation and beyond.[10]

The low levels of social mobility of Italian Americans in these years ensured that they would be among those groups who stayed longer in the urban centers. But this does not fully account for the concentration of Italians in American urban centers. Italian Americans demonstrated a predilection for urban life. This has been viewed through the lens of southern Italian *campanilismo* characterized by a strong attachment to the village of origin. This orientation translated easily into a preference for and loyalty to the urban neighborhoods of Italian settlement.[11] Besides reflecting Italian norms about family and community, this neighborhood insularity served to shield Italian Americans from negative comparisons to other groups in an ethnically stratified American society. As long as the Italian American resided within an isolated neighborhood, there were no reminders "of his or her low class and ethnic status."[12] Thus, although many Italian Americans joined other white ethnics in the postwar exodus to the suburbs, a large portion would have been more likely to remain in the cities than other white ethnics.

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These urban Italian American enclaves were given a boost in the postwar era with the arrival of new Italian migrants. Although the literature has barely begun to address this migration stream, Italians continued to enter the country in significant numbers in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, first through the McCarran-Walter Act that paved the way for the relatives of naturalized immigrants, then through the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act that finally abolished the quota system instituted in the 1920s. The influx of Italians who entered the country from 1965 through 1975 constituted the largest European immigrant group. Like the earlier arrivals, many of these post-war migrants became urban dwellers. Though this later migration was dwarfed in size by the Italian migration at the turn of the twentieth century, it was nevertheless substantial and ensured a continued presence of first-generation Italian Americans in the cities for decades after World War II.[13] Of course, the mere presence of Italian Americans and African Americans in urban areas does not in and of itself explain tensions between the two groups or the specific forms those tensions took. Most discussions of racial conflict in the postwar North revolve around housing. As several authors have noted, Italian Americans along with other Southern and Eastern European immigrants demonstrated a particular attachment to home ownership, even in the prewar cities, setting the stage for conflict.[14] The racist practices of banks and government policy at all levels, contract selling, job discrimination, and deindustrialization that hit African Americans hardest while they were charged inflated housing costs, all contributed to the creation of black ghettoes that became associated with illicit activities and poor housing stock, fueling white resistance to racial transition. The blockbusting and other practices that realtors engaged in created a panic environment that encouraged white flight. Those whites who remained had a strong financial incentive to keep out blacks as their mere presence became associated with dropping property values.[15]

Some argue that home ownership in the postwar white suburbs constituted the main means through which Italian Americans and other Catholic ethnics asserted their status as whites. While whiteness scholars disagree on the periodization, most cite World War II as the moment when white ethnics achieved widespread acceptance as unambiguously white, even if this process continued into the postwar era. In mobilizing with other white ethnics on the basis of race rather than nationality against incursions into "their" neighborhoods, Italian Americans and other white ethnics were securing and/or protecting their whiteness, which would have been threatened by proximity to black neighbors. But efforts by Italian Americans to keep blacks out of "their" neighborhoods also pre-date an identification with whiteness and continued beyond the years by which their white status should have been solidified. Also, while Italian Americans did react against blacks moving in, this was not always the case.[16] The presence of large numbers of new arrivals from Italy in postwar cities complicates the whiteness interpretation. Presumably, first-generation Italian Americans would not have had the same understanding or experience of American racial politics as second- and third-generation Italian Americans that would have impelled them to participate in racial violence.

In any case, the process of white racial formation was, as has been noted, considerably more complex.[17] Whiteness, like any other identity, was never a stable position that was achieved in a linear fashion, nor does it follow that assuming a racial identity necessarily negates ethnic identities. The widely accepted view of ethnicity as an "invention" that ethnic groups continuously reformulate within their current contexts has not been fully incorporated into whiteness studies with its focus on racial identity. Ethnic and racial identities can coexist as evidenced by the persistence of "cultural patterns and traits" that continue to shape the behavior of descendants far removed from the immigrant generation even on an unconscious level. For example, although denying the persistence of ethnicity on a group level and asserting that they are in keeping with a purely symbolic ethnicity, Richard Alba concedes that elements of ethnicity continue at the level of customs. He also finds that people of Italian ancestry are almost twice as likely to report maintaining ethnic customs than those from other ancestry groups.[18]

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Indeed, as Yiorgos Anagnostou's recent study highlights, the academy by and large continues to adhere to one of two views of ethnicity: white ethnics are either presupposed to be homogenized into an indistinguishable mass or participants in an individualistic, celebratory, and largely inconsequential "symbolic ethnicity." Anagnostou argues that these views reflect the absence of models that can accommodate a more complex view of white ethnicity rather than the absence of ethnicity per se. Such a view would necessitate that we examine more closely questions such as why some members of white ethnic groups did not forcefully resist blacks or why ethnic groups positioned themselves differently in relation to blacks depending on the context.[19] In the case of Italian American communities, we know, for example, that radical and antifascist traditions condemning American racism existed alongside expressions of racial animosity. The early Italian American radical press indicted America for its treatment of blacks, including lynchings. In Harlem, where Italian American blackshirts hung Emperor Haile Selassie in effigy during their rallies, Italian American antifascists marched alongside African Americans to protest Italy's invasion of Ethiopia. Italian American antiracism also found expression via conventional political channels through the fourteen-year tenure of Congressman Vito Marcantonio who represented East Harlem until his death in 1954.[20]

In addition to the internal differences within white ethnic communities on the subject of race, other areas in need of closer examination are the timing and degree to which Italians and other ethnic groups embraced whiteness. Just as Jews may have equivocated well into the postwar era over assuming an unqualified white identity because of their identification with the plight of blacks, the Italians' lingering sense of themselves as a distinct people or "razza," even if diluted over time, may have remained in the form of an unwillingness to cast off ethnic traits and practices that precluded a complete submersion into mainstream white America. Even a casual perusal of contemporary reality television shows provides evidence of the popular recognition of—one could say fascination with—a distinctly Italian American whiteness.[21]

Scholars have offered alternative explanations for why black entry into previously white ethnic neighborhoods, whether inside or outside of the cities, often led to conflict. Like other white Catholics, Italian Americans seem to have been more attached to their neighborhoods than non-Catholics in part because leaving them meant leaving the parish, a focal point of religious and community life. There is evidence, however, that the degree of attachment to the parish on the part of Italian Americans varied.[22] The degree of attachment to their neighborhoods, however, is not in doubt. The tendency of Italian Americans to remain in the cities was buttressed by notions of territoriality specific to them that help to explain the sometimes fierce protectiveness of their neighborhoods in the face of any perceived intruders. As anthropologist Thomas Belmonte notes, this "loyalty and defensiveness . . . to their neighborhood as a transplanted *paese*, can seem provincial and xenophobic in American urban and suburban contexts."[23]

Robert Orsi raises another issue specific to Italian Americans to account for their hostility toward nonwhites—the determination of immigrant Southern Italians "to become 'cristiani,' their word for 'human beings' (and obviously the opposite of 'Turks')," something that the poverty and racism of the Italy they left behind had made all but impossible. In the United States, the "mark of the Turk was color," providing the immigrants and their descendants with a major impetus to separate themselves from blacks and other dark-skinned minorities. Color, however, has not always been the determining factor in how Italian Americans evaluated outsiders. The celebrants of the Feast of the Madonna of 115th Street in East Harlem welcomed the Haitian immigrants who began coming to participate in the feast in the 1980s while continuing to scorn the generally lighter-skinned Puerto Ricans within the neighborhood. That the second generation was becoming Americanized at a time when race and nation were linked may have further encouraged distancing from racialized others, especially in light of the particularly unstable whiteness of Italian Americans.[24]

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Rather than adhere to a model for understanding interracial conflict, recent studies of Italian American communities in the postwar era highlight the importance of studying relations on the local level. In his recent comparative study of postwar Italian communities in Toronto and Philadelphia, Jordan Stanger-Ross suggests that Italian Americans in the postwar inner cities expressed an ethnicity which could include racism toward African Americans that was constituted within both local and national contexts. In the case of Philadelphia, that dual context included declining real estate values, the large influx of Southern blacks into the city in the postwar era, deindustrialization, as well as government policy on the federal, state, and municipal levels that fostered segregation in Northern cities.[25] With little social or economic capital, Philadelphia's Italian Americans clung to the premium they placed on their tight-knit, ethnically cohesive communities by trying to keep blacks out. Indeed, racial conflict helped to reinforce community ties.[26] Their homes were also their major economic asset, the value of which, because of the larger society's racism, would be diminished by the presence of blacks.[27] In Toronto, on the other hand, where Italian Americans enjoyed a robust real estate market for decades, they were much less attached to their neighborhoods, selling their homes more readily, often to other Italians, though the low numbers of racial minorities makes a fuller comparison on how this context influenced interracial relations difficult. Stanger-Ross posits that racist practices did not originate with Italian Americans; rather, they participated in existing racist real estate patterns that they could not reverse.[28]

Todd Michney's nuanced treatment of the shooting death of a black man by an Italian American in Cleveland's Little Italy during the 1966 Hough Uprising situates the event within the smaller frame of the public school and the neighborhood while keeping in mind "the broader urban milieu." He pays particular attention to the effect of racial transition within surrounding neighborhoods, which included whites moving out along with blacks moving in, as well as larger structural forces. A mixture of "racial anxieties" along with fears of a decline in class and status in Little Italy added substantial fuel to racial intolerance. But he also finds that the police played a significant role in contributing to a vigilante mentality by going door-to-door in the neighborhood to warn residents of possible attacks by black nationalist snipers and saboteurs. Residents were advised to "govern themselves accordingly."[29]

The examples of Newark and Boston illustrate other forces that promoted racial conflict or the perception of racial conflict. Some have seen disturbances between groups in the postwar cities as part of a continuum of the interethnic clashes that marked the prewar era. According to this view, struggles erupted over access to resources, economic or political power, and status, although the postwar struggles were distinguished by the specific racial dynamics of the era. In other words, earlier battles between white ethnic groups were "similar, but not quite the same" as interracial conflicts in the postwar era.[30] The idea of reconfigured, specific white ethnicities versus a homogenized whiteness outlined above lends credence to this interpretation of intergroup conflict. Given the preponderance of Italian Americans in the cities compared to other whites, they figured in urban issues that pitted them against African Americans. Indeed, the urban crisis of the 1950s and 1960s often boiled down to a conflict between blacks and whites, many of them Italian Americans, over increasingly scarce resources because of white flight to the suburbs from the cash-strapped cities. This was certainly the case in Newark, New Jersey, where the shrinking tax base and increased demand for public services led to conflicts between Italian Americans and minority groups. Such struggles could easily come to be seen by those involved as well as by outsiders solely in racial terms. In Newark, Italian Americans came to "view blacks and Hispanics as the source of an increasing tax burden and disparage them as welfare cheats and lazy bums."[31] Competition in the labor market also heightened tensions. In construction, the federal government's mandate to include racial minorities on worksites threatened Italian Americans, who dominated the industry. Public sector jobs that Italian Americans entered into in large numbers

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for reasons of "security and intergenerational mobility" were also perceived as imperiled by minorities as a result of equal opportunity legislation.[32] When civil service workers were laid off because of the fiscal crisis facing the cities, blacks and Hispanics filled the void via federally supported training and other programs, again displacing Italian Americans. Government jobs in Newark generated through President Johnson's Model Cities Program were all given to blacks despite pleas on behalf of the city's poor whites. These experiences coupled with Italian Americans' harsh and at that time still fairly recent experience with immigration made it difficult to sympathize with racial minorities who cited lack of opportunities and discrimination.[33] At the same time, Italian Americans resented upwardly mobile blacks for showing up urban Italian Americans who were still largely blue collar, leading to bitterness over affirmative action and the prospect of downward mobility. In addition to increased job competition from blacks and other racial minorities, Italian Americans felt threatened by calls for community control which in Newark meant control by African Americans who outnumbered them. Nor were Italian Americans equipped to deal with the myriad challenges in the cities. With the professional class lost to the suburbs, there was little leadership or organizational infrastructure. But this socioeconomic dimension of interracial struggles in postwar cities like Newark has been lost in the retelling of it, with Italian Americans primarily cast "in a racial role . . . [that] defines their relationship to the urban crisis largely in terms of racial conflict." The "new ethnicity" promoted in Newark at the time initially emphasized commonalities between blacks and urban Italians, including "their common isolation from wealth, power, and prestige." Of course, there was no shortage of racial rhetoric and threats on the part of Italian Americans leaders, notably Anthony Imperiale, in efforts to mobilize the ethnics. But as Kevin Mumford notes, "Fear of social and economic decline informed every dimension of the new construction of whiteness" among Italian Americans taking shape in Newark in those years, which included racism, ironically producing "in some ways . . . a mirror image of the black nationalist type."[34]

For the most part, Italian Americans have also been erased—lumped into a generic white category—in the popular and historical narrative of the events of 1967 in Newark. Beginning with the Kerner Commission report, ethnicity is scarcely mentioned, with the disturbances characterized as conflicts between whites and blacks outside of the specific socioeconomic context such as job competition, or local politics. Recent scholarship, however, illustrates how Newark's African Americans had long been engaged in a struggle for power in a city that was ruled largely by Italian Americans. A comparative study found that in 1970, only Italian Americans in Newark as compared to those in municipalities in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York had achieved "total political control." Black nationalist leader and Newark native Amiri Baraka, who had a complicated history with Italian Americans dating back to his childhood, wrote that in Newark, "Italian Power must be second only to that in the Vatican." A flier that was produced following the violence suggests that at least some African Americans drew a distinction between Italians in Newark and the general white population. It warned other blacks that "these italians [*sic*] are going to lock off these streets and imprison us." The fact that the police officers sent in response to the looting were overwhelmingly Italian American has also received little attention.[35]

In some cases, perceptions of interracial/intergroup interaction may have been distorted by the media. In Boston, working-class Italian Americans were prominent in media depictions of the sometimes violent clashes over busing in the 1970s. But this focus on working-class collective action belied the fact that white middle class neighborhoods were no less tolerant of busing even if they did not express themselves violently.[36] The working-class opposition to busing also had less tolerance for differences of opinion within its ranks than did the middle class. This intransigence made them more appealing subjects for the media, leading to an inaccurate estimation of the support the antibusing movement actually enjoyed within the Italian American community. The intensity of those protests and the form they took reflected the spirit of the times, which was

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largely incongruent with Italian Americans' rejection of the social and political militancy often embodied by black nationalists.[37] Some members of the Italian American community objected to the tactics and attitudes of the militants who were behind the antibusing protests. Many of those who did oppose busing may have been motivated by the challenge busing represented to parental control. There is also evidence that Boston's Italian Americans were at least as antithetical to white suburban liberals as they were to blacks. Since the busing laws did not apply to the suburbs, those working-class whites in the city who were directly affected particularly resented the criticism of suburban white liberals.[38]

Italian American resentment was clearly rooted in class, but the comments of antibusing leader Elvira "Pixie" Palladino provide a significant insight into the nuances of Italian American self-perception in this period: Palladino contended that people like the Kennedys—the upper-class white liberal establishment—"look down on people of color like me."[39] These comments echo those of an Italian American community leader in Newark addressing himself to the perceived advantages blacks were enjoying under Kenneth Gibson, Newark's first black mayor: "A lot of people confuse us with white Americans, which we are not. We are the working-class people who haven't made it in America, like the blacks, and we are still in the inner city competing with them."[40] Not only then did at least some urban Italian Americans into the 1960s and 1970s continue to identify strongly with their ethnicity, they also saw themselves as a disadvantaged minority, distinct from mainstream white America, their relationship to blacks defined by economic and social competition as well as by racial animosity.[41] Indeed, any existing racism on the part of Italian Americans tended to intensify through particular experiences with blacks—public housing, neighborhood desegregation—that Italian Americans perceived as threatening their interests.[42] In addition to issues around group competition, Italian Americans, in keeping with popular perceptions at the time, associated blacks with the new permissive society, an unstable family structure, and a reliance on welfare, all of which were inimical to traditional Italian American values.[43] Yet even in Boston, these differences did not preclude the possibility of coming together around shared objectives. Prior to the eruption of conflict over busing, the two groups had joined with "cosmopolites" as part of a coalition to protest highway construction.[44]

As the above examples illustrate, a narrow focus on whiteness can be insufficient to explain interethnic/interracial hostility. Yet, arguably, Italian Americans may have felt a greater imperative than other white ethnics to distinguish themselves from African Americans because of certain commonalities in how the two groups have been perceived as well as shared cultural traits. They may thus have been more challenged than other white ethnic groups to draw such a distinction for mainstream white America. African Americans and Italian Americans have shared certain stereotypes, most of which are specific to men. Both groups, for example, have been characterized as criminals or buffoons, ignorant, oversexed, and prone to violence. Observers in the past have noted cultural behaviors among working-class members of each group such as hypermasculinity and a predilection for reverting to an insider, oppositional language among their own. Even those representations of Italian American and African American relations that stress conflict such as several of the films of Spike Lee suggest affinities between the two groups: "Throughout both films [*Do the Right Thing* and *Jungle Fever*], characters take on each other's movements and expressions. . . . Gold chains, hand movements, verbal and physical communication, none are the dominion of one or the other group; Italians act Black, and African Americans act Italian."[45] These borrowings are not limited to filmic representations. Each has engaged in cultural appropriation from the other—to take some more recent examples, black rappers emulating Frank Sinatra and Italian American mobsters, Italian American "hip wop," cross-cultural borrowings of dress and speech evident in inner city "youth styles"—that suggest an identification that runs both ways.[46]

Similar physical characteristics possessed by members of each group in skin color, hair, and facial features have contributed to the historic association of Italian Americans with African

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Americans. To take just one example, the choice by a southern black woman at the turn of the twentieth century to try to pass specifically as Italian American in the urban north speaks to the physical similarities between members of the two groups that could blur boundaries.[47] These physical similarities contributed in part to the widely held notion that Italian immigrants were, if not black, then less than fully white, an idea that was fueled by the racism of Northern Italians against Southerners, who formed the bulk of immigrants to the United States. These views were promoted and given an air of scientific legitimacy by Italian criminal anthropologists. Indeed, many of the racist views Americans had about Southern Italians were imported from Italy.[48] The arrival of Italian immigrants in large numbers in the urban North coincided with that of blacks migrating from the South along with African Caribbeans. In a sense then, "Italians belonged to the first wave of dark-skinned immigrants." As such, they were conspicuous in that they often lived near and worked with blacks holding the same low-level, unskilled jobs, which sometimes led to competition for both neighborhood control and work. In some parts of the country, such as Louisiana where Italian immigrants worked alongside African Americans in the fields, the two groups were even more likely to be linked in the minds of whites.[49] Finally, as Matthew Frye Jacobsen and others have observed, achieving whiteness is as much about acting white as it is about looking white.[50] Many Italian Americans retained cultural markers evident in speech styles and practices such as ritual foods for holidays, the observance of religious *feste*, and values that distinguished them from the rest of the white population.[51] These features of Italian American life may have added yet another imperative for the immigrants and ethnics to forcefully differentiate themselves from blacks and other nonwhites in a racist society.[52]

The idea that Southern and Eastern European immigrants and ethnics needed to forcefully assert their whiteness given their own unstable racial position through aggression against blacks is the bedrock of the whiteness paradigm. Yet this has necessitated downplaying sometimes complex intergroup relations. Despite the tensions that could erupt into violence between Italian Americans and African Americans, the two have a long history of associating that was surprising and, at times, disturbing to the larger American society. This was particularly, but by no means exclusively, so in the prewar era. As John Bodnar et al. note in the context of a discussion of Italian/black socializing: "The degree of peaceful interaction that existed between immigrants and Blacks prior to the 1930s has been underestimated."[53] For example, Italians along with Jews were patrons and often owners of the "Black and Tans," where Southern and Eastern Europeans mixed with blacks both socially and sexually. Relations between the proprietors and black clientele were complicated. While blacks sometimes viewed them as exploiters, Harlem Renaissance poet Claude McKay, commenting on "Italian impresarios" in Harlem, found that they were "more engaging, freer and more intimate in their relationship with the Negroes than were the Irish saloon owners who preceded them."[54] Earlier on, Italians in the South alarmed the white establishment by crossing the color line to sell goods and to socialize with African Americans. In the postwar era, Italian Americans' sometimes knotty attitudes toward African Americans need to be teased apart, as Maria Lizzi does in her analysis of the 1969 New York City mayoral candidate, Mario Procaccino. In a speech to an audience in Harlem, the "law and order" (ie, anti-black) candidate claimed, "My heart is as black as yours." Lizzi demonstrates that this awkward phrasing was no mere cynical ploy for black votes. Rather, Procaccino's identification with Harlem's black residents stemmed from his own sense of isolation from the larger white world growing up as a working-class Italian American.[55] Rather than being uniformly antagonistic, the history of relations between Italian Americans and people of color has been mixed, alternately characterized by "collaboration, intimacy, hostility, and distancing," containing elements of both "choice and coercion" in the development of white consciousness.[56] Even the horrific events of the 1980s alluded to above "disclose undercurrents of attraction, disappointment, and mutual implication."[57]

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Even less familiar than the fact that these two groups could enjoy positive relations is that African Americans and Italian Americans encountered each other early on in the suburbs as well as in the cities since Southern and Eastern Europeans at the turn of the twentieth century most often settled in the urban Northeast and Midwest. The traditional definition of the suburb as a bastion of postwar middle-class white America has occluded the possibility of working-class immigrants. For similar reasons, blacks have typically been excluded from any discussion of the suburbs except for the assumption that they helped to propel whites into them. The more recent literature on the history of the suburbs challenges these views. Whereas racial and economic homogeneity have been considered hallmarks of the American suburb, scholars have uncovered significant racial/ethnic and socioeconomic heterogeneity dating back to the prewar era.[58] This early history of suburban blacks and immigrants disrupts the whiteness narrative with its focus on racial violence in the postwar suburbs.

While this burgeoning literature is changing our understanding of the suburbs with, among other innovations, its recognition of class and ethnic/racial difference within suburban life, little has been written on relations between ethnic/racial groups in the suburbs. Montclair, located in Essex County, is a suburb of New York City and Newark that has long prided itself as an integrated community of blacks and whites.[59] In this popular understanding of local history, Italian Americans constituted an invisible minority. But the greatest degree of integration in the early decades of the twentieth century and beyond, though by no means unproblematic, took place not between an undifferentiated white Montclair and black Montclair, but between Italians and blacks who shared neighborhoods, schools, and, to differing degrees, an outsider status. An examination of the positioning of each group within Montclair along with interviews conducted with twenty black and twenty-seven Italian residents between 2000 and 2005 provide a suburban counterexample to the more widely known narrative of black and Italian American urban conflict.[60] By recovering this little-known story of generally peaceful black and Italian interactions, this study complicates our understanding of the American suburb, the dynamics of these two groups, and interethnic/interracial relations more generally.

Despite the fact that already by 1930, New Jersey ranked third after New York and Pennsylvania in its population of Italian immigrants, New Jersey Italian Americans have received short shrift in the historical literature. In 1920, they constituted the largest immigrant group in the state. Even in 1980, New Jersey's Italians remained the largest "immigrant or racial group," second only to New York in terms of the size of the Italian population. Like their compatriots throughout the Northeast, Italian migrants were drawn by employment opportunities, but with no single city comparable to Philadelphia or New York, they dispersed throughout the state. Essex County had one of the largest populations of Italians in New Jersey.[61] African Americans in New Jersey have also received comparatively little attention considering their longtime significant presence. Indeed, more African Americans went to New Jersey during the Great Migration than to any other northern state. The rapidity of the growth of the black population in New Jersey is noteworthy; the period between 1910 and 1930 saw a137 percent rise, from 89,760 to 208,828.[62]

The suburbs may seem like an unlikely place to examine Italian American/African American interaction, and yet, as two groups that often catered to the service needs of well-to-do white society, it should not be surprising that they sometimes found themselves living in suburban communities in close proximity. As Kenneth Jackson notes, "many pre-1930 suburbs . . . maintained an exclusive image despite the presence of low-income or minority groups living in slums near or within the community." These were service workers who usually lived near railroad stations. According to a 1925 study, "the heaviest concentrations of foreign-born populations in the United States are not urban but suburban . . . no Northern city has massed so large a proportion of Negro population as some of the Northern suburbs."[63]

Blacks and Italians encountered each other in Montclair beginning in the latter years of the nineteenth century. African Americans began arriving in Montclair in the 1870s, primarily from

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Virginia and North Carolina though some had come in the earliest days of the town as slaves.[64] In the early decades of the new century, many of the women worked as domestics. Men also worked in the service sector as chauffeurs, gardeners, and such although as many as 22 percent of the men held industrial jobs, an unusually high number for black suburbanites.[65] The community also had a number of black-owned businesses—barbershops, restaurants, funeral homes. In an 1894 local history, Montclair's African American population was briefly acknowledged for being "quiet," "industrious," and "well-behaved." The author also went on to note the black population's "grateful appreciation of the support and sympathy of their white neighbors." Notwithstanding white perceptions of contentment with their station, black Montclair formed a community of strivers, giving rise beginning in the 1920s to a small middle class of professionals that had grown substantially by the 1950s. Over the years, organizations for the upwardly mobile sprung up, such as a local chapter of Jack and Jill.[66]

Italians did not arrive in Montclair until the 1880s. Initially, they found employment digging water and sewer lines. These early Italians, living in tents and barracks on an open lot, and sporting red bandanas, presented an exotic sight for Montclarions. According to one romanticized account, they could be heard singing around the bonfire at night. Those who stayed on would find employment as shoe shines, landscapers, railroad workers, and handymen. In later years, a number would labor in municipal departments, such as the Public Works and the Water Department.[67] Italians too established their own businesses such as bakeries, shoemakers, and specialty markets. While the Italian population continued to grow, it remained smaller than the African American population. In 1895, the number of African American Montclarions totaled 1,817, more than double the 824 residents of Italian descent out of a total population of 16,370. By 1910, the total population of Montclair had reached 21,550, which included 2,000 blacks and 1,500 Italians. By 1920, the Italian population witnessed a marginal increase to 1,625, less than half of the black population, which had grown to 3,467, representing 12 percent of the total population of Montclair.[68] Italians constituted more than half of the 5,207 foreign born in 1940, a still modest number compared to the black population of 6,777, though the addition of the second generation narrows the gap. The remaining white population was 39,807. Already by the turn of the twentieth century, Montclair was a very well-to-do suburb. Its proximity to Manhattan, "parklike setting," and "panoramic views of the city and countryside, thanks to its elevation" made it one of the most desirable suburbs in the tri-state area, attracting prominent business people.[69]

Both groups settled largely in the Fourth Ward, which had the largest concentration of Italians. Outside of the Fourth Ward, Forest Street contained another significant grouping of Italians. In these areas, they initially found cheap accommodations in tenement housing and apartments. The black and Italian presence in the Fourth Ward was negligible in the early years of the 1900s. The black population was dispersed throughout town; a number were living in the homes of their employers, and the Italian population was nominal. Beginning with the 1910 census, blacks and Italians can be found sharing tenements and apartment buildings in parts of the Fourth Ward, some of which were owned by Italians. Black settlement became concentrated in the Fourth Ward during the 1920s. Through the 1920s and into the 1930s, both groups could be found within the same multiunit buildings though single-family housing predominated. As early as 1920, most blacks in the Fourth Ward were living in one- or two-family houses. While rates of Italian homeownership were higher, blacks were also homeowners. Italian owners also rented to blacks, though beginning in the 1930s Italians began to be less likely to do either. This intermixing of the two groups within the same buildings and neighborhoods was comparatively rare nationwide, though not unique. As Italians sought more single-family housing, they fanned out from the poorer areas of initial settlement leaving both blacks and less well off Italians behind. The small but growing cadre of the more upwardly mobile middle-class Italian families were the least likely to live in mixed neighborhoods, though even into the 1950s and early 1960s, black and Italian

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homeowners could be found on the same blocks.[70] During the same period, the Fourth Ward became increasingly black, with the Italian population moving beyond the area though a concentration of Italians remained, including newer arrivals.

Social conditions for Italians and blacks in the Fourth Ward can be gauged by the level of attention they received from local social service organizations. Indeed, these two populations were the focus of social service activity from the early 1900s into the 1940s. Beginning in 1926, the energies and resources of the Junior League were directed exclusively toward blacks and Italians. The League maintained its Community House in the Fourth Ward, where they served black and Italian children through a nursery school, library, and clubrooms. Minnie Lucey, a social worker, began working with Italian students even earlier, beginning in 1915. In 1928, she established the Baldwin Street Community Center primarily to aid local Italian immigrants, but the Center also served black families mainly through teaching infant care to mothers or would-be mothers as well as domestic skills such as sewing. The "Opportunity Class" was geared toward Italian and African American boys. The center was renamed the Minnie Lucey Community House in 1932.[71] The perception that Italians and blacks in the Fourth Ward were in need of assistance was supported by the poor housing stock, congestion, and communicable diseases that characterized the area.[72]

Like the rest of New Jersey in the early decades of the twentieth century, Montclair practiced segregation, although the practice varied in degree across the state. According to the firsthand experience of one black New Jerseyan, in those days, "South Jersey was just like the South."[73] While not overtly enforced, black Montclarions well understood the unwritten rules of segregation and generally followed them. Those interviewed rattled off the names of institutions from which they were clearly, if not openly, excluded—the Claridge and Wellstone theaters required blacks to sit in separate sections; their exclusion from the local "Y" led to the establishment of a "colored" Y in 1920; the town skating rink, some bowling alleys, and most restaurants were also off limits. Although all children attended the lone high school, blacks encountered limits to their participation in school activities. For example, they were prohibited from participating in the graduation dance. Professional opportunities were also limited by segregation. Hospital staff did not begin the process of desegregation until the late 1940s. The fire department was not integrated until the 1950s. Black teachers were limited to nonacademic positions in the white public schools until the late 1950s. In at least one instance, local whites resorted to a form of racial policing more familiarly associated with the South. In 1925, a group of whites burned a cross on the lawn of the family of a white woman who intended to marry a black man who had been passing for white, after he confessed his secret to her.[74]

While not subject to the restrictions that were imposed on the town's African American population, relations between Italians and native-born white Montclarions were strained as evidenced by the establishment of organizations by Italian Americans to address the situation. The Amity League, Inc., was formed in 1937 "to foster and help to create and maintain a closer understanding between American citizens and Italian-American citizens of this community." The Italian Forum, founded in 1935 to promote the study of Italian culture, was established by Miss Elaine Renna in response to low self-esteem by Italian American students attributed to "race prejudices inculcated in their minds since childhood," that made them feel "slightly inferior to the youth of other nationalities." A 1937 report by the Junior League on its Community House made a similar observation: "Too often, the younger generation is ashamed of its Italian background."[75]

As elsewhere in the nation, African Americans' housing options were restricted. They were discouraged from moving out of the South End. Well after World War II, blacks were still being steered away from white neighborhoods by real estate agents.[76] Similarly, black residents noted that they did not feel welcome even entering affluent white neighborhoods. As one black resident recalled of life in Montclair in the 1930s–1940s, "Up town was more high class than the people who lived in the Fourth Ward." Sharon Burton-Turner, who grew up in the 1950s, noted, "Racism

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was unwritten in Montclair, it was unwritten but you knew. I knew we were unwanted in certain places in this town. You didn't go to Upper Montclair even though nobody said you couldn't go." But she and others also noted that black parents shielded their children from the realities of racism: "Our parents and the rest of the black community made it so that we didn't have to leave the Fourth Ward. Everything that we needed was right there in our own neighborhood."[77]

Although obtaining housing in all-white suburban neighborhoods in the postwar era was an important step toward and expression of the desire to fully assimilate on the part of Southern and Eastern Europeans and their descendants, Italians in Montclair experienced limitations in their ability to move into or even move within Montclair neighborhoods, though not to the same extent as blacks. The 1947 Montclair Civil Rights Audit, a formal appraisal of the degree of equal opportunity in several areas including housing, found that 347 of 356 "substandard homes" were located in a congested area of town inhabited "principally [by] Negores and persons of Italian origin." The Audit goes on to explain that "in regard to both sales and rentals there are certain areas in Montclair in which houses are to be sold or rented only to certain persons. To achieve this end there is in existence between the real estate operators the so-called gentlemen's agreement." Indeed, contrary to the belief that nationwide, restrictive covenants only excluded blacks, the Montclair Audit revealed that of 170 deeds examined in the Hall of Records, 40 contained restrictive covenants aimed at "Negroes, Jews and Italians for a period of years ranging in length from 1 year to 25 years." Even after the covenants expired, those who were previously excluded may have experienced informal restraints. One of the interviewees claims that it was not until the early 1960s that Italian Americans felt a lessening of the pressure to keep them from moving into more affluent areas of Montclair.[78]

Earlier in the century, Italians, like blacks, recognized the unwritten rules of movement within the town. One Italian resident recalled that if Italians ventured into certain neighborhoods in the 1920s and 1930s, they would be met with rocks and ethnic slurs. Michael Sarageno remembered that in the 1920s and 1930s, his father, who worked emptying out barrels of ashes from private homes that burned coal for fuel in the more affluent section of Montclair, was arrested on several occasions. As he explained, they "put my father in jail because he didn't look right. He was sweaty he had the work clothes on . . .and they would say there is a man that walking up the streets here he doesn't look good! He looks like a treat [*sic*—threat] and whatever it is!" These types of incidents were not uncommon in the prewar era, however, the separation between Montclair's Italians and white Montclair proper continued well into the postwar era. Paul Porcelli, for example, recalled that it wasn't until he entered Montclair High in the 1960s that he had any direct contact with affluent whites from Upper Montclair. Even so, Italians at the High School were set apart: "We were always 'you the Italians,' remarks were always made."[79]

The church was another arena where both blacks and Italians experienced discrimination, black Montclarions more so. One Italian resident recalled a family story regarding the establishment of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in 1907 that became the Italian Catholic church of Montclair. He claimed that the Italian community was spurred to create its own church when Immaculate Conception, the Irish Catholic Church, refused to bury his wife's grandmother.[80] Black Catholic residents recalled that at Immaculate Conception, they were required to sit downstairs for mass apart from white parishioners. Segregation extended beyond the confines of the church itself. John Price reported that he was not allowed to play basketball against Immaculate Conception's team in the 1930s. Like the Italians, African Americans too established their own Catholic church, St. Peter Claver in 1931, which was also frequented by some whites who lived outside of Montclair. [81]

Unlike at Immaculate Conception, services at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel were open to blacks, at least informally. Black parishioners were not kept apart. As a teenager, Lucille Clemons recalled: "We lived in an Italian and Irish neighborhood. And you know Mt. Carmel over here? We used to go there to be with the kids. We used to go there all the time [attended mass]. . . . We

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didn't know what was happening, but we went because our friends went there. When we got older, I started going to St. Peter Claver. . . . Everyone was so nice. I said to my friend Vivian. . . . I think I'm going to join."[82] While she felt more at home at St. Peter Claver than at Mt. Carmel, she did not experience the segregation at Mt. Carmel that was practiced by Immaculate Conception and other mainstream churches. Our Lady of Mt. Carmel provided other opportunities for mixing between Italians and blacks. The Church and the Saint Sebastian Society sponsored an annual "*festa*" honoring the Italian saint. Some African American residents remembered "the Feast" or "street party" that took place each summer as a highlight of neighborhood life. It is unclear whether African American attendance at mass went beyond kids tagging along with their Italian American friends. The formal history of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel clearly identifies it as an Italian church, making no mention of non-Italian or black parishioners. Still, this inclusion in at least some of the aspects of parish life contrasts markedly with Italian and other white ethnic parishes in urban areas, attesting to the degree of familiarity between the two groups in Montclair.[83]

Because children attended schools within their own neighborhoods at the elementary level, Italian and black children went to the same schools where the children of white native born Montclarions would have been underrepresented if not absent. The 1947 Audit devotes a good deal of attention to the racially segregated school system without acknowledging that, as the evidence it presents suggests, Italian children were not well integrated into the school system either. Angelo Pomarico recalled that even in the 1950s and 1960s, the schools he attended were composed entirely of blacks and Italians. The Audit did comment on the lack of integrated social life at the high school along with a lack of recreational opportunities for "all low income groups," blacks in particular.[84] A 1943 study by a student at Columbia University's Teachers College suggests that Italians were still seen as distinct from the white population and more likely to interact with blacks than would native-born whites. Commenting on the high school, the report notes that there is "no social life at the school. They offered a dance but it was not successful because only the Italian and colored children would attend and there were not enough of them to pay expenses." Regarding the native-born white population, the report goes on to note, "The upper class children have their social life in their fraternities and sororities." While lower class native born whites were shut out of these elite fraternities and sororities, it seems that they chose not to mix with Italians and blacks at the school dance that was open to all.[85] But the separation of black and Italian schoolchildren from native-born white pupils was not merely a matter of *de facto* residential segregation. Montclair had a history of steering black and Italian children into schools away from mainstream white students.[86]

Italian Americans and African Americans generally though not always enjoyed good relations from their earliest years in Montclair into the postwar era.[87] Black respondents recalling their youths in the 1930s and 1940s spoke of being "good neighbors" with Italians, and having a "grand time" playing together as children and teenagers. One woman spoke of an Italian woman who regularly gathered the neighborhood children together to regale them with stories; others had fond memories of visiting Italian storeowners. In describing life on Pine Street in the 1930s and 1940s, Elizabeth Yarborough commented, "We grew up with Italians, Irish, and no problems. We didn't see colored back them [*sic*]. I had friends. . . . We were the only Blacks in our building. My sister could speak a little Italian. My mother had the accent."[88] Although one woman recalled two incidents in the 1950s when the parents of her Italian American childhood friends tried to prevent them from playing with her, all other instances of discrimination reported by African Americans involved "white" Montclair, which in the minds of at least some black Montclarions did not include Italians. As Elberta Hayes Stone, born in 1922, noted in her interview, "There were three kinds of people in Montclair. There were Black people. Italian folks. And there were white people."[89]

Italian Americans also recalled good relations with blacks. They contrasted what they saw as the lack of racial animosity between the two groups in the early decades of the century—some

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extended this period into the 1960s—with the situation in recent years. As Lucy Ruccio, who was in her eighties at the time she was interviewed, put it, "There was no racial business then. In those years, you were friends with everyone and doors were always left open. The Italians were all making the gravy. Now everyone's doors are closed." Seventy-four-year-old Anna Menullo remembered that her mother attended a mothers' club through her (Anna's) school where she socialized with Italian, black, and Irish mothers.[90] Nicholas Villarosa, eighty-one, who lived in a tenement building that housed black and Italian families, compared the relationship enjoyed by blacks and Italians with the aloofness of white Montclair toward its black townspeople; "I think actually the Italians [*sic*] people weren't being racist like other groups . . . we had them over for dinner you know it was more integrated, the Italian people were quicker to accept because they had some of the same problems." The idea that blacks and Italians were united by similar life experiences was shared by Michael Sarageno, quoted at the beginning of the article, whose father was regularly arrested in Upper Montclair for not "belonging." While the similar circumstances of the two groups may have contributed to generally good relations between them, they also helped shape the attitudes of white Montclair toward Italians even well into the postwar era. As Michael D'Agostino notes about the 1950s and early 1960s, "there wasn't a demarcation between the immigrants, and the black part of town . . . I was acutely aware of that, and the others were acutely aware of the difference between the other community and the Italian American immigrant community."[91] Angelo Pomarico also indicates an appreciation for how others today might look on his friendships with his black neighbors as he was growing up in the 1950s and 1960s, "Again, the neighborhood was mostly black and Italian. And my neighbors were black and were my very good friends. . . . That was life, and that was what it was . . . and didn't know much better. And that was a pretty good life." Pauline Catalano Booth-Ellis, sixty-five years old, expressed a similar sentiment: "We all got along. We didn't think anything, you know, they were people, we were people, we played together, we probably had battles together, we learned together, it was fine."[92]

Despite the understanding that Italians were stigmatized for their association with blacks, the responses to the question "Why did Italians leave Montclair?" by and large did not reference a variation of "white flight" (i.e., a move from an increasingly black suburb to a whiter one) and in some cases openly questioned that explanation. Rather, they cited the desire to demonstrate upward mobility and obtain its trappings (i.e., bigger, single-family houses). Nicholas Villarosa, albeit generalizing, noted, "as . . . all the Italians became very successful doctors and lawyers, so they spread around, and that was more [be]cause of economics." He also commented on friends who never returned after college. Others noted the desire to escape the town's high property taxes.[93] Racial transition was certainly a factor for some. Rosemarie Ramundo attributed the flight of Italian Americans from the Fourth Ward in the 1970s to the shifting racial balance in the schools, which had become predominantly black. In two cases, respondents made references to "drugs" and a "bad element" moving in, which might be coded references to blacks, though these newcomers were seen as intruders into the neighborhood as opposed to established black families.[94]

It is worth noting here that unlike many Jews, for example, who held liberal views on race relations in part out of a sense of identification with the plight of blacks, Italian Americans did not share the same historic concern with appearing racist. It is less likely, therefore, that interviewees "sugar coated" their observations on Italian American–African American relations. At the same time, as oral historians note, oral interviews are narratives, stories that people tell themselves as well as others in an attempt to make sense of a given situation. In East Harlem, Italian Americans "recalled" that dark-skinned others pushed their children and grandchildren out of the neighborhood when in actuality they began leaving prior to the racial transition of the area. Similarly, Canarsie's white ethnics, interviewed in the 1970s, relied on a narrative of moral failings to account for the changes to the neighborhood that occurred when blacks moved in,

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ignoring social and economic realities.[95] In Montclair, however, at least some Italian Americans spoke of uneventful coexistence with their black neighbors. Movement out of the neighborhood was generally not discussed in terms of an escape from black encroachment. This is a very different narrative of Italian American and African American relations and racial transition. What distinguishes the Montclair case is that the Italian Americans were no longer living in the old neighborhood at the time of the interviews. There was no need to construct a narrative of blame for why they found themselves in what had become a less desirable neighborhood. While not unique to Montclair, the long history of sharing neighborhoods and the numerical predominance of the African American relative to the Italian American population are significant. Unlike in East Harlem or Canarsie, a large presence of people of color in areas of Italian settlement in Montclair was nothing new. That black Montclarions were recognized for pursuing upward mobility themselves, and with some success, helps account for the marked departure from earlier urban narratives that associate racial minorities with economic blight and social disorder though those characterizations do appear in some interviews regarding the 1960s and 1970s. In discussing the dispersal of Italian Americans from the Fourth Ward, an Italian American World War II vet noted: "Well eventually it became black . . . There was always a large presence of blacks in Montclair, but I have to qualify this, they were more professional . . . a lot of them owned their own houses, they took care of them, even at that time, they were more professional people, that's why Montclair is the way it is today. I mean if you go down to Orange it's a wreck like Newark." He then goes on to favorably compare educated African Americans with uneducated immigrants who fail to assimilate. Taken together, the interviews suggest that class figures strongly into Italian American assessment of racial minorities.[96]

Irrespective of the narrative Montclair's Italian Americans have fashioned regarding relations with African Americans, there are objective factors at work. High levels of segregation have been associated with racial violence.[97] The relative integration of the Fourth Ward may help account for the difference in relations between the two groups in Montclair versus other settings. Indeed, as noted above, a number of interviewees highlighted the degree to which Italian American proximity with African Americans normalized relations between the two communities.

The historic marginalization of the two communities by the dominant white population, even though the African American community faced greater restrictions than the Italian American one, also needs to be taken into consideration in explaining generally good relations between the two groups. Both saw themselves as separate from the dominant white community, which did not consider them peers. Nevertheless, as some of the interviews suggest, however peaceful relations may have been between the two communities, over time, Montclair's Italian Americans, like other postwar white ethnics, would have became increasingly aware of the negative associations attached to proximity with blacks. While they may not have perceived blacks as pushing them out of the old neighborhoods, choosing instead to view moving as taking a step up on the socioeconomic ladder, disassociating themselves from African Americans may have been recognized as a part of that process. It is worth noting, too, that most of the Italian Americans interviewed in total glossed over the question about intergroup relations. Whether this means that there was nothing remarkable to note, or that they were hesitant to discuss any tensions between the two communities is open to speculation. Also, although Montclair did receive an influx of Italian immigrants in the 1960s, some of whom still reside in the Fourth Ward, most members of this cohort have yet to be interviewed.

Those who did speak more freely about interracial relations agreed that they became more contentious as the 1960s progressed, with the events of 1967 in nearby Newark as a turning point in black/Italian relations though there is anecdotal evidence from other Italian Americans who were in high school at the time of being shielded from racial violence by black friends who continued to differentiate Italians from the general white population. Beginning in the early 1960s, Montclair also experienced conflicts over busing that created tensions between the two groups.[98]

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A couple of the interviews in particular with Italian Americans who grew up in the postwar era hint at the complexity of the relationship between these two groups. Joe Attamante, referring to the late 1940s and 1950s, suggests the often ambivalent relations between the two groups: "I think that stereotype is way off base in that, ya [*sic*] know, you hear that a lot of Italians didn't like Blacks and a lot of Blacks didn't like Italians, and I guess there were . . . but luckily I never saw that. But there was prejustice [*sic*], there was." His remarks here invoke the sense that relations between blacks and Italians could encompass both identification and disassociation without necessarily becoming rancorous. Similarly, Anna Delorio recalled good relations between blacks and Italians on Pine St. until "social unrest and the Newark riots" when violence erupted between the Italian kids on the street and relatives of black neighbors who were visiting town at the time. Yet even at this moment when racial tensions were at their height, she remembers nuances in the relationship between local blacks and Italians: "At the same time, we Italian kids and the black kids were having a good time dancing in the street to the Jackson 5 and Motown."[99]

To conclude, the history of Italian Americans and African Americans in Montclair reminds us that while tensions and even open conflict between these groups into the postwar era is a significant part of their story, it is not the whole story. Certainly there were tensions, and conflict sometimes erupted between the two communities. For example, as in other parts of the country, Italy's invasion of Ethiopia negatively affected relations between Italian Americans and African Americans. The Junior League noted "racial withdrawal" between the youths of each group that participated in its Civics Club, yet there is evidence of tensions even earlier. When the Community House opened in 1926, some Italian families objected "to the racial mixture in the groups there."[100] On an individual basis, levels of racial tolerance no doubt varied. But overall, relations between the two in suburban Montclair appear to have been fairly positive, or at least peaceful, well beyond the early decades of the twentieth century. The suburban setting, the demographics, the neighborhood composition, as well as the ethnic/racial and class dynamics of the town are important to understanding this relationship and suggest the need for case studies of interracial/interethnic relations beyond the urban core. The Montclair case also argues for the persistence of ethnicity. Whether or not Italian Americans perceived themselves as fully incorporated into white America into the postwar era, white Montclarions continued to draw distinctions between the Italians of Montclair and themselves. Ethnicity remained a significant factor in the social dynamics of this suburb irrespective of race as well as an important aspect of self-identification for the Italian Americans. Black Montclarions, too, distinguished between Italian Americans and the general white population.

The example of Montclair also reminds us that it is much easier to find and, thus, to focus on conflict that can leave us with an incomplete account of interracial relations, a danger both for historians as well as for contemporary observers.[101] In any case, most Italian Americans along with other white ethnics left the inner cities in the postwar years and so did not participate in antiblack violence even if those who remained and did participate contributed disproportionately to the creation of the "second ghetto."[102] Evaluating the actions and attitudes of those members of racial/ethnic groups who stayed behind in the cities as well as those who lived in the suburbs requires drawing distinctions. If we reject essentialist notions of ethnicity/race, are the acts and attitudes of people of the same ethnicity necessarily representative of the ethnic groups they hail from? Because individuals of a certain group take part in an action, does it follow that they are responding solely from their ethnicity or to the ethnicity of others? Clearly Italian Americans and other white ethnics quickly learned the importance of maintaining the color line, their encounters with nonwhite peoples informed by the racism of the larger society and the inequalities that it perpetuates.[103] But the example of suburban Montclair indicates that in certain contexts, there was room for a broader spectrum of interaction.

Documenting relatively harmonious relations between these two groups in Montclair or between other groups elsewhere remains a challenge. The silences in the historical record may be

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as telling as the information available.[104] As Anna Delorio, quoted above on the subtleties of Italian American/African American interaction in Montclair's Fourth Ward during the 1960s, said, "You really had to live on Pine St. and be in the middle of it all to know what that world was all about."

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Notes

1. Michael Saregno, interview by Anna Maria Romano, April 3, 2005. I worked from transcriptions of the interviews that were conducted by interviewers, many of whom were college students. It is unclear if "tuff" here is used as an abbreviation of "tough," or perhaps as an attempt to mimic the speech style of the interviewee.
2. Richard Gambino, *Blood of My Blood: The Dilemma of the Italian-Americans* (Toronto: Guernica 2003), 330; Jennifer Guglielmo, "Introduction," *Are Italians White? How Race Is Made in America*, ed. Jennifer Guglielmo and Salvatore Salerno (New York: Routledge, 2003), 7.
3. On the lack of studies on relations between immigrants and African Americans, see, e.g., Nadia Venturini, "'Over the Years People Don't Know': Italian Americans and African Americans in Harlem in the 1930s," in *Italian Workers of the World: Labor Migration and the Formation of Multiethnic States*, ed. Donna Gabaccia and Fraser Ottanelli (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 197; David R. Roediger, *Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 105; Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). Examples of the many works on whiteness include: Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995); James Barrett and David Roediger, "Inbetween Peoples: Race, Nationality and the 'New Immigrant' Working Class," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16, no. 3 (1997): 3–44; David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 2007); Matthew Frye Jacobsen, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).
4. Although it is a truism that there is only one human race, in recognition of contemporary usage, I employ "interethnic" when discussing relations between white immigrants/ethnics and "interracial" for relations between blacks and white immigrants/ethnics.
5. John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth Century Urban North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 5.
6. This article is part of a larger study that will also consider African American reaction to Italian Americans.
7. Pat Gallo, "Preface," *The Urban Experience of Italian-Americans* (Staten Island, NY: American Italian Historical Association, 1977); Joseph Velikonja, "Demographic and Cultural Aspects of Italian Americans," in *Italian Americans in the 80s: A Sociodemographic Profile*, ed. Graziano Battistella (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1989), 25; Gambino, *Blood of My Blood*, 330. The statistic is from Gallo.
8. On the relationship between culture and structure in understanding social mobility among immigrant/ethnic groups, see Joel Perlmann, "The Place of Cultural Explanations and Historical Specificity in Discussions of Modes of Incorporation and Segmented Assimilation," Working Paper, The Jerome Levy Economics Institute (1998); Joel Perlmann, "Introduction: The Persistence of Culture versus

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Structure in Recent Work. The Case of Modes of Incorporation," in *Immigrants, Schooling and Social Mobility: Does Culture Make a Difference?*, ed. Hans Vermeulen and Joel Perlmann (New York: St. Martin's Press, LLC, 2000), 22–33. On the Italian case in particular, see, e.g., Joel Perlmann, *Ethnic Differences: Schooling and Social Structure among the Irish, Italians, Jews, and Blacks in an American City, 1880-1935* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988); Richard Alba, *Italian Americans: Into the Twilight of Ethnicity* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985), 117–28; S. H. Hall, "The Italian Americans: Coming into Their Own," *New York Times Magazine*, May 15, 1983.

9. E.g., Southern Italians entering the country during the Age of Migration had among the highest rates of illiteracy. Partly as a result of their illiteracy, they also had particularly low rates of English-language acquisition, which limited their economic opportunities. Nancy C. Carnevale, *A New Language, A New World: Italian Immigrants in the United States, 1880-1945* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 39, 63.
10. In the case of schooling, many in the immigrant generation did not place a high premium on education since they relied on the practice of pooling resources, a strategy that had served them well in Italy and in the United States, where seasonal labor and low wages made it impossible for the largely unskilled Italian male wage earner to sustain a family. Italian immigrants also believed with good reason that the focus in American schools on assimilation threatened their values and, critically, control over their own children. See, e.g., Michael J. Eula, *Between Peasant and Urban Villager: Italian-Americans of New Jersey and New York, 1880-1980, The Structures of Counter-Discourse* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 95–100; Leonard Covello, *The Social Background of the Italo-American School Child* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1972). These attitudes sometimes carried over to subsequent generations though as Miriam Cohen argues, when economic opportunities requiring more education became available, Italian Americans followed suit. Early on, American educators were quick to label those Italian children who did attend school slow learners, steering them into "steamer classes" and vocational schools even when other explanations for their poor performance were readily available. The perception of mental inferiority was supported by the poor performance of Italian children on flawed intelligence tests that ranked them at or below the level of blacks. Low test scores for Italian children were related to the largely non-English language home environment, the product in part of high rates of illiteracy in Southern Italy. Nancy C. Carnevale, "Culture of Work: Italian Immigrant Women Homeworkers in the New York City Garment Industry, 1890-1914," in *A Coat of Many Colors: Immigration, Globalization, and Reform in New York City's Garment Industry* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 156–57; Stephen Lassonde, *Learning to Forget: Schooling and Family Life in New Haven's Working Class, 1870-1940* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 132, 182; Miriam Cohen, *Workshop to Office: Two Generations of Italian Women in New York City, 1900-1950* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 114–25. On low test scores, see Carnevale, *A New Language*, 57–58. Some have argued that the experience of migration itself changed Italian attitudes toward education both in Italy and abroad. Linda Reeder, *Widows in White: Migration and the Transformation of Rural Women, Sicily 1880-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003); Rudolph J. Vecoli, "The Italian Press and the Construction of Social Reality, 1850-1920," in *Print Culture in a Diverse America*, ed. James Danky and Wayne Wiegand (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 17–33.
11. Donald Tricarico, *The Italians of Greenwich Village: The Social Structure and Transformation of an Ethnic Community* (Staten Island, NY: Center for Migration Studies Press, 1984), 42–45; Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians and Irish of New York City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1963), 186–90; Joseph Velikonja, "Italian Immigrants in the United States in the Sixties," in *The Italian Experience in the United States*, ed. Silvano M. Tomasi (Staten Island, NY: Center for Migration Studies, 1970), 28. Joseph Conforti notes that this attachment to old urban neighborhoods has been variously attributed to a fondness for "la via vecchia" (Richard Gambino), "immobility" (Mario Puzo), "moral backwardness" (Edward Banfield), and a preference for local village life (Herbert Gans; Marc Fried). Conforti ascribes to the latter view. Joseph M. Conforti, "Italian-Americans and the Urban Crisis: A Sociological Perspective," in *The Urban Experience of Italian-Americans*, ed. Pat Gallo (Staten Island: American Italian Historical Association, 1977), 96. Kenneth Jackson claims that Italians along with some other Europeans place more value on "urbanity and group interaction" than the Anglo-American ideal of "a detached house in a safe, quiet, and peaceful place" that in part led to the rise of the suburbs. Kenneth T. Jackson,

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Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 288. Freeman notes a "cultural propensity of Italians toward residential stability [that] has resulted in their being, in many cases, the last white ethnic group in changing urban communities." Robert C. Freeman, "The Development and Maintenance of New York City's Italian American Neighborhoods," in *The Melting Pot and Beyond: Italian Americans in the Year 2000*, ed. Jerome Krase and William Egelman (Staten Island, NY: American Italian Historical Association, 1987), 235.

12. Tricarico, *Italians of Greenwich Village*, 44–45.
13. Graziano Battistella, "Italian Immigrants to the United States: The Last Twenty Years," in *Italian Americans in the 80s*, 104.
14. Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 187. On the desire for home ownership by Italian immigrants in particular, Hirsch cites Rudolph J. Vecoli, "Chicago's Italians Prior to World War I: A Study of Their Social and Economic Adjustment" (PhD dissertation, University of Wisconson, 1963), and Humbert Nelli, *The Italians in Chicago, 1880-1930: A Study in Ethnic Mobility* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970). See also Simone Cinotto, "Italian Americans and Public Housing in New York, 1937-1941: Cultural Pluralism, Ethnic Maternalism and the Welfare State," in *Democracy and Social Rights in the "Two Wests,"* ed. Alice Kessler-Harris and Maurizio Vaudagna (Turin: Collana Nova Americana in English, December 2009), 281.
15. See, e.g., David McAllister, "Realtors and Racism in Working-Class Philadelphia, 1945-1970," in *African American Urban History since World War II*, ed. Kenneth L. Kusmer and Joe W. Trotter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Beryl Satter, *Family Properties: How the Struggle over Race and Real Estate Transformed Chicago and Urban America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt, 2009); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); Amanda Seligman, *Block by Block: Neighborhoods and Public Policy on Chicago's West Side* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). The "second ghetto" interpretation has been criticized for muting African American agency. See, e.g., Raymond A. Mohl, "Making the Second Ghetto in Metropolitan Miami, 1940-1960," in *The New African American Urban History*, ed. Kenneth W. Goings and Raymond A. Mohl (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996), 266–98.
16. The origins of white identity have been located anywhere from the 1920s through the 1940s. See, e.g., Matthew Pratt Guterl, *The Color of Race in America, 1900-1940* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Russell A. Kazal, "The Interwar Origins of the White Ethnic: Race, Residence, and German Philadelphia, 1917-1939," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 23, no. 4 (Summer 2004); Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation across the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). On the importance of home ownership to establishing whiteness, see Roediger, *Working towards Whiteness*, 158–62. Freund contends that whites in the postwar era see themselves defending a newly perceived right to housing. They interpret violence toward African American around housing accordingly rather than as an expression of racism even if home ownership and racial status were linked. David Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America*. For influential critiques of whiteness studies, see Eric Arnesen, "Whiteness and the Historian's Imagination," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 60 (2001): 3–32; Peter Kolchin, "Whiteness Studies: The New History of Race in America," *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 1 (2002): 154–73. On conflict at the neighborhood level between Italians and African Americans before the development of a "public white consciousness," see Thomas A. Guglielmo, *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 57.
17. On this point, see in particular Eric L. Goldstein, The *Price of Whiteness:Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), and Russell Kazal, *Becoming Old Stock: The Paradox of German-American Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004). On the endurance of white ethnicity, see Joshua Zeitz, *White Ethnic New York: Jews, Catholics, and the Shaping of Postwar Politics* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
18. Kathleen Neils Conzen, David A. Gerber, Ewa Morawska, George E. Pozzetta, and Rudolph J. Vecoli, "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the U.S.A.," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 2, no. 1 (1992): 3–41. The quote is from Ronald H. Bayor, "Another Look at 'Whiteness': The

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Persistence of Ethnicity in American Life," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 29, no. 1 (2009): 14; Richard Alba, *Ethnic Identity: The Transformation of White America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), chap. 3.

19. Yiorgos Anagnostou, *The Contours of White Ethnicity: Popular Ethnography and the Making of Usable Pasts in Greek America* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010). On symbolic ethnicity, see Herbert Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2 (1979): 1–20; Bayor, "Another Look at 'Whiteness.'"
20. Rudolph J. Vecoli, "'Free Country': The American Republic Viewed by the Italian Left, 1880-1920," in *In the Shadow of the Statue of Liberty*, ed. M. Debouzy (Saint Denis, France: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 1988), 35–56; Salvatore Salerno, "Paterson's Italian Anarchist Silk Workers and the Politics of Race," *WorkingUSA: The Journal of Labor and Society* 8 (September 2005), 611–25; Nadia Venturini, *Neri e Italiani ad Harlem: Gli Anni Trenta e la Guerra d'Etiopia* (Rome: Lavoro, 1990); Jennifer Guglielmo, *Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 204–5, 217, 256–57.
21. Goldstein cites Thomas Guglielmo's discussion of Italian immigrants' self-perception as a separate race but—unlike Goldstein—Guglielmo "does not argue that this self-understanding had much of an enduring impact on their emerging white identity." Goldstein, *Price of Whiteness*, 242n6. On the different times at which ethnics achieved whiteness, see Kazal, "The Interwar Origins of the White Ethnic," 116. Examples of the many recent reality television shows that feature Italian Americans whose ethnicity is clearly "signed" include: "Cake Boss," "Jersey Shore," "Jerseylicious," and "Jersey Couture."
22. In addition to McGreevey cited above, see Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, 84–99, 185–200; Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 152–53. Stanger-Ross notes that in Philadelphia, "religious life reinforced parish boundaries" whereas Catholic churches in Toronto "played host to a geographically elastic Italian ethnicity." Jordan Stanger-Ross, *Staying Italian: Urban Change and Ethnic Life in Postwar Toronto and Philadelphia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 59. Jews were more likely to avoid conflict altogether by simply moving out of neighborhoods that blacks were moving into. The fact that the synagogue was not dependent on its members or location in the same way as the Catholic Church made it easier for them to leave. As Gerald Gamm notes, "what primarily distinguishes Jews from Catholics is not a different capacity for racist behavior but a different attachment to territory. Catholics have a strong sense of turf, regarding their neighborhoods as defended geographical communities." Jews may also have been more likely to want to avoid a confrontation with African Americans given the moral dilemma posed by going against a disenfranchised minority. For the quote, see Gerald Gamm, *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 16.
23. Thomas Belmonte, "The Contradictions of Italian American Identity: An Anthropologist's Personal View," in *The Italian American Heritage: A Companion to Literature and Arts*, ed. Pellegrino D'Acierno (New York: Garland, 1999), 16. On territoriality as a specific source of interracial tensions, see Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), and Jonathan Rieder, *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn against Liberalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985).
24. On the link between race and nation, see Robert Orsi, "The Religious Boundaries of an Inbetween People: Street Feste and the Problem of the Dark-Skinned Other in Italian Harlem, 1920-1990" *American Quarterly* 44, no. 3 (September 1992): 318; Gerstle, *American Crucible*.
25. Stanger-Ross, *Staying Italian*, 15–16. Some scholars have generalized findings regarding white reaction to African Americans. Stanley Lieberson, e.g., notes that "there is some evidence that white resistance to, and fears of, blacks rises with the percentage of blacks in the community." Once blacks come to equal more than half of the population, this is no longer the case. Stanley Lieberson, *A Piece of the Pie: Blacks and Immigrants since 1880* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 61.
26. Stanger-Ross, *Staying Italian*, 4.
27. Stanger-Ross, *Staying Italian*, 45.
28. Stanger-Ross, *Staying Italian*, 50–51.
29. Todd M. Michney, "Race, Violence, and Urban Territoriality: Cleveland's Little Italy and the 1966 Hough Uprising," *Journal of Urban History* 32, no. 3 (2006): 419. Unfortunately, Michney does not

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provide the ethnic composition of the Cleveland police force. For an illustration of the importance of looking at interracial relations on the neighborhood level, see Thomas Guglielmo, *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), chap. 2.

30. On the similarities between postwar interracial conflict and interethnic conflict of earlier eras, see Bayor, "Another Look at 'Whiteness'"; Maria C. Lizzi, "'My Heart Is as Black as Yours': White Backlash, Racial Identity, and Italian American Stereotypes in New York City's 1969 Mayoral Campaign," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 27, no. 3 (Spring 2008): 43–80. For the quote, see Bayor, "Another Look at 'Whiteness,'" 15. For his view of ethnic conflict that stresses "a sense of threat" that can include economic depressions, foreign events, and periods of dramatic change, see Bayor, *Neighbors in Conflict: The Irish, Germans, Jews, and Italians of New York City, 1929-1941* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 164–67.
31. Conforti, "Italian-Americans and the Urban Crisis," 101. The insistence on the part of many Italian Americans that their families never went on welfare has been viewed as a desire to distance themselves from blacks who are most often associated with welfare. See Orsi, "Religious Boundaries," 319; Gerald Suttles, *The Social Order of the Slum: Ethnicity and Territory in the Inner City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 37. In East Harlem, e.g., the percentage of Italian Americans who benefited from New Deal programs including Home Relief was higher than that of any other European group. Cinotto, "Italian Americans and Public Housing," n11.
32. Conforti, "Italian-Americans and the Urban Crisis," 102.
33. Gambino, *Blood of My Blood*, 327; Conforti, "Italian-Americans and the Urban Crisis," 101, 103.
34. Conforti, "Italian-Americans and the Urban Crisis," 102. The quote on the "new ethnicity" is from Peter L. Myers, "Between the Lines and Behind the Times: The Marginal Identities of Newark Whites," in *From Riot to Recovery: Newark after Ten Years*, ed. Stanley Winters (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1979), 144. For more on Italian Americans being cast purely as racial bigots in the urban crises of the 1960s, see Gambino, *Blood of My Blood*, 345. Mumford notes that in parts of Newark and its environs in the late 1960s, Italians were second to African Americans in income and educational level. Kevin Mumford, *Newark: A History of Race, Rights, and Riots in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 177–78. See also Eula, *Between Peasant and Urban Villager*, 71n86; Myers, "Between the Lines."
35. The Kerner Commission report has been faulted for singling out "white racism" on an individual level as the main cause of the riots and for ignoring that whites "may be responding to what they feel is an objective threat to their own self-interest. For example, white construction workers may oppose black workers, not only because of racial attitudes, but also because of labor market characteristics." See http://www.archive.org/stream/kernerreportrevi00asse/kernerreportrevi00asse_djvu.txt (accessed May 10, 2011). Komozi Woodard, *A Nation Within a Nation: Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) & Black Power Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 75. On composition of the police force (and more generally for a study that situates the events of 1967 within a local political contest between blacks and Italian Americans), see Mumford, *Newark*, 133. On the flier, see Mark Krasovic, "The Struggle for Newark: Plotting Urban Crisis in the Great Society" (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 2008), 339. For a sociological study that emphasizes rapid demographic change and ethnic competition in explaining urban violence including 1967 Newark, see Max Arthur Herman, *Fighting in the Streets: Ethnic Succession and Urban Unrest in Twentieth Century America* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2005). The quote is from Mumford, *Newark*, 181. Contemporary characterizations of disturbances as race riots in the public schools of Inwood, Long Island, in the 1970s also obscured the role of ethnicity and class. The whites were largely Italian Americans who fought blacks, "the other poor people in the vicinity." Inwood last saw violence between the two groups in 1932 when both were the most affected by the Great Depression in that area. Salvatore J. LaGumina, *From Steerage to Suburbs: Long Island Italians* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1988), 144–45, 202–4.
36. Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 108–9. Krase makes a similar observation regarding the media representations of Italian Americans in the aftermath of the killing of Yusef Hawkins in Bensonhurst. Working-class white ethnics are no more racist than wealthy whites, but they are more likely to provide drama in the streets suitable for the media than wealthy whites who use co-op boards, "'color-blind'

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economic criteria" and similar strategies to keep out minorities. Jerome Krase, "Bensonhurst, Brooklyn: Italian Americans Victims and Victimizers," in *The Review of Italian American Studies*, ed. Frank M. Sorrentino and Jerome Krase (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2000), 241.

37. Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 171; Gambino, *Blood of My Blood*. "More than other groups they are flabbergasted by and hostile to black verbal and nonverbal styles which they interpret as antagonistic, provocative, and disrespectful." Myers, "Behind the Lines," 143.
38. Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 108–9, 128, 171; Gambino, *Blood of My Blood*, 344.
39. Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 183.
40. Stefano Luconi, "How Italians Became White," in *Close Encounters of another Kind: New Perspectives on Race, Ethnicity and American Studies*, ed. Roy Goldblatt, Jopi Nyman, and John A. Stotesbury (Joensuu: Joensuun Yliopiston Humanistinen Tiedekunta, 2005), 269.
41. Rieder, *Canarsie*, 42, cited in Forminsano, *Boston against Busing*, 181.
42. Micaela DiLeonardo, *The Varieties of Ethnic Experience: Kinship, Class, and Gender among California Italian-Americans* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 175.
43. Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 165; McGreevey, *Parish Boundaries*, 205. DiLeonardo notes that Italian American racism reflects in part the conflation of poverty with race; that is, blacks are despised for being poor, and the cause of poverty among racial groups is attributed to "disorganized, dysfunctional families." *Varieties of Ethnic Experience*, 177. Also on the perceived challenge to values that blacks posed for Italian Americans, see Rudolph J. Vecoli, "Italian-American Ethnicity: Twilight or Dawn?" in *The Italian American Experience*, ed. John Potestio and Antonio Pucci (Toronto: Canadian Italian Historical Association, 1988), 139.
44. Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 165. See also 302n70.
45. Pasquale Verdicchio, "'If I was Six Feet Tall, I Would Have Been Italian': Spike Lee's Guineas," in *Devils in Paradise: Writings on Post-emigrant Cultures* (Toronto: Guernica, 1997), 79.
46. On shared stereotypes, see, e.g., Lizzi, "My Heart Is as Black as Yours": 57; Suttles, *The Social Order of the Slum*; Kimberly Simms, "Blacks, Italians, and the Progressive Interest in New York City Crime, 1900-1930" (PhD dissertation, Harvard, 2006); Stephanie Hull and Maurizio Viano, "The Image of Blacks in the Work of Coppola, De Palma, and Scorsese," in *Beyond the Margins: Readings in Italian Americana*, ed. Paolo A. Giordano and Anthony Julian Tamburri (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998), 171. On affinities between the two groups, see John Gennari, "Passing for Italian," *Transition* 72 (Fall 1997): 42–44; Joseph Sciorra, "The Ethnoscope of Hip Wop: Alterity and Authenticity in Italian American Rap Music," in *Global Media, Culture, and Identity: Theory, Cases, and Approaches*, ed. Rohit Chopra and Radhika Gajjala (New York: Routledge, 2001), 33-51; Donald Tricarico, "Guido: Fashioning an Italian-American Youth Style," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 19, no. 1 (2004): 9. On code-switching by both Italian Americans and African Americans, see Mumford, *Newark*, 178–79; Myers, "Between the Lines," 143.
47. David A. Gerber, *Black Ohio and The Color Line, 1860-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 326–27. Gerber cites this incident in the context of noting that of all of the "swarthy southeastern European immigrants, particularly Italians then streaming into the nation helped to further confuse the physiognomy of racial and ethnic identity."
48. On Northern Italian racism toward southerners, see, e.g., Mary Gibson, "Biology or Environment? Race and Southern 'Deviancy' in the Writings of Italian Criminologists, 1880-1920," in *Italy's "Southern Question": Orientalism in One Country*, ed. J. Schneider (Oxford: Berg, 1998), 99–116. See also Gibson's monograph, *Born to Crime: Cesare Lombroso and the Origins of Biological Criminology* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), chap. 5; Pasquale Verdicchio, *Bound by Distance: Rethinking Nationalism through the Italian Diaspora* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1997), 21–29; Peter D'Agostino, "Craniums, Criminals, and the 'Cursed Race': Italian Anthropology in American Racial Thought, 1861-1924," *Comparative Studies in Society & History* 44, no. 2 (2002); Thomas Guglelmo, *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 59–67.
49. Orsi, "Religious Boundaries," 316. On generally positive Italian American/African American relations in the South, see, e.g., George Cunningham, "The Italian: A Hindrance to White Solidarity in Louisiana, 1890-1898," *Journal of Negro History* 50 (January 1965): 23–35; Vincenza Scarpaci, "Immigrants in the New South: Italians in Louisiana's Sugar Parishes, 1880-1910," in *Studies in Italian American*

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Social History, ed. Francesco Cordasco (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1975).

50. Jacobsen, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 57; Lizzi, "'My Heart Is as Black as Yours,'" 55; Michael Novak, *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* (New York: Macmillan, 1971); Rudolph J. Vecoli, "Are Italian Americans Just White Folks?" in *Beyond the Godfather*, ed. A. Kenneth Ciongoli and Jay Parini (Boston: University Press of New England, 1997), 307–18.
51. Gambino, *Blood of My Blood*, 337.
52. As Verdicchio notes on the commonalities Italian Americans share with African Americans, "The unearthing of these links in the psyche of Italian Americans is most likely the element that instigates the violent reactions toward the visibly different subject that becomes the mirror image of their own oppression." Verdicchio, "'If I was Six Feet Tall,'" 78.
53. John Bodnar, Roger Simon, and Michael P. Weber, *Lives of their Own: Blacks, Italians, and Poles in Pittsburgh, 1900-1960* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 215–16. See also Arnold Shankman, *Ambivalent Friends: Afro-Americans View the Immigrant* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1982), 30–31.
54. Chad Heap, *Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 222. In the 1930s, Italians represented 75 percent of all bar and cabaret owners in Harlem. Steven J. Gold, "Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Customers throughout the Twentieth Century," in *Not Just Black and White: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in the United States* (New York: Russell Sage, 2004), 323.
55. Lizzi, "'My Heart Is as Black as Yours.'"
56. Guglielmo, "Introduction," 4. On the complex and often contradictory relationship Italian Americans had with racial minorities, see also DiLeonardo, *The Varieties of Ethnic Experience*, 175. For more on Italian American/African American relations, see in the Guglielmo and Salerno collection, Vincenza Scarpaci, "Walking the Color Line: Italians in Rural Louisiana, 1880-1920," 60–78; Caroline Waldron Merithew, "Making the Italian Other: Blacks, Whites, and the Inbetween in the 1895 Spring Valley, Illinois Race Riot," 79–97; Thomas Guglielmo, "Encountering the Color Line in the Everyday: Italians in Interwar Chicago," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 23, no. 4 (Summer 2004): 45–77; Orsi, "Religious Boundaries;" Venturini, "Over the Years People Don't Know;" Bodnar et al., *Lives of their Own*. For a fictionalized account of Italian American and African American laborers working on a plantation together in the South inspired by life on an actual plantation in Arkansas, see Mary Bucci Bush, *Sweet Hope* (Toronto: Guernica, 2011).
57. Orsi, "Religious Boundaries," 335.
58. On prewar, blue-collar suburbanization, see, e.g., Richard Harris, "Working-Class Home Ownership in the American Metropolis," *Journal of Urban History* 17 (November 1990): 46–69; Richard Harris, "Self-Building in the Urban Housing Market," *Economic Geography* 67 (January 1991): 1–21; Becky M. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1965* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002). On African Americans in the early suburbs, see, e.g., Andrew Wiese, *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Andrew Wiese, "The Other Suburbanites: African American Suburbanization in the North before 1950," *Journal of American History* 85 (March 1999): 1495–1524; Leslie Wilson, "Dark Spaces: An Account of Afro-American Suburbanization, 1890-1950" (PhD dissertation, City University of New York, 1992). For brief discussions of the changing historiography on suburbanization, see Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, *The New Suburban History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 1–10; Becky M. Nicolaides and Andrew Wiese, *The Suburb Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 1–12.
59. The revisionist historiography has given rise to a debate regarding the definition of a suburb. I accept the expansive definition offered by Nicolaides and Wiese: "By predilection, we emphasize a broad definition of suburbia that encompasses a long sweep of time and a diverse collection of communities, landscapes, and functions. In practical terms, we treat as suburban the sprawling territory beyond the central city limits that lies within commuting distance and social orbit of the older core." Nicolaides and Wiese, *Suburban Reader*, 9.
60. These selected interviews were part of larger pools of interviews carried out between 2000 and 2005 by multiple interviewers as part of two separate projects that set out to document the histories of Italians and blacks in Montclair. Each led to exhibitions: "The Italians of Montclair" in 2004 at the Montclair

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Public Library and "Growing up Black in Montclair" in 2006 at the Montclair Historical Society. The interviews with black Montclarions are available through the Montclair Public Library. Marisa Trubiano, of Montclair State University's Spanish and Italian Departments, coordinated the Italians in Montclair project and has possession of those interviews, which she generously shared with me. Stacey Patton and Leslie Wilson directed me to sources, including the interviews with black Montclarions. There is a voluminous literature on the oral interview as a unique source that is a joint construction between interviewer and interviewee, a "text" that can be read in multiple ways. See, e.g., Ronald J. Grele, *Envelopes of Sound: The Art of Oral History*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Precedent, 1985); Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990). I am using the interviews here in a more conventional sense with an awareness of the issues involved in their use.

61. Dennis J. Starr, *The Italians of New Jersey: A Historical Introduction and Bibliography* (Newark: New Jersey Historical Society, 1985), 7–11.
62. Clement Alexander Price, *Freedom Not Far Distant: A Documentary History of Afro-Americans in New Jersey* (Newark, NJ: New Jersey Historical Society, 1980), 192; "Leaving the South Behind," *The Newark Star-Ledger*, February 1–7, 2002. For more on the history of African Americans in New Jersey, see Giles R. Wright, *Afro-Americans in New Jersey: A Short History* (Trenton: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1988).
63. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 241; H. P. Douglass, *The Suburban Trend* (New York: Century, 1925), 97. Although Jackson notes the presence of the poor and minorities in the suburbs, overall, his study reinforces the more traditional view of the suburbs as white and middle class.
64. David Nelson Alloway and Mary Travis Amy, "A Goodly Heritage," in *Montclair 1868-1993* (Montclair Historical Society [MHS]), 50–52.
65. Wiese, *Places of Their Own*, 55–56; Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage, 2003), 213; John Price, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, April 2001; Dr. Theodore Bolden, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, April 2, 2001.
66. Henry Whittemore, *History of Montclair Township, New Jersey* (New York: Suburban Publishing, 1894), 105–7; *Growing Up Black in Montclair, 1870-1970*, Exhibition in The Black Montclair Series, September 5, 2006–September 30, 2006, MHS; Patricia Hampson Eget, "Challenging Containment: African Americans and Racial Politics in Montclair, New Jersey, 1920-1940," *New Jersey History* 126, no. 1 (2011): 4. Jack and Jill was founded in the 1930s as an exclusive national organization for the children of upper-class African Americans.
67. Alloway and Amy, "A Goodly Heritage," 53–58; Elizabeth Shepard and Royal F. Shepard, Jr., *Images of America: Montclair* (Portsmouth, NH: Arcadia, 2003), 38. Donato DiGeronimo, interview by Marisa Trubiano, 9 September 2005.
68. 1895 Census of New Jersey, Essex County, Montclair Township; "Facts and Figures," unmarked folder, MHS; Alloway and Amy, "A Goodly Heritage," 56.
69. 1895 Census of New Jersey, Essex County, Montclair Township; Jane Rinck, "Juvenile Delinquency in Montclair, N.J.," New York School of Social Work, Columbia University, July 1943, 5. Richard K. Cacioppo, *The Glory of Montclair: Past and Present* (Montclair: Dream City Publishing, 1995), 43. The earliest population total of 3,130 for Montclair comes from the 1890 census cited in the Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, Data for New Jersey, 336n11. No breakdown by race/ethnicity is available.
70. In certain Chicago neighborhoods, e.g., Italians shared buildings though mainly only in the early 1900s. Guglielmo, *White on Arrival*, chap. 8. For mixed neighborhoods and buildings in Montclair, see Ann Andolino Chiaravalloti, interviewed by Assunta Scotto D'Abbusco, May 1, 2002; Anna Menullo (pseudonym), interviewed by Daniela Petruzzella, Spring 2003; Anthony Proto, interviewed by Shanna Di Cristo, August 6, 2003; Mr. Andolino, interviewed by Ilenia Pitti, June 26, 2003. See also Frank W. Herriott, *A Community Serves Its Youth: A Case Study of Montclair, New Jersey* (New York, 1933), 7; Manuscript Census Schedules for 1920 and 1930: Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 14th census of the U.S. Population Manuscript Census Schedules, Montclair, Essex County, New Jersey; 15th Census of the U.S. Population Manuscript Census Schedules, Montclair, Essex County, New Jersey; Donato DiGeronimo, interview by the author, January 11, 2013.

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71. "The Montclair Community House," *Montclair Times*, November 20, 1936; Shepard and Shepard, *Montclair*, 36-37.
72. "Increase in Communicable Diseases Laid to Measles," *The Montclair Times*, June 28, 1938; Herriott, *A Community Serves Its Youth*; "Montclair Civil Rights Audit 1947," http://chss.montclair.edu/~klobyg/Audit1947.html.
73. "Leaving the South Behind," *The Newark Star-Ledger*, February 1–7, 2002
74. Wiese, *Places of Their Own*, 60–61; *New York Times*, November 7, 1925; Herschel T. White, interview by Josephine Bonomo, December 16, 2000; Sharon Burton Turner, interview by Asantewaa Harris, July 19, 2001; Orene Shelton, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, January 17, 2001; William Cannady, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, July 6, 2001; Elaine Douglas, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, March 19, 2001; John Sterling, interview by Kenneth French, November 27, 2000; John Price, interview; Daisy Douglass, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, March 19, 2001; "New Home for Colored YWCA," *The Montclair Times*, April 1920; "Montclair Civil Rights Audit 1947," http://chss.montclair.edu/~klobyg/Audit1947.html.
75. "Trust Fund Plan of Italian Forum," *Montclair Times*, March 5, 1937; "The Montclair Community House," by Janet Goodwillie and Constance Hook in Montclair Junior League Year Book 1937, Box A25 of Township of Montclair Collection, MHS. Leonard Covello's work with Italian American youth in East Harlem in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s was also aimed at enhancing self-esteem. See Carnevale, *A New Language,* chap. 5.
76. "Montclair Civil Rights Audit 1947," 8; Herschell T. White, interview.
77. Theodore Bolden, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, April 2, 2001; Louis Sturdivant, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, July 9, 2001; Sharon Burton Turner quoted in "Growing Up Black in Montclair" exhibition publication.
78. "Montclair Civil Rights Audit 1947," 8; Donato DiGeronimo interview (2005). This finding is contrary to Roediger who sees little evidence of restrictive covenants aimed at new immigrants/ethnics. He claims that they practiced a kind of self-enforced segregation that helps explain why they remembered restrictive covenants as being more pervasive. Roediger, *Working Towards Whiteness*, 173.
79. Paul Porcelli, interview by Anna Di Pinto, May 2, 2002; Michael Sarageno interview. For other examples of anti-Italian sentiment from the 1920s through the 1940s, see Anna Menullo, interview; Aurelio Di Vito, interview by Jo Anne Tartaglia, April 16, 2002; Ralph Del Visco, interview by Ilenia Pitti, July 13, 2003.
80. Fred Ruccio, interview by Rosalia Fiordilino, May 8, 2002. Whether this incident actually led to the establishment of Mt. Carmel, the persistence of this story through the generations is telling. Alloway and Amy, "A Goodly Heritage," 56–58; Shepard and Shepard, *Images of Montclair*, 39.
81. William Cannady, interview; John Price, interview.
82. Elizabeth Milliken, "St. Peter Claver: Race and Catholicism in the Formation of an African American Parish," *New Jersey History* 117, no. 3/4 (Winter 1999), 13–14.
83. John Price, interview; Alice Price, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, April 2001; Maud Credle, interview by Laura Krause, January 2001; "Our Lady of Mt. Carmel's 75th Anniversary Retrospective" (1982), Montclair Local History Collection, Montclair Public Library. This inclusion of racial others in an Italian feast, e.g., contrasts with the case presented by Orsi vis-à-vis Puerto Ricans. Orsi, "Religious Boundaries."
84. The Audit reveals that the Glenfield elementary and junior high that served the Italian and black neighborhoods had "white" populations of only 14.6 and 35 percent, respectively. It is likely that these whites were of Italian origin. Ethnic distinctions were made in the Audit; a statistical breakdown of the composition of the high school included Italians (13–15 percent) and Jews (3 percent) as well as blacks (23 percent). "Montclair Civil Rights Audit," 11–14. Shepard and Shepard, *Images of Montclair* notes that the "system of neighborhood elementary schools led to *de facto* segregation for some parts of the community" (62). Angelo Pomarico, interview by Shanna Di Cristo, August 2003. The interviews collectively suggest that blacks and Italians tended to go to the same schools at the elementary level and junior high level.
85. Rinke, "Juvenile Delinquency," 5.

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86. Bernadette Anand, Michelle Fine, David S. Surrey, Tiffany Perkins, and the Renaissance School Class of 2000, *Keeping the Struggle Alive: Studying Desegregation in Our Town: A Guide to Doing Oral History* (New York: Teacher's College Press, 2002), 31–32; Jane Manners, "Repackaging Segregation: A History of the Magnet School System in Montclair, N.J." *Race Traitor* 8 (Winter 1998). See also Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2008), 460, 466.
87. Italian American respondents commented more frequently on their interactions with African Americans than the other way around. This may reflect the difference in the questionnaires administered to each group—black Montclarions were specifically asked about incidents of discrimination while Italian Americans were asked about interactions with other groups.
88. Orene Shelton, interview; Louis Sturdivant, interview; Audrey Fletcher, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, February 5, 2001; Alice Price, interview; Elizabeth Yarborough, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, September 21, 2001. Yarborough's parents were part of a Caribbean migrant stream to Montclair.
89. Leona Smith, interview by Elizabeth Shepard, June 6, 2001. Quote taken from "The Black Montclair Series: Growing Up Black in Montclair, 1870-1970," Exhibition Catalog, MHS. In remembering Montclair in the 1940s and 1950s, Daisy Douglas also distinguished between whites and immigrants including Italians, Germans, and Irish. Daisy Douglas, interview.
90. Lucy Ruccio, interview by Rosalia Fiordilino, May 8, 2002; Anna Menullo, interview.
91. Nicholas Villarosa, interview by Ilenia Pitti, July 3, 2003; Michael Sarageno, interview; Michael D'Agostino, interview by Ilenia Pitti, July 24, 2003.
92. Angelo Pomarico, interview. He goes on to say that as he got older, he only remained friends with other Italians, hinting that after the 1960s, it became more difficult to maintain these interracial friendships without specifying why. Pauline Catalano Booth-Ellis, interview by Shanna Di Cristo, November 21, 2003.
93. See Donato DiGeronimo interview (2005), Frank Godlewski, interview by Marisa Trubiano, September 9, 2005; Nicholas Villarosa, interview; Michael D'Agostino, interview; Rosmarie Ramundo, interview by Ilenia Pitti, undated; Thomas Russo, interview by Shanna Di Cristo, August 2003; Steve Di Geronimo, interview by Rosa Zaccardi, July 29, 2005; Esterina Francantonio (pseudonym), Jennie Rizzo, Spring 2002; Angelo Pomarico, interview.
94. Several elderly people drew distinctions between established black families from Montclair whom they knew well and blacks who moved in later, e.g. Ralph Del Visco, interview. Regarding her father who only interacts with blacks that he grew up with, see Anna Delorio (pseudonym), interview by Daniela Pettruzella, April 28, 2003; Mary De Carlo, interview by Daniella Pettruzella, Spring 2003.
95. Orsi, *Religious Boundaries*, 336; Rieder, *Canarsie*.
96. Ralph Del Visco.
97. Herman, *Fighting in the Streets*.
98. Pauline Catalano Booth-Ellis, interview; Joe Attamante, interview; Dan Arminio, interview by Rosa Zaccardi, July 13, 2005; Angelo Pomarico, interview; Fred Ferretti, "Busing of Pupils Sways Votes in Town Election," *New York Times*, May 14, 1972. The article notes that by 1968, the Fourth Ward was "predominantly black."
99. Joe Attamante, interview; Anna Delorio, interview.
100. "The Montclair Community House," *The Montclair Times*, November 20, 1936; Herriott, *A Community Serves Its Youth*, 14.
101. E.g., Roger Sanjek claims that Jonathan Rieder's narrow focus on white resistance to black newcomers "neglects countervailing activity arising within Canarsie's white and black population." Roger Sanjek, *The Future of Us All: Race and Neighborhood Politics in New York City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 4. For an example of contemporary observers hastily (mis)interpreting conflict in racial terms, see Gerald Meyer, "When Frank Sinatra Came to Italian Harlem: The 1945 'Race Riot' at Benjamin Franklin High School," in Guglelmo and Salerno, eds., *Are Italians White?*, 161–76.
102. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto*, xiii.
103. Roger Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). Stephen Steinberg, *The Ethnic Myth: Race, Ethnicity, and Class in America* (Boston: Beacon Press,

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1989). Gold, "Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Customers," 315, 333–334. For other motives underlying racial violence, see Belmonte who speculates that although racism was certainly involved, the bigger issue in the Yusef Hawkins killing was the "ancient code of female inviolability as sacred and unassailable by *any* outsider on pain of death." Belmonte, "The Contradictions of Italian American Identity," 7.

104. The statement by the Chicago Commission on Race Relations in the aftermath of the 1919 Chicago race riot on the difficulty of identifying positive relations between Italians and nonwhite groups is broadly applicable: "Where amicable relations prevail and where adjustment has become fixed and acknowledged, the public hears and knows little or nothing of the relations, for there is nothing in these relations to cause comment or attention." Quoted in Guglielmo, *White on Arrival*, 189n80.

Author Biography

Nancy C. Carnevale, associate professor of History at Montclair State University, is the author of *A New Language, A New World: Italian Immigrants in the United States, 1890-1945* (2009), winner of a 2010 American Book Award. She is coeditor of the *Critical Studies in Italian America* series (Fordham University Press).

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