Race and Racism in Cincinnati Toolkit

Christina D. Brown
Louise Lawarre
Jennifer Sens

www.RaceAndRacismCincinnati.org
Race and Racism in Cincinnati
June 2018 Edition I
Links Updated October 2019

Authors: Christina D. Brown, Louise Lawarre, and Jennifer Sens
© 2018 Intercommunity Justice & Peace Center, Cincinnati, OH. All rights reserved

Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center
215 East 14th Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202
513.579.8547
info@IJPCcincinnati.org
# Table of Contents

- Preface 4
- Introduction 5
- Guidelines on How to Use this Toolkit 6
- Suggested Guidelines for Discussing Race and Racism 7
- Glossary 8
- Timeline 10
- Opening Exercise 12
- History of Racial Violence in Cincinnati 14
- Race and the Law in Cincinnati 20
- Resilient Communities of Color in Cincinnati 26
- Next Steps 32
- Discerning Next Steps 33
- Take Action 34
- Acknowledgements 35
In the fall of 2015, staff from the Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center (IJPC), the Cincinnati Human Relations Commission (now the Office of Human Relations) and the YWCA Greater Cincinnati gathered with other local anti-racism activists to rethink ways to address racism in our region. Our goal was “to raise Cincinnati’s consciousness and create change to end racism through education, dialogue, and action.” Since January 2016, with the name Rethinking Racism, we have offered events designed to meet two of our objectives: provide space for authentic intraracial and interracial exchanges; and challenge white people to take responsibility for understanding/deconstructing racism. To those ends, many of our programs for dialogue about racism have used Open Space Technology, a methodology to give participants control of the agenda and topics for discussion. We have also offered many speaker/discussion events to provide “deeper dives” into how racism is experienced in the lives of Black people in Cincinnati and how to end it.

A different kind of action would be necessary to address our third objective: “Meaningfully explore the history and impact of individual and institutionalized racism in Cincinnati.” As we investigated how students learn the history of this region, it became clear that much of Cincinnati’s history is not taught in schools and is not easily accessible to the public. Beginning with the indigenous people who were living in the region prior to the arrival of white settlers, and continuing into the present day, the history of people of color is not part of the most curriculums in a meaningful way. Without a basic knowledge of Cincinnati’s history vis a vis people of color, critical reflection on this history for current policies in business, government and community planning is completely lacking. We committed ourselves to creating a resource to begin to fill this void.

We recognized the importance of beginning this exploration with Native Americans on whose land our communities now stand. We need to do that with full awareness that they did not “disappear” or “move on.” It is essential to understand the forced removal of tribes, including the Shawnee, Miami and Wyandot, and the usurping of their lands for white settler communities like Cincinnati. In the years before the Civil War, Ohio did not allow slavery. However, the conditions and limitations on Black people deprived them of participation in the opportunities that abounded as Cincinnati grew to the 6th largest US city by 1850, just 62 years after its founding in 1788. From Reconstruction to the present, the effects of national trends such as the Great Migration, the interstate highway system, white flight to the suburbs, and police violence have created powerful and often devastating consequences for the Black community in Cincinnati. At the same time, Black men and women have been active contributors in the struggles and achievements of our region.

These stories must become part of school curriculums and community knowledge if we hope to create equitable institutions and governance. White people need to recognize that decisions today are not made in a vacuum but are built on the foundations of racism that are woven into the very fabric of our structures, institutions, and culture. Black people deserve to have their stories fully reflected in the educational process and to learn about the heroes who have built strong communities, often in the face of opposition, and led the way toward justice and freedom. We hope this Toolkit is a step toward these goals.

- Your Race and Racism Toolkit Authors (Christina D. Brown, Louise Lawarre & Jennifer Sens)
Knowing your history helps you move toward a more productive future. That’s why this toolkit is so important. Cincinnati’s history is also entwined in your history. When you study the history of race and racism in Cincinnati, you help make a positive shift in the way you view people who are different from you. This helps you see life from an empathetic angle to the point of showing more innovation in your approaches to new projects or experiences. It is necessary to know this history, understand how it evolved and grasp why there is a need to strive toward improvements -to move forward, as a City.

Racism stems from our implicit or unconscious biases that stem from fear. Those fears are not always obvious – even to us, as individuals. We have a responsibility to work on ourselves so that those internal fears are not exhibited when we least expect them. This fear-based behavior could come out in the workplace or at school. That behavior could be displayed toward those who are different from us because they are not in the “in group.” As with any issue, recognizing that racism exists is the first step toward making life better for everyone in the Queen City.

Countless numbers of brave souls, tried to make life better for escaped slaves in Cincinnati. In fact, the conductor of the Underground Railroad, Levi Coffin, lived in Cincinnati. Why was Cincinnati such a pivotal point in the anti-slavery movement?

As a boundary city, Cincinnati sometimes illustrated both pro- and anti-slavery sentiments, in the 1800’s. If you were a free person of color in Cincinnati, you had to have a $500.00 bond on your person, proving that you were not a slave. But, the moment you crossed the Ohio River into Kentucky, you could be kidnapped and turned into a slave. So, Cincinnati is a northern City with a southern exposure.

This toolkit will expose you to information on inspirational, everyday citizens and well-known Cincinnatians who left their mark on this City. You, like many others, may discover information that you don’t know when it comes to the history of race and racism in the Queen City.

While you will focus on Cincinnati, this toolkit narrates stories that are reflective of situations that happen all over the nation. Cincinnati continues to take a look in the mirror to reflect the history so that we see ourselves and the world sees us as a City with a past, but an even brighter future.

- Gina Ruffin Moore (local author of Cincinnati—the Black America Series)
This toolkit is a resource that can be used by individuals or in a group by those interested in gaining more insight and background on race and racism in Cincinnati. It is recommended that readers spend an estimated 25 minutes to complete the exercises at the beginning and end.

Please refer to the Suggested Community Guidelines for Discussing Race & Racism as you read this information to appropriately contextualize this sensitive information. Terms have been included in the glossary that may be unfamiliar to all readers or that require a specific definition. The Timeline of Events gives readers more background to key events in Cincinnati and may be especially helpful in the History of Racial Violence in Cincinnati chapter.

Each of the three chapters (History of Racial Violence in Cincinnati, Race and the Law in Cincinnati, and Resilient Communities of Color in Cincinnati) begin with an introduction to the topic and a set of learning objectives which align with a list of post-reading questions at the end of the chapter. Readers are invited to review the learning objectives and quiz questions before diving into the chapter’s readings in order to focus their attention. Most post reading quiz questions can be answered by reading the key resources in each section. Each chapter is divided into subcategories with selected key resources and additional resources listed if there is interest in learning more, both under the subcategories and at the end of each chapter.

For those using this toolkit in a large group, consider taking the post reading quizzes together. Each participant can think about their own answers to the questions, then get into a small group of two or three people they know the least and discuss one question at a time. After the small groups finish their conversations, participants can come together and reflect on each of their conversations with the whole group.

Learning can be further fostered by sharing thoughts and questions for others on social media using the hashtag #RaceAndRacismCincinnati. We have created an online forum to collect comments and feedback for future iterations of this resource as well as so you can share thoughts with other readers. Visit http://bit.ly/RRiCFeedback to access. We would also be interested to hear feedback on your experience so please email info@IJPCcincinnati.org and let us know how you are using the toolkit, what you learned, and if you want to be more involved.
Before introducing the content of this toolkit, it is important to frame how to best benefit from these readings and reflections. It is suggested that this toolkit be utilized with a partner or in a small group. Our additional recommendation is for readers to navigate the toolkit using the “Courageous Conversations” guidelines. These guidelines listed below are discussion tools that were developed by Glenn E. Singleton designed to ignite action and inform productive discussions about race and racism. To begin your toolkit journey, review the suggested guidelines with your partner/or group which conditions will be applied. Feel free to suggest additional guidelines, or revisions for guidelines. Once you have selected your group guidelines, use a marker/color pencils etc, draw a poster with these agreements. Group members should also identify strategies to ensure these principles are being upheld throughout the learning process.


- Remain morally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in dialogue.
- Being honest about your thoughts, feelings, and opinions and not just saying what you perceive others want to hear.
- Engaged in tough conversations that may make you feel uncomfortable.
- Not looking to solve/answer all of the questions.
- The critical need to address race explicitly and intentionally.
- Understanding how racial assimilation is present in everyday life.
- Different racial groups offering different racial points of view as determined and defined by their shared racial experiences.
- Keeping us all at the table by focusing on the dialogue process as a way of ensuring greater safety and sustained, deeper introspection.
- Examining and understanding how race is lived differently by white people and by people of color.

Stay engaged.

Speak your truth.

Experience discomfort.

Expect and accept non-disclosure.

Isolate race.

Examine the role and presence of ‘whiteness’.

Normalize social construction, and multiple perspectives.

Monitor agreements, conditions, and establish parameters.

Establish a working definition of race.
**Antebellum**: The word antebellum means “before the war.” It is often used to refer to the period of U.S. history prior to the Civil War, e.g., antebellum South, antebellum period.

**Blockbusting**: A tool used by real estate agents for housing segregation. This process included creating fear that Black residents would move into a community, causing all white residents to leave and decreasing property values in the community.


**The Civil Rights Movement**: A struggle for social justice that took place mainly during the 1950s and 1960s for Blacks to gain equal rights under the law in the United States.


**Gentrification**: A general term for the arrival of wealthier people in an existing urban district, a related increase in rents and property values, and changes in the district’s character and culture. The term is often used negatively, suggesting the displacement of poor communities by rich outsiders. But the effects of gentrification are complex and contradictory, and its real impact varies.


**Great Migration**: The relocation of 6 million African Americans out of the rural South to urban centers in the Northeast, Midwest, and West. Historians date its start in 1916 with the plentiful industrial jobs available in northern cities during WWI and people fleeing Jim Crow violence, and ended in about 1970.


**Indigenous**: Originating or occurring naturally in a particular place: native. In the U.S., it mostly refers to Native-American (also called Indian) people.


**Lartinx**: of, relating to, or marked by Latin American heritage—used as a gender-neutral alternative to Latino or Latina


**Miami Purchase**: A land division created in 1788 that began settlement in what is now The Cincinnati and Dayton region of Ohio.


**Narrative Violence**: “Narrative violence builds solidarity among racist activists and communicates a message of group empowerment and racial identity. In contrast to strategic violence, narrative violence is not part of a larger strategy for white advancement, but is rather a form of group bonding and a stimulus to white collective identity.”


**Ohio Black Laws**: The Ohio legislature passed a series of laws in 1807 to discourage African American migration to the state.


**Race as a construct**: Race is not a biological fact. It is a “social construct,”meaning it was created by societies to serve the goals of those in power. There is no gene or cluster of genes common to all Blacks or all whites. Ethnicity can overlap with race but is based on a shared cultural heritage.


**Racial justice:** The active enforcement of policies, actions and attitudes that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, and treatment for all.


**Racial violence:** Harassment of or violence towards someone who is perceived by the assailant to be racially or ethnically different and where evidence would indicate that someone of a different ethnicity, in the same place and similar circumstances would not have been attacked in the same way.


**Racism/racial discrimination:** Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism from members of the dominant racial group towards the oppressed racial group.


**Redlining:** A form of housing discrimination that has been used by lenders to make it difficult for minorities to obtain financing to purchase housing. The word redlining was used because a red line would be drawn on a map to identify the areas where lenders would not make a mortgage loan.


**Strategic Violence:** Violence of organized racism takes two forms: strategic violence and narrative violence (Blee, 2005, page 2). Strategic violence is planned violence, typically developed in a small set of racist leaders or a cell of racist activists or by “lone wolf” racists. It is focused on a specific target and directed by a racial agenda. It is a means toward a racial end, as in the “cool technical violence” of terrorism (Collins 2008: 451, see also Crenshaw 2010).


**Underground Railroad:** A vast network of people who helped fugitive slaves escape to the North and to Canada. It was not run by any single organization or person; rather, it consisted of Black and white individuals who knew only of the local efforts to aid fugitives and not of the overall operation. Still, it effectively moved hundreds of slaves northward each year; according to one estimate, the South lost 100,000 slaves between 1810 and 1850 through this network.


**White supremacy:** The belief that white people are superior to those of all other races, especially the Black race, and should therefore dominate society.


1800


1850


1900


1954: The United States Supreme Court Decision Brown v. Board of Education prohibits racial segregation in schools.


1961: Coney Island, an amusement park open since 1886, desegregates its swimming pool, the last section of the park to be desegregated.

1984: Mona Bronson vs. Cincinnati Board of Education Settlement reached. District uses magnet schools to improve integration.

1992: Ku Klux Klan erects cross on Fountain Square

2000: Black United Front boycotts downtown restaurants due to racist treatment

2001: Timothy Thomas is killed in April by a Cincinnati police officer in Over-the-Rhine. Violence breaks out in the following days in the neighborhood.

2015: Unarmed Sam Dubose is killed by University of Cincinnati Police officer Ray Tensing, the Judge in both trials against Tensing declares two mistrials.

2016: Cincinnati City Council Declines Passing Indigenous Peoples Day

2018: Cincinnati City Council unanimously passed a bill to recognize Columbus Day as Indigenous Peoples’ Day
Learning Objective: Foster self-knowledge and answer the question: Where am I in the anti-racism framework?

Part 1: Your Autobiography: racial and ethnic

1. How would you describe your ethnic and racial background?

2. What ways do you identify with these and/or other ethnic and racial heritages?

3. What events, situations, moments, or processes have led to a greater awareness of your ethnic/racial background?

4. Where do you have privilege and where do you not? What role does privilege play in your actions, reactions, and attitudes?

Part 2: Assumptions and Behaviorships

1. Think about an ethnic or racial group that you know little about. List everything you know, or think you know, about this group.

2. Identify the sources of your knowledge and critique the accuracy of this information received from these sources.

3. How has this knowledge influenced how you interacted with people of that specific group?

4. What questions or comments come up for you after doing this section?

Think of the irony of living in the city where the centerpiece of the National Underground Freedom Railroad network is being built, and we are struggling through the highest state of Apartheid. Economic disparity, legal injustice, political and governmental unaccountability, and lack of adequate and affordable health care and housing are just some of the challenges we face.
CHAPTER 1:

HISTORY OF RACIAL VIOLENCE IN CINCINNATI
The history of Cincinnati is littered with racial violence. One way this violence is manifested is through the name Cincinnati itself, which is replaced the region’s indigenous roots. Additionally Cincinnati’s unique proximity near a slaveholding state (Kentucky) complicates the city’s relationship with enslavement and Jim Crow. This unique geography, accompanied by centuries of racist policies, has aided and abetted in the physical harm and literal destruction of communities of color. In an era where police killings of unarmed Black people continue to go unpunished, (local examples being Roger Owensesby Jr, JoAnn Burton, Sam Dubose) and Indigenous, Black, Latinx, and Asian folks are displaced from their neighborhoods due to gentrification, the following readings underscore the history of racial violence in greater Cincinnati. Our expectation is that these histories will inform present and future action.

*Introduction by Christina D. Brown*

### Learning Objectives

- Define and give examples of past and present racial violence
- Identify examples of systemic violence against communities of color in Cincinnati
- Explore modern consequences of past racial violence

---

**Photo Credits (previous page):**

Chapter 1: History of Racial Violence

From the top of the page, clockwise:

   *Tiro, K. Exiled-Poster [portrait]. Xavier University, Cincinnati*

   *Matté. (2013, 29 Nov). Ohio State Route 126 [map]. Wikipedia*

   *Photographer unknown. Cincinnati’s Historic Coney Island [photograph]. InPark Magazine, Milwaukee.*

Ohio Indigenous History

According to the Cincinnati Museum Center, “On December 28, 1788, 11 families and 24 men led by Colonel Robert Patterson arrived at a site of 747 acres located directly opposite the Licking River. This second settlement was first named Losantiville and renamed Cincinnati on January 4, 1790 by Arthur St. Clair, the first Governor of the Northwest Territory.” While this is popularly known as the history of Cincinnati, what is often erased is the presence and contributions of the Indigenous populations from this area. Below is a resource titled Exiled: Ohio’sIndian Removal which uncovers the history of racist removal of Indigenous nations in the region known as Cincinnati.

Key Resource

Exiled: Ohio’s Indian Removal

Ohio’s Native American populations were forcibly removed in the 1830s and 1840s as a result of the Indian Removal Act. Two of those tribes were the Shawnee and the Wyandot. Both tribes experienced illness, death, and uncertainty as they moved to Kansas and Oklahoma. The Wyandot tribe passed through the Cincinnati area on their way to Kansas. While a few people from these tribes have returned to Ohio today, the land that once belonged to these native peoples has been long lost.

Destruction of Black Neighborhoods

What happens when Black communities strive for autonomy? Destruction of a Black Suburb explores how institutional racism destabilized America’s first Black suburb in the North.

Key Resource

Destruction of a Black Suburb

Lincoln Heights started as the first self governing Black community in the North, and today it has the most concentrated Black population in Ohio. In the 1940s it was a thriving Black middle class suburb known amongst the Black population for its sense of community. However without the same land, local businesses and resources as other suburbs, Lincoln Heights has suffered from disinvestment leading to population loss in the last 20 years. The residents continue their efforts at revitalizing their community.
Resources for Additional Information

**People Lived in Kenyon-Barr when the City Razed it to the Ground**

Before the 1958 destruction of the Kenyon-Barr neighborhood, located in the West End, the City of Cincinnati took pictures to survey the area. These pictures reveal a vibrant neighborhood with businesses, family homes and an active community.

**Coney Island Segregation Ended 40 Years Ago**

Starting in 1952, Black residents started coming to a white-only Coney Island amusement park, seeking equal access to the park. They were always turned away from the gates, but never gave up the fight. Through picketing and acts of civil disobedience, Coney park opened its gates to Blacks in 1955, and the pool was desegregated in 1961.

---

**CINCINNATI MOB VIOLENCE**

The uprisings of 2001 are colloquially referred to as a race riot. The use of the term race riot in this context undermines the rebellious nature of resisting structural violence, and confuses a history of massacres against communities of color in Greater Cincinnati. Below are histories of violence against communities of color that have been documented since the incorporation of Cincinnati.

**Key Resource**

**Civil Unrest Woven into City’s History**

Racial Violence in the form of riots has long been a practice in the city of Cincinnati. Starting even before the Civil War, the rise of Blacks and other ethnic groups sprouted riots and violence as groups competed for jobs and land. With over 15 major incidents between 1829 and 1970, the mob violence in Cincinnati have shaped Cincinnati into the city it is today.

**Resource for Additional Information**

**Cincinnati Goddamn**

Documentary addressing police brutality against the Black community in Cincinnati. This issue is demonstrated through the stories of the deaths of Roger Owensby Jr. and Timothy Thomas. Please note that this movie is not recommended for young audiences.
**Additional Resources**

*Race and the City: Work, Community, and Protest in Cincinnati*

Using pre-Civil War Cincinnati as an example, this book explores the experience of Black citizens in the urban setting. In Cincinnati, the Black community constantly faced problems and opportunities presented by industrialization and living on the border of slavery and freedom.

*The Black Brigade of Cincinnati*

This book tells the story of the Union’s first group of organized Black men for the military. In 1862, Black men were taken from their homes and forced into military service when Cincinnati was threatened. They were poorly treated and not given food or supplies. They were released after the press voiced outrage over their story. Yet when the army asked for volunteers to protect Cincinnati, hundreds of Black men willingly volunteered to save the city from conquest.

*Telling Our Story: A Living History of the Myaamia (Miami Tribe), History lessons for grades 3-12.*

This curriculum provides lesson plans, resources, and activities for teaching the history of the Myaamia. The guide covers history of the tribe from pre-1600s to modern day.

---

**Post Reading Quiz**

1. Explain the process of forced removal for Indigenous populations. What are the modern consequences of this policy?
2. Identify the processes that led to the creation and devastation of Lincoln Heights. How does this relate to the status of other neighborhoods of color in greater Cincinnati?
3. Select two incidents of racial violence in Cincinnati, identify the causes and the outcomes. What should be done to commemorate this history?
In short, Cincinnati is the poster child for unstable race relations in America. What else would you expect from the largest city straddling the Mason-Dixon Line?...The reality is that the definition of what a Cincinnatian is or what a Cincinnatian believes is wholly dependent on the neighborhood that Cincinnatian happens to live in. The city itself is speckled with a hundred little racial fault lines that separate the city on a block by block basis, making the Queen City the 8th most segregated city in the country.

DREW "VIRALY SUPRESSED" GIBSON
MOB CITY: HOW CINCINNATI BECAME THE POSTER CHILD FOR UNSTABLE RACE RELATIONS IN AMERICA
CHAPTER 2: RACE AND THE LAW IN CINCINNATI

Before in Over-the-Rhine

After in Over-the-Rhine
The incorporation of Cincinnati occurred because of the Miami Purchase which ultimately led to the forced removal of Indigenous peoples from the area. From that point to today, institutional laws and policies have oppressed people based on their race. In Cincinnati, these policies have resulted in unequal segregation in housing, education, health care and more. Other issues such as mass incarceration, police violence, and environmental hazards have also disproportionately affected people of color. According to an 2015 article featured below, “That Which Divides Us,” Cincinnati is the 8th most segregated city in the United States. It is not accidental that all of the top ten lowest median income neighborhoods in Cincinnati are majority Black neighborhoods. Housing and real estate practices such as blockbusting and redlining have pushed Black people into segregated neighborhoods that don’t have the same resources as majority white neighborhoods. Cincinnati’s history of displacement contributes to this segregation. The majority of the West End was destroyed for Interstate 75, and throughout the first two decades of the 2000’s, new investments in neighborhoods such as Over-the-Rhine and Walnut Hills force people out of their homes and businesses rather than build wealth within the existing community.

All the above-mentioned issues are in place because of unjust, but legal, systems of American society. These articles are a reminder that racism is present in many societal issues.

Introduction by Jennifer Sens

Learning Objectives

- Provide examples of Cincinnati neighborhoods that have been segregated based on race, and what policies and practices caused this segregation.
- Explain how school segregation is affected by economic inequality and housing segregation.
- Define gentrification, explain how it has affected Cincinnati neighborhoods, and why it is a significant racial issue today.
- Identify a variety of societal issues which systemic racism has plagued, and the different policies and laws which play a part in systemic racism.

Photo Credits (previous page):

From the top of the page, clockwise:


Housing

Governmental policies have determined where people live since Cincinnati’s foundation. The following articles explore how people of color have been displaced, discriminated against, and forced into certain neighborhoods because of redlining, blockbusting, and more.

Key Resource

**That Which Divides Us**

Cincinnati’s neighborhoods are not integrated in regards to race and economic levels. An examination of why this remains a large problem today is illustrated by stories of displacement and bad real estate practices in neighborhoods such as the West End and Avondale. The narrative of the widening gap between economic instability in communities of color and wealthier white communities continues today.

Resource for Additional Information

**Going Home: The Struggle for Fair Housing in Cincinnati**

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 addressed segregation and inequality in housing nationally. This report from Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Greater Cincinnati (HOME) looks at the history of fair housing from 1900 to today and how race and housing have interacted both before and after the Fair Housing Act.

Education

Despite the attempted integration of schools after the Supreme Court Case Brown v. Board of Education in 1954, many schools today are still segregated based on race. The causes of school segregation, including housing segregation and economic inequality, remain the same as they did in 1954.

Key Resource

**Still Segregated after 50 Years**

Magnet schools were created and improvements were made to existing schools in an effort to desegregate schools in Cincinnati. The example of two West End schools, however, demonstrate that racial segregation remains. Sands Montessori has moved location and no longer has West End families attending the school, and Hays-Porter Elementary School is trying to disprove its reputation as a poor, low-income and low success school.
School integration became national policy in 1954, yet racial disparities still remain. This article examines statistics of school districts in the Cincinnati region and factors that lie under this current segregation.

In this radio clip, Dr. Michael Battle from the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center and Dr. Ervin (Maliq) Matthew from the University of Cincinnati discuss school segregation and why full integration, both educational and economic, are important.

Who benefits? The question often comes up in regards to bringing new businesses and development to low-income, Black neighborhoods. Cincinnati’s recent neighborhood development brings worries that long time residents and business owners will be displaced.

Over-the-Rhine is an example of one of the neighborhoods that has seen recent development. Seemingly, the development has created two different worlds in the same neighborhood; one being the new developers and residents that are taking advantage of the development, and the other the community and residents who have called Over-the-Rhine home for years. As development continues, the future of Over-the-Rhine is put into question.

The story of a Black man who had to move his home, store, and karate studio illustrates the impact of gentrification on individuals in the Over-the-Rhine community.

The new development in East Walnut Hills brings feelings of unrest to the author of this editorial. There is a scene of entertainment geared towards white customers that pushes out the Black residents who live there.
1. Why was school integration after Brown v. Board of Education not completely successful? What are some of the causes of school segregation today?

2. Name and describe 2 examples of policies that discriminated against people of color in the housing industry.

3. What concerns do people have about gentrification? What needs to be taken into consideration when development happens in a community?

4. Pick one societal issue and explain:
   - How have people been discriminated against because of race?
   - What is the state of the issue today?
   - How can society address this issue for the future?
It is time to rethink America. Imagine if Reconstruction had actually honored the citizenship of four million freedpeople—provided the education, political autonomy, and economic wherewithall warranted by their and their ancestors' hundreds of years of free labor...Imagine the educational prowess our population might now boast had Brown actually been implemented...Imagine if the Civil Rights Movement had really resulted in Martin Luther King's "Beloved Community"...We shouldn't have to imagine.

CAROL ANDERSON
WHITE RAGE
CHAPTER 3:
RESILIENT COMMUNITIES OF COLOR IN CINCINNATI
In the antebellum period, Cincinnati was a boundary city, a city of both the North and the South. While Ohio was not a slave-holding state, Black Codes passed by the Ohio legislature in 1804 and 1807 severely restricted black life. The economy of Cincinnati was dependent on trade with Kentucky and other slave states, which created an unwelcome social climate and limited opportunity for free black people. Cincinnati is known for its role in the Underground Railroad and African Americans were very active in these efforts. After the Civil War, Black communities maintained as best they could and began to thrive. In the late 19th and 20th centuries, outstanding African American individuals and organizations were leaders in civil rights movements and at all levels of community engagement. Black Cincinnatians have often been segregated into certain areas of the city, but they also founded communities of their own. Two resources listed in Additional Resources, *Frontiers of Freedom* and *History of African Americans in Cincinnati*, offer a broad brushstroke of life for and by African Americans in Cincinnati from the city's beginnings to the present.

*Introduction by Louise Lawarre*

**Learning Objectives**

- Gain insight into Cincinnati as a boundary city, with a culture that reflected both North and South from 1802, including activities of the Underground Railroad, and the aftermath of the Civil War.
- Identify key Cincinnati African American leaders and describe their contributions to the life of Cincinnati, both for the African American community and for the wider community.
- Recognize Cincinnati’s Black communities and neighborhoods of the past and present and articulate the struggles and achievements of these communities.

**Photo Credits (previous page):**

3. Lincoln Court was within walking distance of Union Terminal. The housing units were on Lincoln Avenue, now known as Ezzard Charles Drive. Moore, G. Black America Series: Cincinnati. p. 33, bottom picture. Photographer unknown. *Street view of Lincoln Court* [photograph]. Arcadia Publishing.
LEADING THE FIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY

Many African American and white Cincinnatians were involved in the struggle to end slavery prior to the Civil War. The people involved in the Underground Railroad used a variety of methods and routes to help people get to safety. In this section, readers will discover how individuals, churches and a seminary in and near Cincinnati risked their lives to save others. Other stories describe the cruelty people endured trying to remain free once they crossed the Ohio River.

Key Resource

Hamilton Road to Freedom

This article, which describes specific routes taken to pass through Cincinnati, includes old maps, identifies groups of people providing assistance, and describes the challenges and dangers people faced. It connects Cincinnati neighborhoods that many current residents travel through regularly with a history of resistance to oppression.

Resources for Additional Information

Enabling Freedom

Website of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center which describes Cincinnati’s involvement in the Underground Railroad and many of the historical heroes in the fight against slavery. Move through the History and Heroes sections to learn about its beginnings, code words used, and brave people like John Parker, Rev. John Rankin, and Margaret Garner.

Wood v. Ward

This is the story of an enslaved woman who was brought to Cincinnati, given her freedom, then re-enslaved. She fought her case in federal court and eventually won.

INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE

Ordinary African American citizens seeking freedom and a better life for themselves, their families and their community are recognized as leaders in Cincinnati’s history. These include people in the late 19th century through today. Through their work they improved education, led civil rights efforts, and were leaders in business and politics.

Key Resource

Guide to African American Resources

The Cincinnati History Library and Archives is an outstanding resource for exploring African Americans who have been leaders in Cincinnati, in all areas of public life. Begin to learn about some of Cincinnati’s outstanding leaders and innovators: Peter H. Clark, Wendell Dabney, Virginia Coffey, Jennie D. Porter, Donald and Marian Spencer, Theodore Berry, Fred Shuttlesworth, William L. Mallory, Sr., Robert S. Duncanson, Nikki Giovanni, Judge Nathaniel Jones.
Cincinnati’s African American neighborhoods have a long history of challenges and successes. Overcoming setbacks, recovering from decline, and building neighborhoods where people support and watch out for each other are hallmarks of these communities.

**Key Resource**

**Avondale’s 50-year-old Recovery Journey from the 68’ Riots**

Burned out buildings after the 1968 riots were only one problem Avondale has faced in the last 50 years. But residents committed to supporting people and the neighborhood have brought ideas for housing, health care and youth empowerment to fruition and made enormous strides for themselves and others.

**Resources for Additional Information**

**The Rise of South Cumminsville**

The Cincinnati community of South Cumminsville is working to eradicate poverty and build a feeling of connection among its residents. By promoting community-building efforts, home ownership and economic learning, residents are changing their neighbors lives and offering a model for others to follow.

**Cincinnati: Black America Series**

In words, sketches and photographs, this book is a beautiful glimpse at the life of Black Cincinnati spanning more than 150 years. This is an excellent starting resource to capture a sense of the breadth and depth of African American involvement in the life of Cincinnati.

---

**Resources for Additional Information**

**Marian Spencer: Oral History**

Marian Spencer has been a leader in Cincinnati for decades. In this interview she shares some insights into her life and experiences, including the fight to desegregate Coney Island.

**Miami University Freedom Summer**

This article marking the 50th anniversary of Freedom Summer tells the story of 800 students who were trained at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, in June, 1964, who then traveled to Mississippi to register voters and set up freedom schools. The murder of three young men shortly after arriving in Mississippi showed them the great risks they were undertaking.
This introduction to the book by UC professor Nikki Taylor paints a picture of the journey to freedom African Americans faced as they moved to and through Cincinnati between 1802 and 1868. The overview Dr. Taylor offers in these few pages gives the reader an understanding of how Cincinnati’s character shaped the lived experience of free and enslaved people.

**History of African Americans in Cincinnati**

This survey of over 200 years of Cincinnati history looks at how African Americans have faced racism, created resilient communities and shaped Cincinnati’s narrative.

**Cincinnati’s West End: Through Our Eyes**

This book on the history of the West End from 1940 to 1960, highlights the characteristics of a community that was home to a vast number of black Cincinnatians, exploring the many ways they survived and thrived despite the racism, segregation and poverty that were part of daily life.

---

**Post Reading Quiz**

1. Describe ways that enslaved people trying to escape to freedom would find help and move safely through and out of Cincinnati.
2. What most inspired you as Marian Spencer shared her stories and experiences?
3. Identify common themes in the challenges faced by African American neighborhoods in Cincinnati and how they addressed these issues?
4. Choose four inspirational African American Cincinnatians and describe their contributions to the city and the nation.
Without knowledge, action is useless and knowledge without action is futile.

ABU BAKR
In accordance with our goals stated in the preface, of providing a resource to make people aware of history of institutionalized racism in Cincinnati, we invite you to use the information you have learned. The following questions ask you to reflect on your experience with the toolkit and identify steps that you can take moving forward.

1. Looking back on your responses to the opening exercise, have your attitudes and/or assumptions changed after your use of this toolkit?

2. Based on your understanding now, why is learning the history of race and racism in Cincinnati important for weeding out racism in society?

3. In your group, or with your partner, use sheets of paper, post it notes, and respond to the following. What general policies and practices exist that take into consideration the needs of people from various racial groups? (e.g., hiring, retention, harassment or professional development.) For example, if you are a teacher, what do you know about school board policies, teacher associations policies, provincial policies, as well as what are your inclusive classroom practices and procedures?
   a) If you do not know what these policies, procedures, and resources are, why do you not know this and where can you go to obtain the information? In your organization, whose job is it to know?
   b) What is the impact of the procedures, practices, and resources in your immediate workplace, institution, or governing bodies?

4. Considering what you now know, identify how you will
   a) Adopt anti racist practices and policies in your circle of influence.
   b) Work alongside organizations promoting anti racist practice
   c) What responses (physiological, emotional and thoughts) affected your decision to respond in the manner you did?
   d) What questions or comments come up for you after doing this section?

Photo Credits (previous page):
From the top of the page, clockwise:
**Advocate**

- **Push for Public** recognition and documentation, and restoration of harms done by existing institutions to communities of color
- **Lobby** for truthful education in our schools
- **Name** public spaces, memorials, streets, etc. in Cincinnati after Indigenous, Black, Latinx, & Asian historic influencers
- **Document** incidents of racial violence in your community; make timeline publicly available.

**Educate**

- **Subscribe** to *The Herald* http://thecincinnatiherald.com/
- **Investigate** and learn about race and racism concerns for other People of Color and marginalized groups.
- **Document and incorporate** histories of resilient communities of color into education.

**Join and Donate to** organizations that actively resist racism

- Cincinnati NAACP https://www.cincinnatinaacp.com/
- Greater Anderson Promotes Peace (GAPP) gappeace.org
- Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center (IJPC) http://IJPCcincinnati.org/
- MLK Coalition mlkcoalition@gmail.com
- YWCA Greater Cincinnati http://www.ywcacincinnati.org

**Recognize and Respect Native Americans**

- **Participate** in the Indigenous Call to Acknowledgement
  - Open public events and gatherings with acknowledgment of the traditional Native inhabitants of the land. Details here: https://usdac.us/nativeland/
- **Honor** Indigenous People’s Day in your school district, city council, and respective organization governing bodies on the Third Monday of October.
  - Cincinnati passed a resolution bill on October 8, 2018 to officially change Columbus Day to Indigenous People’s Day. The holiday now celebrates Native American culture and recognizes the struggles they faced. This change is especially significant in Ohio due to the many Native American Tribes who once resided here, before being forced to leave. http://bit.ly/TNRIndigenousPeopleDay
  - Resource: https://zinnedproject.org/?s=Columbus
- **Remove** offensive mascots & logos from schools and sports teams
- **Read** Indian Country Today to learn current news https://newsmaven.io/indiancountrytoday/

**Support**

- **Sponsor** longstanding cultural events
- **Purchase** books by authors and about authors of color
  - *Cincinnati: Black America Series* by Gina Ruffin Moore
Since January 2016, Rethinking Racism has hosted 16 large group gatherings with more than 600 unique individuals in attendance, in at least 10 different locations throughout Cincinnati. Thank you to each of you who has showed up, been vulnerable, asked the hard questions, hosted a conversation, and asked to learn more. Thank you to our partners, families, colleagues, and friends who support each of us in this effort to dive deeper into a complex reality.

This project would not have been possible without the intentionally, commitment, and support from the many people who have been part of the Rethinking Racism Team over the years. Team members included those who designed the meetings, assisted in hosting and facilitating, and/or played an administrative role. We especially thank individuals: Ren Austing, Desirè Bennett, Mary Anne Bressler, Christina Brown, Nancy Brown-Jamison, Barbara Dixon, Phyllis Flanagan-Cox, Robert Freer, Betti Glynn, April Griffi, Elaine Hansen, Joy Haupt, S. Kathleen Hebbeler, OP, Whayne Herriford, Mary Ellen Huss, Dan Joyner, S. Andrea Koverman, SC, Louise Lawarre, S. Monica McGloin, OP, Edith Morris, Rochell Prater, Chantae Recasner, Allison Reynolds-Berry, Jennifer Sens, Candice Tolbert, Kristi Williams, Rachael Winters, and Pat Youngblood.

With gratitude to the many contributors to the toolkit, including those who wrote content, edited grammar, provided feedback, and designed the layout including: Lauren Bailey, Mary Anne Bressler, Christina Brown, Donald Foley, Mary Ellen Huss, Dan Joyner, Louise Lawarre, S. Louise Lears, SC, Allison Reynolds-Berry, Kathleen Sellers, and Jennifer Sens.

We are grateful for the organizational commitment to foster discussion and education for Rethinking Racism from Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center, Cincinnati Office of Human Relations, and YWCA Greater Cincinnati. Funding for this work was provided by many individual supporters as well as through a grant from the Dominican Sisters of Hope Ministry Fund.

Finally, we are grateful to all those who have gone before us in the struggle for justice and racial equity, those whose lives were taken too soon, those who died fighting for what is right. We are grateful to those who have taught us this history and to those, like you, who will carry this struggle forward.

Photo Credits (back page):