



I Shouldn't Have to Work This Hard



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Community Observations

Location 1: Standing on the corner of Hicks Street and Mill Street.

- There is heavy foot action in this area and there are also many guys standing on the corners and in and out the stores .
- Mostly black and brown people. Kids got out of school from pave at 12:30pm.
- It is loud from people playing music and talking. Also kids screaming and playing around.
- Drug addicts walking past.
- Music playing from cars that are stationary and moving throughout the block
- Housing workers walking back and forth and workers doing construction.
- A guy dancing in front of the chicken spot.
- Men standing in front of the laundromat for the entire 15 mins I was here.
- A lot of trucks are stationary and doing deliveries.



Community Observations

Location 2: Smith & 9th Street Station. F and G Lines. The Only train station in Red Hook.

Time: Very busy at this time (2:00pm)

- Buses and cars moving back and forth non stop. 3 buses passed me while standing here.
- There are many people getting off the train and also waiting for the bus.
- A diverse range of people. Asian, Black, Hispanic, White.
- People going in and out of the restaurant and bar and also the corner store deli.
- The bridge is visible and the water. No boats passed. From inside of the train you can see many buildings and the Statue of Liberty .
- It's very nosey because it is so active at this time.
- People coming from school and work.
- High school students going to the train and walking from the train.
- People going inside of their homes that live near the train, mostly white people.



Interview with Shakeria Nash, NYCHA Worker

Date: 11/26/2021

Dylana, Bourne:

Okay, so what is your name?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Shakeira Nash.

Dylana, Bourne:

And do you consent to this interview with maybe other people being able to read it?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Yes.

Dylana, Bourne:

Okay, so the first question is, what is your connection to Red Hook?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Um, I work here and I also have family here.

Dylana, Bourne:

And how long have you been living or working in Red Hook?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Um, two and a half years.

Dylana, Bourne:

Two and a half years, and what about your family? How long do you think they've been living out here?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Uh, forever.

Dylana, Bourne:

Forever?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Yeah.

Dylana, Bourne:

How does the community look to you?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Horrible, horrible.

Dylana, Bourne:

Any specific things?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Um, construction, the people, rats.

Dylana, Bourne:

And what do you do for a living?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

I work for NYCHA.

Dylana, Bourne:

Okay, in Red Hook you work for NYCHA?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Yes.

Dylana, Bourne:

Okay. What would you consider your current goals to be?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Get a house where my family's a better environment.

Dylana, Bourne:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Have my kids in a better environment.

Dylana, Bourne:

Okay, and what barriers do you face in a pursuit of your goals?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Um, maintaining work, staying motivated, taking care of my household.

Dylana, Bourne:

Okay, and do you feel like it's like a big barrier, or it's something that you could, like, eventually overcome?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

It's definitely something I could overcome.

Dylana, Bourne:

Okay, and question number six, what would your vision of a safe Red Hook look like?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Um, getting rid of the guns, having a little bit more police around, just interacting with the community and coming together.

Dylana, Bourne:

Okay, and what resources would the community need to achieve that vision?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Um, having, um, having things where everybody coming together, talking with each other, not bickering and fighting.

Dylana, Bourne:

Yeah, that is true, and question number seven is, what do you believe the role of the police should be in terms of community safety?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Um, to protect and serve, but also have more mental health awareness and be more in tune with the communities.

Dylana, Bourne:

Okay, and how can we bridge the gap between different generations within our community, meaning, like, older and younger.

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

For the older people to be involved with the younger community, not just shut them out. Have- have things, have them come, talk to them. Do things with each other, not just saying, you know, like ...

Dylana, Bourne:

Yeah, and just not doing anything or just being judgmental.

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Yeah-

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

Showing them the correct way to do things.

Dylana, Bourne:

Yeah, I understand that.

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:
To live life.

Dylana, Bourne:

And the last question is, how can we make housing more accessible?

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:

By speeding along the construction, making sure that everybody could get from place A to B.

Dylana, Bourne:

That's about it, yeah. Well, thank you, Shakeira.

Shakeira Nash, NYCHA Worker:
Thank you.

Dylana, Bourne:

You're welcome.

Interview with Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher

Date: 11/26/2021

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:

What is your connection to Red Hook?

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:

I live in Red Hook.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:

And how long have you been living or working in Red Hook?

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:

15 years plus.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:

Um, okay. And how does the community look to you? That can be physically, that can be like what you think about the neighborhood.

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:

Um, it, it could look better. Uh, we don't have a lot of stuff down here that we may need. The train is too far and there's no access for handicaps even if you go into the train station, and it's scarier even at night because everything is blocked off.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:
Alright. And what do you do for a living?

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:

I work in a school lunchroom serving lunch.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:
And what do ... what would you consider your current goals to be?

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:

Shoe designer or chef.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:
Okay. What are the barriers you face in the pursuit of your goals?

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant
Teacher:
Time.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:
Yeah.

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant
Teacher:
And raising grandchildren.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:

Okay. What would your vision of a safe Red Hook
look like? And that can be about like anything.

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant
Teacher:

There'd be possibilities for everyone to have
growth and to get a job, and something for the
children to do so they're not all over the streets
causing a lot of crime.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:

What resources would the community need to
achieve that vision?

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant
Teacher:
Funding.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:

What resources would the community need to achieve that vision?

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:
Funding.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:

Definitely. Um, question number seven, what do you believe the role of the police should be in terms of the community's safety?

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:

Care and control they need. The cops need care and control, 'cause they already have a lot of custody. They just need to care and they need to be able to have control.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:

How can we bridge the gap between different generations within our community? With like the older and the younger?

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:

Community centers, where they have senior centers, also have a center for young people where they can interact, where the young people could help older people do a lot of things.

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:

Helping them with computers, just talking, find out information about one another.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:

Okay. And the last question is, how can we make housing more accessible?

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:

People need money. And it needs to be easier for everyone to get into housing. They have all kinds of housing, but regular people can only get into low-income housing and that's through a lottery. People don't have the funds to just move into places. They don't make enough money.

Dylana Bourne, Public Safety Organizer:

Okay. Well, thank you for your time.

Delka Clarke, Red Hook Resident, Assistant Teacher:

You're welcome.

I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WORK THIS HARD

*An Auto-Ethnography of a young person of color from/working in
Red Hook.*

Research Question: What does public safety mean to me?

What does public safety mean to me? I've thought long and hard about this and I can't always seem to get a straight answer because my thoughts on it are constantly changing. Growing up as a young black female in the projects you don't really notice the limited opportunities that are available to you. From schools, to healthy food options, to gun violence, we are subject to our environment negativity. Many young people don't understand these unfair circumstances that they live under because society overtime makes people believe it is their fault. Guns, drugs, police domestic violence, robberies. The main part about this is the schools. We want to change things. We have to start with the youth by knowing and understanding what they go through on a daily basis. Schools are teaching kids to obey instead of to learn and there are very scarce resources and opportunities for them to succeed and to evolve. Public safety is generational wealth versus generational trauma, black/brown versus white, and race versus environment. It's important to have public safety because as a black young girl walking around sometimes it can be scary; scary because you're black and scary because you're a female. Sometimes I feel like I've been safeguarded from the toxic public by my family. They value education, honesty, and speaking up for yourself. The safety of our environment is security, and every day we are working to approve our security. Not just in Red Hook but all over because we need to start breaking the cycle between different groups of people.

Generational wealth versus generational trauma. Well what's the difference for Black people? People that look like me. The term "generational wealth" refers to assets passed from one generation of a family to another. Those assets can include stocks, bonds, and other investments, as well as real estate and family businesses. As for myself and many other black people in Red Hook we have no clue what that is. We strictly suffer from generational trauma. Generational trauma is a traumatic event that began decades prior to the current generation and has impacted the way that individuals understand, cope with, and heal from trauma. Trauma is shared by a group of people, rather than individually experienced. The trauma spans multiple generations, such that contemporary members of the affected group may experience trauma-related symptoms without having been present for the past traumatizing event.

Being systematically exploited, enduring repeated and continual abuse, racism, and poverty are all traumatic enough to cause genetic changes. We struggle daily with trying to figure out who we are and who we want to be. Not every day do you find someone like myself, a 22-year-old college graduate who is also pursuing her Masters degree, who also lives in the projects where I am subjected to many social determinants of health. It's crazy because I'm really one of the lucky ones and it shouldn't even be that way because as a child being born into this world as an innocent human being, we all deserve equal treatment in our households and in society. Our schools don't have adequate resources, we have very little to no healthy food options, we have abandoned lots, we have pollution in the air due to the outside train station and factory work, The area is filled with fast food restaurants and liquor stores and there is construction going on that should of happened 10 years ago. And I won't lie, at times I do feel like it's so much for me. Society, the system, working so hard, college; But I feel like I have an obligation and something to accomplish. I just can't give up. I'm fighting the odds because I don't want to be a statistic. For other people that I know they suffer from a different environment but live in the same neighborhood as me. If you haven't been exposed to certain behavior you won't know how to go about it. And it's not the youth's fault because it's trauma, it's a type of trauma that doesn't just go away on its own. Trauma has its own way of eating people from the inside out. Not only can it cause one to act out but also will trigger negative behaviors or biased mindsets of all people of a specific group of people. Due to the trauma of people, it may cause them to act out and have extreme behavioral changes. These negative effects on the community lead to bigger issues. Focusing on children, growing up with trauma which can lead to more delinquent behavior. This leads back to public safety because we can use that to our advantage to help guide people who need it. Instead of blaming the community we blame the government, the laws, and everything else that is put into place to keep us below.

We see a lot of white people with generational wealth because they've been able to pass down money, houses, businesses and many other things. For white kids their parents have connections where the kids can get into the best schools and activities and also they have jobs and careers that keep them financially stable to where they can build a legacy. From the first day that we are born, determines how we end up in life. The very first day counts for every other day that you live. So no you can't expect the youth in Red Hook to automatically want to evolve because they haven't seen anything better. I honestly wish I would have grown up in a better environment. If my family had big money and had essentials and lifetime resources to pass down to me there are a lot of things that I wouldn't be going through today or in the past. Everything I do is for my future and the family I create. I literally have to work to be able to save any kind of money. If I want a house and a car I have to buy it for myself, from the very first dollar to it being paid off. If my family had generational wealth my life would have just been so much smoother financially and mentally if I didn't have to work 10 times harder than a white girl.

I need public safety! I want to feel safe not only in my home but in my community all the time. Safety isn't just my physical aspect but also mentally and emotionally.

Living in Red Hook forced me to be mentally strong and emotionally strong because I couldn't and still can't allow for the environment I live in to distract me from where I'm trying to go. How can I think straight if I can't even get a decent meal from a supermarket? Why doesn't everyone else know about it? Where is their public safety? We need to educate ourselves on what's happening around us or we won't survive. They want us to be blind to the circumstances we live under. They don't want you to see. They don't want us to learn this is slavery without us actually being in a field. Communities don't just fall apart by themselves. The environments and the lifestyles of the residents is what causes it to be the way it is. All of this comes from the experiences you've been through and how you deal with them. Neighborhoods more high in trauma and homelessness or low income are the communities that are most suffering from these issues. Overall, public safety can strengthen social ties in the communities, reconciling order, and autonomy. Most importantly it's a way to get the youth to be more positive. Have you ever heard of the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child?" To me this is public safety because it allows for the community to be intimate with each other, like a family or a gated community where everyone knows each other or there is a system that is in place that can bring everyone together.

I am so passionate about where I come from and the people I know. I know the obstacles one has to take to overcome poverty and the system telling you 'no' because of the color of your skin. I can relate, understand, and overlook the hurt because I know who I am and what I am capable of. Public safety is evolving continuously through different aspects of life and situations. I want to work with many populations because it will broaden my ideas and learning experiences. Being a part of a change also means educating yourself and practicing the process every single day! Not just when you are in school or at work.

In essence, historical/generational trauma will never end. There will always be someone suffering from the past events in their lives or generations from before. It has affected many lives and atmospheres and desperately puts people in an unhealthy state of mind that can and will affect the way they view the world as a person or as an entire group of people. As a person with decency we need to continue the ideas and expansion of public safety in all communities especially Red Hook.

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